I. ABSTRACT
In this unit students will care for, observe, and record observations of birds, noting key physical characteristics, development, needs, and life cycle (Core Knowledge Preschool Sequence Level II, p. 85). In addition, students will participate in bird-themed math and literacy activities.

II. OVERVIEW
A. Demonstrate an Initial Understanding of the Living World.
B. Understand and Use Language to Communicate.
C. Understand and Use Language to Think: Organize, Relate, and Analyze Information
D. Understand and Use Increasingly Varied and Complex Vocabulary and Syntax.
E. Develop a Sense of Rhyme.
F. Listen to Stories Read Aloud.
G. Participate in Stories Read Aloud.
H. Develop a Notion of “Story Schema”.
I. Demonstrate an Awareness of Book and Print Organization.
J. Develop an Awareness of Written Matter/Print in Everyday Surroundings and Its Many Uses.
K. Develop an Awareness of the Structure of Print.
L. Develop Phonemic Awareness.
M. Develop the Fine Motor Skills and Strokes Used in Writing
N. Sort and Classify Objects or Pictures of Objects.
O. Use Simple Measurement Skills and Seriate Objects
P. Quantify Groups of Objects.

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

IV. PREREQUISITE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE FOR STUDENTS
A. Animals are living things that need food, grow, and reproduce.
B. There are different kinds of animals in our world.
C. Birds are animals.

V. RESOURCES


I. Teacher-created Parent Letter (Appendix A)

VI. LESSONS OUTLINE
Lesson One: What Is a Bird?
A. Daily Objective
   1. Students will consider what they already know about birds and what they want to learn about birds by completing the Know and Wonder columns of a Know-Wonder-Learn (KWL) Chart.

B. Grouping
   1. Whole group instruction

C. Materials & Preparation

D. Language of Instruction:
   1. Teacher: KWL chart, characteristics
   2. Students: alive, animal, grow, living, fly, wings, nests, feathers, eggs, beak

E. Procedures and Activities
   1. Read the book, Stellaluna, then tell the children that they will be learning about birds over the next several days.
   2. Discuss the characteristics of the birds in the story and compare them to the characteristics of the bat.
   3. Bring out the pet bird for the children to observe.
   4. Complete the Know and Wonder columns of a Know-Wonder-Learn chart with the children.
   5. Ongoing activity after Lesson One: Children will help feed the pet bird, clean its cage, and observe it daily. They will make journal entries about the bird each time they visit the science center.
   6. Child-initiated Center Activities (Please note, these are available for the duration of the unit, not just this lesson.)
      a. Art: Paint with feathers, make birdseed collages, make feather collages, egg-shaped paper available, bird-shaped paper available, play dough for sculpting birds, eggs, and nests, twigs, leaves, and string available for creating nests
      b. Dramatic Play: A large birdhouse and bird costumes for children to pretend to be birds, bird puppets in the puppet theater
      c. Library: Fiction and Non-Fiction books about birds, pictures of different kinds of birds to discuss
d. Listening: Tape recording of bird sounds

e. Science: Feathers and nests to observe with magnifying glasses, paper for recording observations, pet bird to observe and care for, hang a bird feeder outside window to attract birds for the children to watch

f. Sensory Table: Birdseed to pour and measure

g. Table Toys/Manipulatives: Teacher-made bird matching game and egg matching game, feathers to seriate and sort, bird counters

h. Writing: Bird-shaped paper to decorate with the writing strokes, feathers and ink for writing

F. Assessment/Evaluation
1. As children complete the KWL chart, note each student’s name by his/her contribution. For the child-initiated activities, use portfolio collections and anecdotal records.

Lesson Two: What Makes a Bird a Bird?

A. Daily Objective
1. Students will learn some additional characteristics of all birds and that all birds are not the same.

B. Grouping
1. Small group instruction

C. Materials and Preparation

D. Language of Instruction
1. Teacher: evolve, species, prey, nocturnal, flightless, carrion, Venn diagram, compare, contrast
2. Students: (same as Lesson One)

E. Procedures/Activities
1. Read from the book *Birds*, discussing different types of birds and how they are alike and different.

2. Using a Venn diagram, compare the pet bird to a bird in the book.

3. Child-initiated Center Activities (same as Lesson One)

F. Assessment/Evaluation
1. On the Venn diagram, note each child’s contribution by writing his/her name beside each comment. Add to KWL chart.

Lesson Three: What Are the Parts of a Bird’s Body and How Does a Bird Move?

