



About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 14 Word Count: 912

Book Summary

Have you ever wondered why some birds have such weird beaks? Have you wondered how they can eat or fly with such oddly shaped beaks? *Weird Bird Beaks* provides insight as to why some birds have the weird beaks they do. Photographs support the text.

Book and lesson also available at Levels H and N.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Summarize

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of summarizing to understand nonfiction text
- Identify details to compare and contrast beaks
- Identify adjectives and the nouns they describe
- Recognize and use antonyms

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Weird Bird Beaks* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Sticky notes
- Thesauruses
- World maps
- Compare and contrast, adjectives, antonyms worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting book on interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if books are reused.)

Vocabulary

Content words:

Story critical: *extinct (adj.), regurgitate (v.), ritual (n.), scarce (adj.), shellfish (n.), wattles (n.)*

Enrichment: *air pockets (n.), dousing (v.), elaborate (adj.)*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Ask students if they have ever been to an aviary, or bird exhibit, at a zoo or wildlife park. Have them describe the kinds of birds they saw. Encourage discussion about birds' beaks and other exotic features.
- Ask volunteers to tell why they think birds have different kinds of beaks.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what kind of book it is and what it might be about.
- Ask students if they think this book is fiction or nonfiction and to explain their reasoning.
- Show students the title page. Talk about the information on the page (title of book, author's name).
- Ask students to turn to the table of contents. Remind them that the table of contents provides an overview of what the book is about. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book based on what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Summarize**

- Explain to students that one way to understand what they are reading is to stop now and then during reading to summarize in their mind what they are reading about in the book.
- Model how to summarize.
Think-aloud: As I read this book, I am going to stop every now and then to remind myself about the bird beaks I have read about so far. This helps me remember what I'm reading and makes me think about new information. When I finish reading the book, I should be able to tell, in my own words, some of the information about bird beaks that I have read about.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Compare and contrast**

- Explain that one way an author helps readers understand information in a book is to tell how topics in the book are alike and different.
- Have students look at the illustrations on the front and back covers.
- Model how to compare and contrast using illustrations.
Think-aloud: These illustrations show two different types of bird beaks. They are alike in some ways and different in some ways. One way they are alike is that they are both long. One way they are different is that the beaks on the front cover are pointy, while the beak on the back cover is blunt.
- Model how to compare and contrast information using a Venn diagram. Draw a Venn diagram on the board. Label the left circle *Front Cover* and the right circle *Back Cover*. Explain that information relating to the beak on the front cover is written in the left side of the left circle (pointy). Information that relates to the beak on the back cover is written in the right side of the right circle (blunt). Explain that in the middle where both circles overlap, information is written about what the beaks on the front and back covers have in common (long).
- Have students identify other similarities and differences between the beaks on the front and back covers. Record these on the Venn diagram.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- As you preview the book, ask students to talk about what they see in the pictures. Write the following vocabulary words on the board: *bearded barbet*, *rhinoceros hornbill*, *sword-billed hummingbird*, and *spoonbill*. Ask volunteers to predict the shapes of the beaks by thinking about the clues the names might give.
- Reinforce new vocabulary by incorporating it into the discussion of the illustrations. For example, on page 4, you might say: *It looks as though the beak on this bearded barbet is hairy.*
- Model the strategies students can use to work out words they don't know. For example, point to the word *crossbill* on page 5. Model using the familiar word parts *cross* and *bill* to read a new word with which they may be unfamiliar. Then read to students the sentence with the word *crossbill* and ask if the word *crossbill* looks right.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to learn more about the beaks of exotic birds. Remind them to stop after reading about a new bird to review, in their own words, what they have learned.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students put a sticky note on page 8 of their book. Tell them to read to the end of this page. Have students reread the pages if they finish before everyone else.
- When they have finished reading, ask students what words they had trouble with. Then have them point out the birds they knew about and tell how the information they knew about the birds helped them understand what they read. Have a student choose one of the birds and summarize what he or she learned.
- **Model summarizing.**
Think-aloud: As I read, I paused to summarize in my mind what I learned about each bird. For example, I read that the crossbill's beak crosses like an X so that it can reach seeds from pine cones. Crossbills travel all over to find good pine cones, and they sing beautiful songs. I'll keep reading to learn more interesting facts about other bird beaks. While I read, I'll summarize what I've read to help me remember the new information.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students put a sticky note on page 10. Tell them to read to the end of this page. Invite them to share the important information about the brown pelican and the shoebill stork. Ask students to write a brief summary of each section on a separate piece of paper. Have them share what they wrote.
- Have students work with a partner to compare and contrast the brown pelican and the shoebill stork, and write the information on a Venn diagram on a separate piece of paper. Discuss their responses aloud as you create a Venn diagram on the board.
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to think about the details in the book so they can summarize the information after they read.



Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Ask students to explain how the strategy of summarizing helped them understand the book.
Think-aloud: I know that summarizing keeps me actively involved in what I'm reading and helps me understand and remember what I've read. I know that I will remember more about different kinds of bird beaks because I summarized the information in my own words as I read the book.
- **Independent practice:** Have students write a summary of page 6 on a separate sheet of paper. If time allows, invite students to read their completed summaries aloud.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review with students the similarities and differences between the brown pelican and the shoebill stork. Add any new information to the Venn diagram on the board. Review how the information is organized in the Venn diagram.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students provide examples of how the beaks of crossbills and rhinoceros hornbills are alike and different. Record this information on a new Venn diagram on the board.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [compare-and-contrast worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses aloud.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

Weird Bird Beaks

- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned about many different types of bird beaks. You learned how each beak was useful in its own way. Now that you know this information, why is it important to learn the functions of different forms in nature?

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Adjectives

- Review or explain that *adjectives* are words that describe nouns or pronouns. An adjective tells *which one, how many, or what kind*.
- Write the following sentences on the board. Ask students to count the number of adjectives in each sentence.
I am a brown pelican.
I build my nest in a dead tree.
My huge and colorful beak is very light.
- Have individual students come to the board and circle the adjectives in each sentence (*brown, dead, huge, colorful, and light*). Then have different volunteers underline the noun that each adjective describes (*pelican, tree, and beak*). Discuss how sometimes writers use two or three adjectives to describe one noun (for instance, *huge, colorful, and light* all describe *beak*).
- Explain that the adjective doesn't always precede the noun or pronoun, as seen in the last sentence (*light*).
- Point to the circled adjective in the second sentence (*dead*). Ask students to determine whether the adjective tells which one, how many, or what kind (it describes *what kind* of tree). Repeat the exercise with the other two sentences.
- Tell students that some adjectives are hyphenated and that they are called *compound adjectives*. Write the following sentence on the board: *I use my long beak to get nectar from tube-shaped flowers*. Have a volunteer come to the board and underline the compound adjective (*tube-shaped*). Have another volunteer underline the noun that the adjective describes (*flowers*).
- ✎ Have students use the inside back cover of their book to write *adjective* along with the definition of the term (a word describing a noun or pronoun that tells which one, how many, or what kind) to help them remember the terminology.
- ✎ **Check for understanding:** Give students highlighters and have them work in pairs to reread page 13. Have them highlight all of the adjectives they find. Discuss their findings as a group, identifying the noun that each adjective describes and whether the adjective is telling which one, how many, or what kind (*many* and *some* tell how many; *weird, incredible, and favorite* tell what kind; *their, other, and which* tell which one).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [adjectives worksheet](#). Discuss the answers as a group once everyone has finished.

Word Work: Antonyms

- Write the word *big* on the board. Ask students to suggest a word that means the opposite of *big* (*small, tiny*). Review or explain that a word that means the opposite of another word is called an *antonym*.
- Have students turn to page 9 and reread the first sentence: *...I have a pouch of skin under my beak that can hold a lot of fish...* Ask them to find the word that describes where the skin is (*under*). Ask students to suggest a word that means the opposite of *under* (*over*).
- Show students a thesaurus. Use the example above to explain how a thesaurus is used, and write the antonyms for *under* on the board.
- **Check for understanding:** Give pairs of students a thesaurus. Ask them to find the word *huge* and name the antonyms listed. If needed, provide additional practice using a thesaurus.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [antonyms worksheet](#). Discuss their answers as a group once everyone has finished.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, partners can take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have students create a Venn diagram and compare and contrast something at home (for example, two foods, two people, and so on).

Extend the Reading

Informational Writing Connection

Provide print and Internet sources for students to research a bird other than those included in the book. Have students write about the bird as if the bird is telling about itself, completing the following sentences: *I am a _____.* *My beak is _____.* *I use my beak to _____.* Have students include a drawing of the bird with their sentence captions. Display their work on a bulletin board titled *Weird Bird Beaks* or bind the pages into a class book titled *Weird Bird Beaks*.

Visit [Writing A-Z](#) for a lesson and leveled materials on expository writing.

Social Studies Connection

Provide print and Internet sources for students to find out where in the world the birds in the book can be found. Give them copies of a world map and have them find the locations on the map. Have them label each location with the bird's name. Post their maps on the bulletin board alongside their finished writing assignments.

Skill Review

[Discussion cards](#) covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Cut apart and use the cards as game cards with a board game.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

Assessment

Monitor students to determine if they can:

- accurately use details from the text to create section summaries during discussion and on a separate piece of paper
- compare and contrast nonfiction details within the text during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly identify the use of adjectives in the text during discussion and on a worksheet
- identify, select, and use antonyms during discussion and on a worksheet
- understand how to use a thesaurus

Comprehension Checks

- [Book Quiz](#)
- [Retelling Rubric](#)