

Build a birds nests

a Sensory Trust outdoor exploration activity



Gather what you need to make your own bird's nest, looking at different materials and exploring construction.



Aim

To collect natural materials and build a nest with them.



Time

1 hour.



Number

Can be done individually, small groups and full classes.



KS

All ages.



What you will need

- * Natural materials to build your nest, leafy twigs (privet works well), moss, feathers, long grasses.
- * Wool.
- * Paper plate or bowl.
- * Clay.
- * Shopping list document.



Prep

Gather the items you need. Practise making a nest yourself to have a sample to show the young people. Consider whether you will gather the natural materials yourself or will the young people to gather the items themselves, locating a suitable place to do this.



Learning outcomes

- * Sensory exploration of textures used for nest building.
- * Connecting with the natural world.
- * Identifying what is needed to build a bird's nest.
- * Thinking about how a nest is suited to the needs of birds.

- * Creativity, thinking and problem solving skills in collecting materials and building a nest, and finding solutions. Carrying out experiments on the nest as suggested in **Expanding the activity.**



Why

Learning about birds and their natural habitats is an essential skill for young people to learn about their natural world in a hands-on way. Thinking skills are needed for how a nest is suited to the needs of a bird as well as considering construction of a sturdy nest. Creativity, hand-eye co-ordination and fine motor skills, along with sensory input from the materials, makes this a worthwhile activity.



Expanding the activity

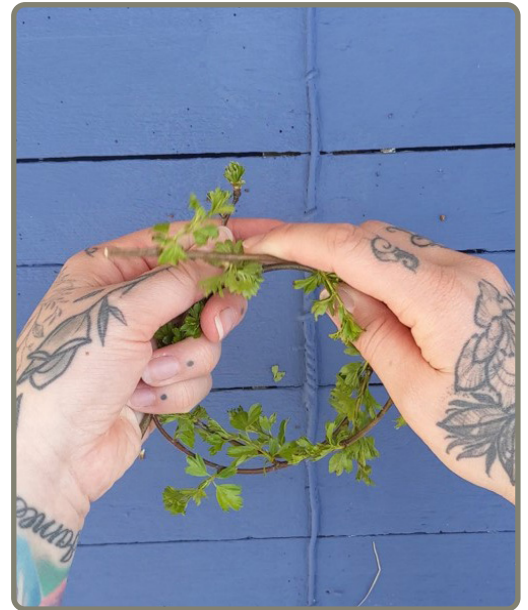
- * Construct an egg from clay or plasticine to go into the nest.
- * Place the nests outside to see if they can be camouflaged. Consider a safe place for the nest.
- * Will your nest be strong in the wind? Use the wind or a hairdryer to test it.
- * Will the nest be waterproof – will water drain away? Leave in the rain or use a watering can to find out.

Levels of engagement



Sensory

- * Explore the materials for the nests using your senses. Discover textures, smells, and colours. See what you can find outdoors and work with the young person to find interesting sensory experiences. For some, this might mean bringing materials to them and exploring in a supported way, using different parts of the body to explore texture. If there are scents, you may have to hold them close to allow the young person to engage. Some outdoor smells may be new and you may need to try them several times to get a true reaction. Remember head turning and pushing away are all responses.
- * When you have found sensory interactions with the materials that are of interest, you can use those to build your nest. Follow along with the communication board, matching materials if possible. Use the word associated with the material being used repeatedly. Support the young person to make the nest. Use a bowl or paper plate as a base if the intertwining of materials proves difficult.
- * If the young person wants to 'test' their nest in the wind, and you are using a hairdryer, use an access switch so they can switch on the hairdryer themselves.



Semi-formal

- * Show your sample bird's nest, explore it and try to determine what has been used in the construction.
- * Use the one star shopping list.
- * Can the young person now write down what may be needed to construct their own nest? Use the communication board to help. There are some extra ingredients that you would not use in a birds' nest on the Widgit shopping list. These are there to encourage thinking skills. Support where necessary but give plenty of thinking time.
- * Once the shopping list for the nest is complete, gather those materials. Use the how-to instructions to encourage the young person to follow along for guidance. There is no right or wrong way in building the nest, this is an experiment to encourage thinking and to problem solve.
- * Encourage the young person by asking questions. What would be the biggest piece of material a bird can carry in their beak? What would make the nest comfy and warm? How strong can you make the nest? How deep will your nest need to be to keep eggs safe?
- * Carry out the extensions in **Expanding the activity**.

1
2
3
4

Formal

- * Show your sample bird's nest, explore it and try to determine what has been used in the construction.
- * Use the two star shopping list.
- * Can the young person write a shopping list for what is needed? Use the Widgit and photo instructions if necessary.
- * Once the shopping list for the nest is complete, gather those materials. Encourage the young person to follow the how-to instructions. There is no right or wrong way in building the nest, this is an experiment to encourage thinking and to problem solve.
- * Ask questions to encourage thinking. What would be biggest piece of material a bird can carry in their beak? Why? What would make the nest comfy and warm? Why? How strong can you make the nest and how would you do this? How deep will your nest need to be to keep eggs safe and also the chicks once hatched from the egg? Where would you put the nest to camouflage it from predators?
- * Carry out the extensions in **Expanding the activity** and problem solve if and where necessary.

Sensory Trust promotes and supports the creation and management of outdoor spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, regardless of age or ability.