A. Daily Objective
1. Students will observe the pet bird’s movement and discuss the bird’s body parts. Students will draw a bird, labeling its feathers, wings, tail, and beak.

B. Grouping
1. Small group instruction

C. Materials and Preparation


D. Language of Instruction
1. Teacher: quill, shaft
2. Student: beak, feathers, wings, tail, bones, feet, perch

E. Procedures/Activities
1. Students will watch and discuss how the pet bird is moving, talk about its body, its feathers, feet, wings, tail, and beak.
2. Read from and look at pictures in the books.
3. Have each student draw a picture of the pet bird, dictating the parts of the bird.
4. Write what the child says on his/her picture.
5. Child-initiated Center Activities (same as Lesson One)

F. Assessment/Evaluation
1. Add children’s drawings to portfolio collection

Lesson Four: How Do Birds Protect Themselves?
A. Daily Objective
1. Students will learn that many birds are camouflaged in their environments and this protects them from predators.

B. Grouping
1. Small group instruction

C. Materials and Preparation
3. Teacher-made game (students “hide” cut out bird by placing it on paper that has the same design as the bird).

D. Language of Instruction
1. Teacher: environment, development, weather, growth
2. Students: camouflage

E. Procedures/Activities
1. Read sections about camouflage from the books.
2. Play the game with the children.
3. Child-Initiated Center Activities
   a. Add the game to the Table Toys center.

F. Assessment/Evaluation
1. Direct observation during game playing.
2. Make anecdotal records of conversations.
3. Add children’s comments to the KWL chart.

Lesson Five: What Do Birds Eat?
A. Daily Objective
1. Students will learn that different kinds of birds eat different things: some eat seeds, while others eat insects, worms, fish, and small animals.
2. Students will make a birdfeeder to hang outside.

B. Grouping
1. Small group instruction

C. Materials and Preparation
3. One pinecone per child
4. Peanut butter
5. Birdseed
6. String

D. Language of Instruction
   1. Teacher: seedeater, invertebrate eater, predator
   2. Students: seeds, insects, worms, fish, animals, birdfeeder, pinecone

E. Procedures/Activities
   1. Read sections about food sources from the books.
   2. Give each child a pinecone and show him how to smear peanut butter all over it. Then let him roll it in birdseed.
   3. Attach a string to the pinecone and allow the child to take his birdfeeder home.
   4. Child-Initiated Center Activities (same as previous lessons)

F. Assessment/Evaluation
   1. Use digital camera to take photos of children making birdfeeders and add photos to portfolio collection.
   2. Add children’s comments to the KWL chart.

Lesson Six: Where Do Birds Live?

A. Daily Objective
   1. Students will learn that birds may live in nests, trees, houses, or cages.
   2. Students will build a birdhouse.

B. Grouping
   1. Small group instruction

C. Materials and Preparation

D. Language of Instruction
   1. Teacher: build, construct, create, tool
   2. Students: Screw, drill, wood, nest, feathers, wool, hair, moss, twigs, sticks, mud, leaves

E. Procedures/Activities
   1. Read from Bird and Birds about nests and nest making.
   2. Discuss where the pet bird lives.
   3. Talk about birdhouses people put up in their yards.
   4. Make a wooden birdhouse with the shop teacher.
   5. Child-Initiated Center Activities (same as previous lessons)
      a. Take birdseed out of sensory table and add mud, twigs, leaves, pine needles, and other nest making items.
      b. Encourage students to build nests.

F. Assessment/Evaluation
   1. Use digital camera to photograph the children’s birdhouses and nests.
   2. Take dictation to accompany their photos.
   3. Add children’s comments to the KWL chart.

Lesson Seven: Where Do Baby Birds Come From?

A. Daily Objective
   1. Students will learn that birds lay eggs, from which baby birds hatch.
B. Grouping
1. Small group instruction

C. Materials and Preparation
5. Eggs for children to explore

D. Language of Instruction
1. Teacher: lifecycle, birth, development, weather
2. Students: egg, hatch, peck

E. Procedures/Activities
1. Read *Are You My Mother*.
2. Discuss how the baby bird is like his mother and unlike the other animals and objects in the story.
3. Read *From Egg to Robin*.
4. Talk about hatching.
5. Use illustrations and explanations from *Bird* and *Birds*.
6. Let the children hold some eggs.
7. Talk about how the eggs are warmed so they will hatch, and if they are not warmed the will not form a bird inside.
8. Allow the children to crack open the eggs and explore the contents.
9. Child-Initiated Center Activities (same as previous lessons)
   a. Put teacher-made egg matching game in Table Toys center.
   b. Put plastic eggs in the Dramatic Play center.
   c. Boil eggs and let the children decorate them in the Art center.
   d. After eggs are eaten, allow children to use shells to make collages.

