

Bird Beak Exploration Activity

Every type of bird has a unique, or different, shape of beak. The different shapes help the birds find and eat the particular types of food they need. Some recognizable examples would be a hummingbird with a long, thin beak to slurp up nectar, or an eagle with a sharp, hooked beak to catch fish.

The birds that call the aquarium their home have different beaks and often eat a variety of foods.

With the help of these instructions

and some simple materials you may find at home, you can further explore how different bird beaks are best suited for different types of food!



What you will need:

1. Tools to represent different types of bird beak: tweezers, clothespins, spoons, tongs, pliers, and forks.
2. Small objects to represent different types of food a bird may eat:
 - Rice and/or beans – represents rice and wheat
 - Gummy worms and/or rubber bands – represents insects and worms
 - Sand and/or sugar – represents nectar
 - Cereal and/or small candies – represents seeds and nuts
 - Marshmallows and/or marbles and/or beads – represents fruits and berries
 - Coins and/or cut plastic straws – represents plastic pollution

Instructions:

1. Think about the tools you are using to represent different bird beaks and compare them to the beaks of birds you may have seen in pictures or in real life.
2. Mix all “food” items in a large bowl or other container. Consider the different objects you are using to represent the food. Make a guess about which beak tool will be best for each object. Feel free to record your answers here or on another piece of paper:
3. Choose a beak tool and try to pick up one of every different type of food. Try again, but this time giving yourself a 30 second time limit and try to only collect one type food object. Avoid the plastic pollution. Was that difficult? Next time, rotate who gets what tool and note your findings. Which tool works best for what kind of food?

Bird Beak Usefulness Recording Sheet

- On the grid below, rate on a scale of 1 to 10 how well each type of beak was able to pick up each object.
- 1 = beak could not pick up the object / 10 = beak very easily picked up the object
- You may also want to record any other observations about each beak and object combinations in the grid below.

	Rice/Beans (rice and wheat)	Gummy Worms /Rubber Bands (insects and worms)	Sand/Sugar (nectar)	Cereal /Small Candy (nuts and seeds)	Marshmallows /marbles /beads (fruits)	Coins /plastic straws (plastic pollution)
Tweezers						
Clothespin						
Spoon						
Tongs						
Pliers						
Fork						