



Birds

Speedy Bird Cake

Age: 7-14

Topic: Biology, PSHE

Time: 30 minutes



What should learners already know?

- Birds which do not migrate need extra support in terms of food over the winter, as this is the time when natural food sources are least abundant.

What equipment will I need? (makes 1 cake)

- 100g suet, lard, vegetable fat, or coconut oil
- A handful of sunflower, pumpkin, or bird seeds
- A clean empty yogurt pot
- A large needle or skewer
- Mixing bowl
- String (preferably not plastic)

How will learners explore this?

1. Firstly, gather enough ingredients for the whole class to make a bird cake, either working in small groups or individually.
2. Start by using the needle or skewer to make a hole in the bottom of the yogurt pot (you may choose to do this before handing them out to the class).
3. Thread a loop of string through the hole and tie a big knot to keep the string in place.
4. Put all the ingredients into a mixing bowl and encourage the children to mix them together using their hands (make sure they wash hands afterwards!).
5. Fill the yogurt pot with the mixture and press down firmly so that none falls out.
6. Place in the fridge overnight. Then the bird cakes are ready to be put out! Hang them somewhere around the school grounds where you will be able to watch birds feeding.

How can we show the learning?

- Use this as a time to reflect with children on why supporting local wildlife is important to them.
- Providing food is one way we can help local birds. Can children think of other ways to help them too?
- Hanging bird feeders in a quiet but visible place (e.g. outside a classroom window) provides a great way for children to watch and interact with nature from inside the classroom.
- Birdwatching is a great hobby to do as a class. You may like to keep a log of the different birds which visit your feeders.
- If you would prefer to make fewer numbers of larger bird cakes, the same ingredients and similar methods can be used with a small ceramic pot. For this, you will need to find a stick which will fit tightly into the hole of the ceramic pot, with the opening of the pot facing towards the ground and the stick partially extending above and below the pot. Then you can tie this together with a loop of string and hang it up, in a similar way to the yogurt pot.

Reflection point

Ask the children to choose three words which describe how it makes them feel to help animals.

Feeding birds in the winter is a great opportunity to study their behaviour first hand. Make a note of the different species you observe on your feeders and how they feed.

If you would like to develop your outdoor learning knowledge and skills, take a look at our range of training courses: ltl.org.uk/outdoor-learning-training

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