

Help Build a Bird's Nest

Springtime is a great time to be outdoors with your child. The weather is nice, the colors are beautiful, and the birds are making their nests. With this easy and rewarding activity, your child will get to contribute to the beauty of spring while learning about birds and practicing fine motor skills.

This activity introduces children to the scientific method by encouraging them to make a hypothesis, do the research, make observations and compare the concluding results with their original hypothesis.

What You Need:

- Coat hanger
- Yarn
- Ribbon pieces
- String
- Cloth scraps
- Mesh material
- Masking tape
- Basket



What You Do:

1. Ask your child how she thinks birds make their nests. What makes good nesting material? Where do they get the materials? What size pieces can they carry?
2. Pull the coat hanger into an oval or a rectangle shape. You don't need to dismantle the hanger or bend the hook.
3. Cover the hanger with mesh material. Tape or tie the mesh to the hanger frame.
4. Have your child help you gather yarn, ribbon pieces, string and cloth scraps in a basket. Use bright colors to attract different birds!
5. Put the coat hanger with the mesh on it in a tray and place the basket beside it.
6. Now your child can choose a piece of cloth or ribbon and thread it through the mesh, leaving about half of the piece on either side of the mesh. Repeat.
7. When the coat hanger mesh is full of ribbon, yarn, string and cloth scraps, have your child take it outside.
8. Using the hook end, hang it in a tree for the birds to gather material for their nests.
9. Ask your child what she thinks will happen to the colorful pieces. Which ones might the birds like best? What will the nests look like? How far away might the birds take them? Have her draw some of her ideas or write them down.
10. Several weeks later, take a walk around the neighborhood and see if any of the materials can be seen in the nests in the trees nearby. Do they look the way your child expected them to?

Don't forget to enjoy the bright color and beautiful weather while you're engaging in all of this important science! Whether your child's predictions are correct or not, she'll learn a lot and give the birds a colorful spring gift.

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