Mourning Dove

Life Science | Lesson Guide

Kindergarten

Photo Description

A small gray bird sits on the dark soil in a garden. The bird has a round body and small head. Green plants and white flowers grow all around the bird in the dirt.

Scientific Phenomena

This image captures the Anchoring Phenomenon of animal habitat selection and foraging behavior. The mourning dove is demonstrating how animals choose specific locations that meet their basic survival needs. The bird has selected this garden location because it provides food sources (seeds from plants), water (likely from garden irrigation), shelter (dense vegetation), and nesting materials (twigs and plant matter). This behavior represents the scientific principle that all living things have basic needs that must be met for survival, and animals actively seek environments that fulfill these requirements.

Core Science Concepts

1. Living vs. Non-Living: The bird is a living thing that moves, eats, and grows, while the pot and soil are non-living things that do not move on their own.

2. Basic Needs of Animals: All animals need food, water, shelter, and air to survive, just like this bird finding these things in the garden.

3. Animal Habitats: Animals live in places that give them what they need, and this garden provides a good home for the bird.

4. Plants and Animals Together: Plants and animals help each other - plants give animals food and shelter, while animals can help spread plant seeds.

Pedagogical Tip:

Use the "I Notice, I Wonder, It Reminds Me Of" thinking routine when showing this image. This helps kindergarteners make observations before jumping to explanations and connects new learning to their prior experiences.

UDL Suggestions:

Provide multiple ways for students to share observations by offering drawing, verbal sharing, or acting out what they see. Some students may better express their understanding through movement or art rather than words alone.

Zoom In / Zoom Out

1. Zoom In: Inside the bird's body, tiny parts called cells work together to help the bird breathe, eat, and move. The bird's heart pumps blood to carry food and air to all parts of its body.

2. Zoom Out: This garden is part of a bigger neighborhood ecosystem where many different animals and plants live together. Birds like this one help connect different areas by flying from place to place, carrying seeds that grow into new plants far away.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you notice about where this bird chose to sit? (Bloom's: Analyze | DOK: 2)
2. What things does this bird need to stay alive and healthy? (Bloom's: Remember | DOK: 1)
3. How is this garden like the bird's home, and how is it different from your home? (Bloom's: Compare | DOK: 2)
4. What would happen if all the plants in this garden disappeared? (Bloom's: Predict | DOK: 3)

Potential Student Misconceptions

1. Misconception: "Birds only eat worms and bugs."
   Clarification: Many birds, like this mourning dove, mainly eat seeds, fruits, and grains, though some birds do eat insects and worms.

2. Misconception: "Animals live wherever they want to live."
   Clarification: Animals must live in places that have everything they need to survive - they cannot choose just any place.

3. Misconception: "All birds build nests in trees."
   Clarification: Some birds, including mourning doves, sometimes build nests on the ground or in low bushes.

Cross-Curricular Ideas

1. ELA Connection - Storytelling: Create a class book titled "A Day in the Garden" where students draw pictures of the bird and dictate sentences about what the bird does. Students can sequence the bird's activities throughout the day (morning, afternoon, evening), building narrative skills while reinforcing animal behavior concepts.

2. Math Connection - Counting and Patterns: Use bird and plant cutouts to create repeating patterns (bird, plant, flower, bird, plant, flower). Students can also count the number of plants visible in the garden photo or estimate how many seeds a bird might eat in a day using manipulatives.

3. Art Connection - Habitat Diorama: Students create a shoebox garden habitat using natural materials (twigs, soil, seeds, leaves) to build a 3D model of the bird's home. This hands-on project reinforces understanding of habitats while developing fine motor skills and creativity.

4. Social Studies Connection - Community Helpers: Discuss how gardeners, park rangers, and veterinarians help animals like birds by creating safe spaces with plants and water. Students can explore how humans and animals share community spaces together.

STEM Career Connection

1. Wildlife Biologist: A wildlife biologist is a scientist who studies animals in nature to learn how they live, what they eat, and where they like to live. They watch birds and other animals, take notes, and help keep them safe and healthy. Average Annual Salary: $68,000 USD

2. Ornithologist (Bird Scientist): An ornithologist is a special kind of scientist who knows everything about birds! They study different types of birds, learn about their nests and eggs, and help protect birds so they can keep living in their habitats. Average Annual Salary: $72,000 USD

3. Landscape Designer/Gardener: A landscape designer creates beautiful gardens and outdoor spaces that are perfect homes for birds and other animals. They choose which plants to grow and where to put water sources so that animals have everything they need to survive. Average Annual Salary: $65,000 USD

NGSS Connections

- Performance Expectation: K-LS1-1 Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive.
- Disciplinary Core Idea: K-LS1.C Organization for Matter and Energy Flow in Organisms
- Crosscutting Concept: Patterns

Science Vocabulary

* Habitat: The place where an animal lives and finds everything it needs to survive.
* Survive: To stay alive by getting food, water, and shelter.
* Observe: To look carefully and notice details about something.
* Living: Something that grows, moves, eats, and can make babies.
* Shelter: A safe place where animals can hide and rest.

External Resources

Children's Books:
- Are You My Mother? by P.D. Eastman
- A Nest Full of Eggs by Priscilla Belz Jenkins
- What Do You Do With a Kangaroo? by Mercer Mayer