

# Feed the Birds

This lesson focuses on our responsible actions towards the environment through a charades game.

## Caring Sub-Concepts

Self Discipline, Kindness

## Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes

## Required Materials

- ☐ Pinecones (one per student or per student group)
- ☐ Twine cut into 18- to 24-inch pieces (or longer depending on where you plan to hang the feeders)
- ☐ Nutbutter or lard
- ☐ Birdseed
- ☐ Plastic knives or popsicle sticks for spreading butter
- ☐ Paper plates, napkins
- ☐ Paper cups if pre-filling nut butter or birdseed for each student (optional)

## Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.



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AS A RECOMMENDED PROGRAM  
FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.  
See last page for details.

## Lesson Objective

Students will be able to:

- Identify ways children can be responsible for the environment through personal actions.
- Explore ways to be responsible by creating a sustainable bird feeder that can help local birds.

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

How much water do you use at school? Do you think about it? This week, make a conscious effort to conserve where you can: check the bathrooms for running faucets, wash items together instead of one at a time, and report any running toilets to the janitorial staff. Every drop counts!

## Tips for Diverse Learners

- This can be a messy activity, so give students opportunities to wash their hands or wipe them clean if they have tactile sensitivities.
- Have students work in groups or with a partner if you are short on supplies or if students will struggle to do this on their own.
- Have a completed bird feeder as a model for students to look at before starting.



## Share

5 minutes

Review the definition of **responsibility**: *being reliable to do the things that are expected or required of you.*

Draw a Venn diagram on the whiteboard and go over the similarities and differences between teacher responsibilities and student responsibilities:

- **Same:** arrive on time, be prepared, eat healthy, keep the classroom clean, use kind words, show respect, care for others, etc.
- **Different:** complete schoolwork, grade papers, go to meetings, go to specials, ride the school bus, plan lessons, etc.

Even though we have some differences in our responsibilities, we all must work together to create a kind and happy classroom!



## Inspire

### Environmental Responsibility

10-12 minutes

#### Explain:

We have talked about responsibility and our choices. Our choices affect ourselves, others, and even the world around us! The choices we make can help or hurt our environment.

#### Ask:

- What is the environment?

Explain that it is the world around us: nature, animals, plants, water, etc.

**Read Aloud:** “10 Things I Can Do To Help My World,” by Melanie Walsh

**YouTube Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTN6T74W4L8> (3 minutes)

This story shows how our choices affect the environment and how we can choose responsibly to make a difference.

#### After the book, ask:

- What are 3 examples from the story that you also do to help our environment?
- How can you help our school with your responsible choices?
- What is the hardest thing they talked about in the book?



## Empower

20 minutes

### Pine Cone Bird Feeder

Students will practice making responsible choices for the environment by making a sustainable pinecone bird feeder. *\*Adjust the ingredients of this activity to accommodate students with peanut allergies. Suggestions have been provided.*

**Preparation:**

- Ensure enough materials for each student (or student group if short on materials).
- Cut twine to length.
- Set up the nut butter (or lard) stations (or prepare small cups of nut butter or lard for each student/group).
- Set up the birdseed station (or prepare small cups of birdseed for each student/group)

**Instructions:**

1. Give each student (or student group, if you do not have enough pinecones for each student) the required materials: a pinecone, one piece of twine.
2. Have students tie their twine to the stem of the pinecone.
3. Then, invite students to the butter stations or pass out the cups of nut butter (peanut butter is typically used but any nut butter or lard will work).
4. Using plastic knives or popsicle sticks, have students spread the butter over their pinecone; try to get butter on all sides. *This will be messy!*
5. Next, invite students to the birdseed stations or pass out the cups of birdseed, along with a paper plate.
6. Have students sprinkle the birdseed all over their pine cone (or they can dump the bird seed on the plate and roll the pine cone in the pile of seeds).
7. Ask students to gently shake any loose seeds from their pine cone.
8. Go outside as a class to hang the bird feeders from trees around the school property. *Speak with custodial or office staff in advance about the best places to hang the feeders; if not feasible to hang around the school, you can send the feeders home with students in small brown paper bags. Don't forget to take the feeders down and compost them once the seed has been eaten.*



**Reflect**

5-7 minutes

Have each student draw a picture of a bird enjoying their bird feeder. While students draw, ask them why it is important to feed the birds (especially important if it is winter time where you live).

*Every person has a responsibility to our environment, even young people like you! You can choose to help animals when they are in need, close the door to conserve heat, or even keep our playground clean when you see trash strewn about. Every responsible and kind choice helps protect our environment and keeps our world just a little bit cleaner than it was before!*



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LEARNING.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>