F. Assessment/Evaluation
1. Write what children say they have learned on the KWL chart.
2. Put their names beside their comments.

VII. CULMINATING ACTIVITY
A. Invite an employee of the Wildlife, Game, and Fish Commission to come to the preschool to talk with the children about wild birds, their habitats, and their life cycles, and bring in some examples of their feathers, nests, and perhaps even a real bird for the children to see.

B. Invite a vet to come to talk with the children about caring for pet birds.

VIII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS
A. Appendix A: Sample Parent Letter
B. Appendix B: Rhymes, Songs, and Fingerplays
C. Appendix C: Recipes for Snacks

IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY


Appendix A

Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

**Bird is the word** for our next unit of study! We are bringing a pet bird into the classroom for your children to observe and care for. In addition, we will study about wild birds. We will read many books about birds, their body parts, what they eat, where they live, and how they protect themselves. We will also learn about baby birds and how they hatch from eggs.

When you visit our classroom, you will find evidence of bird-related items in every center! If you have something at home that you think might relate to our studies, please let us know. Expect your children to bring home a bird feeder and a bird house, bird sculptures, and lots of bird artwork, which we will make here at school.

If you would like to reinforce the learning at home, here are some activities you can do:

- Go birdwatching with your child. Make a pair of field glasses with your child by securing two empty toilet paper rolls together.
- Set a timer for three minutes and count how many birds you see. Drop a bean in a jar for each bird. When the timer goes off, count the beans.
- Refill your birdfeeders together when food gets low. Talk about how birds need food to grow, just as all animals do.

Thank you for your continued support in making each unit of study we do successful!
Appendix B

Rhymes, Songs, and Fingerplays

Once I Saw a Little Bird
Once I Saw a Little Bird
Come Hop, Hop, Hop,
And I Cried, “Little Bird,
Won’t You Stop, Stop, Stop?”
I Was Going to the Window,
To Say, “How Do You Do?”
But He Shook His Little Tail,
And Far Away He Flew.

Hickety Pickety, My Black Hen
Hickety Pickety, My Black Hen
She Lays Eggs for Gentlemen
Gentlemen Come Everyday
To See the Eggs
My Hen Doth Lay

Two Little Blackbirds
Two Little Blackbirds
Sitting on a Hill
One named Jack
One named Jill
Fly Away Jack
Fly Away Jill
Come Back Jack
Come Back Jill

Chickadees
Five little chickadees sitting in a door
One flew away and then there were four
Four little chickadees sitting in a tree
One flew away and then there were three
Three little chickadees looking at you
One flew away and then there were two
Two little chickadees sitting in the sun
One flew away and then there was one
One little chickadee sitting all alone
He flew away and then there were none.
**Little Birds**
One little bird with lovely feathers blue
Sat beside another one. Then there were two
Two little birds singing in the tree
Another came to join them then there were three
Three little birds wishing there were more
Along came another bird then there were four
Four little birds glad to be alive
Found another lonely friend then there were five
Five little birds just as happy as can be
Five little birds singing songs for you and me.

**Pretty Birds**
One pretty, two pretty,
Three pretty birds,
Four pretty, five pretty,
Six pretty birds,
Seven pretty, eight pretty,
Nine pretty birds,
Ten pretty birds in a tree.

**Birds** (To the tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush")
This is the way we scratch for worms…
This is the way we peck our food…
This is the way we sit on our eggs…
This is the way we flap our wings…
This is the way we fly away.

**If I Were a Bird**
If I were a bird, I’d sing a song
And fly about the whole day long
And when the night comes, go to rest,
Up in my cozy little nest.
Appendix C

Recipes for Snacks

Bird’s Nest Salad

1 grated carrot
½ cup canned Chinese noodles
¼ cup mayonnaise
Grapes

Mix all together. Mound on plate then push down middle with spoon.

Bird’s Nest Cookies

½ package dried chow mein noodles
1 package butterscotch chips
1 package chocolate chips

Melt chocolate and butterscotch together. Pour in noodles and stir. Spoon out onto wax paper and quickly shape into nest shapes.