



Take it Outside STEM KS1

Build a Bird's Nest

Introduction

Sit very quietly. What can you hear? The chances are that a bird will be somewhere nearby. Where does that bird live? Birds use their beaks to weave materials together to build a nest. This STEM challenge encourages you to use your clever fingers to do the same.



You will need:

- sticks and twigs of different sizes
- bark
- feathers
- straw
- leaves
- grass

Key Questions

- What material will you use? Why did you choose that material?
- How will your nest stay firm and stable?
- Where would the best place be to build a nest?

What to do:

1. Set the scene by showing pictures or models of birds. The RSPB have resources available linked to the Big Bird Watch or use these [British Birds Display Photos](#).
2. If you were a bird, where would you choose to live? What materials would you need to build your home? Do you know what a bird's home is called? It might be possible to handle a bird box or even a real nest.
3. Once you've established that birds live in nests, consider what materials they might use to build their nest. You could have a selection of materials to choose from. Try including some red herrings! Expect justification for choices made. For example, leaves and feathers are soft; small sticks are easier to carry in a beak.
4. Now it's time to collect your nest building material. You may prefer to have piles of resources ready to choose from. Alternatively, allow children to collect materials from a designated area. Remember - only collect material from the ground. It is best not to pull leaves and snap branches from trees. You could always have extra material on hand.



5. Once collected, it's time to plan. This could be a discussion or a drawing activity. Maybe it would be suitable to have 'success criteria' for the build. You could use a toy bird seeking a new home. He requires space for three, a soft lining, strong walls, etc.
6. Ready? Steady? Build! This could be done in groups, pairs or as individuals.
7. To evaluate, take the toy bird on a tour of the nest and get the children to explain their designs. Make sure everyone gets to look at each other's designs too.

Ways to Support

Some children may need help with fine motor skills. Encourage them to build a larger nest using larger sticks and twigs.

Ways to Extend

Some children could build a nest for a specific bird and need to consider its size. Give them plastic eggs and challenge them to build a nest to support them.

Curriculum Links

Science: Describe physical properties of materials; find out about basic needs for survival; identify suitable habitats and identify and name birds.