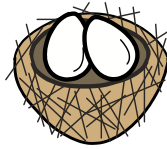
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Bird's Nest Activity

Shopping List Worksheets*	2 - 3
Communication Board	4
Picture How-to Guide	5 - 7

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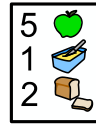
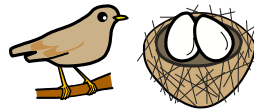


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* The number of spirals in the top left hand corner of the page, increase with the difficulty of the worksheet. This could be more difficult questions or lessened support.





Bird Nest Shopping List



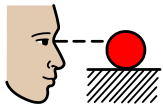
to be able to identify what materials a bird uses to create a nest and write a shopping list



1. Write a shopping list



for your bird's nest.



Look at the words



below to help.



A large yellow notepad with a perforated top edge and horizontal lines for writing.



ketchup



grass



foil



privet



feathers



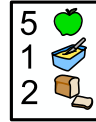
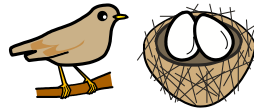
cheese



moss






wool



Bird Nest Shopping List

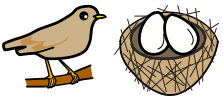


to be able to identify what materials a bird uses to create a nest and write a shopping list

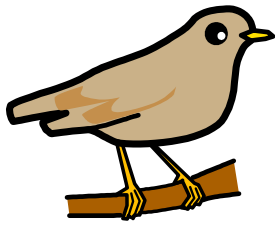
1. Look at the photo
of the nest. What can you
use to make yours?
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 



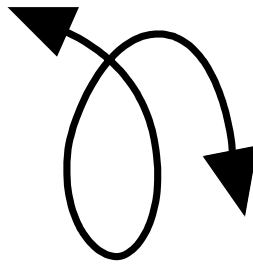
2. Write a shopping list


for your bird's nest.

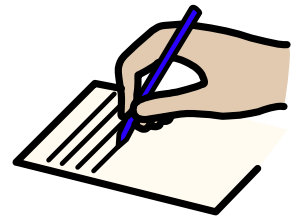
butter
flour
milk
cheese
bread
eggs



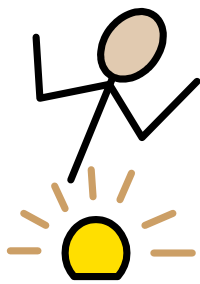
bird



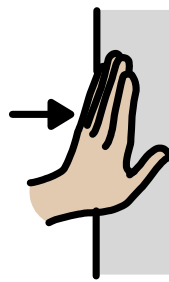
twist



write



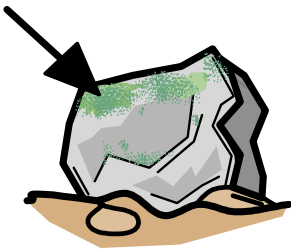
find



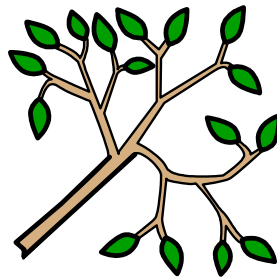
push



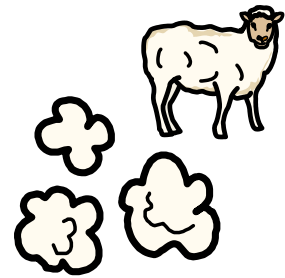
roll



moss



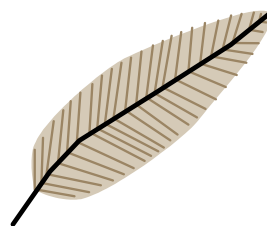
privet



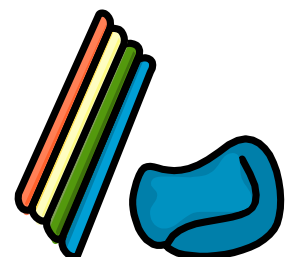
wool



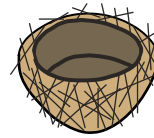
grass



feathers



plasticine



Making a bird's nest



What do I need?



Plasticine



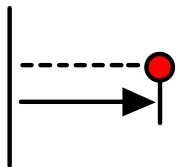
Linings:



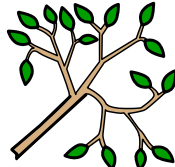
feathers



moss



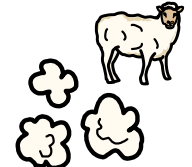
4 - 5 lengths



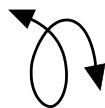
of privet



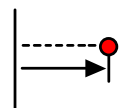
grass



wool



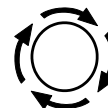
Twist



one length

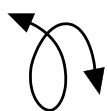


of privet

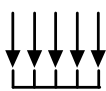


into a circle.

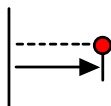




Twist



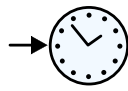
all the other



lengths



of privet,



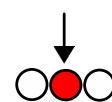
until there



is no



hole



in the middle.



Use



your fist



to push

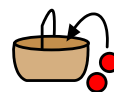


the centre

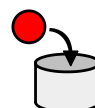


of the nest.





Line the nest with things you have collected.



Make a bird from plasticine to put in the nest.

