



# Who Are You?

Grade Level: 5-8

Subject Areas: science

Duration:

- Preparation - 20 minutes
- Activity - 30 minutes

Setting:

Classroom or Outdoors

Group Size:

20-50 students

Materials:

- copies of "Bird Call" cards - one set of matching cards per two students.

Skills Used:

matching, listening.

Vocabulary:

vocalization, reproduction, mating, communication.

Project BEAK Links:

- [Adaptations - Communication](#)

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will discuss how birds, like humans, use many ways to communicate – colors, actions, and calls or songs.
- Students will discuss why birds need to communicate.
- Students will use listening skills to find a match for their bird call.

## Nebraska State Science Standards

- 8.4.5

## BACKGROUND

Just like all animals, birds have adapted many ways of communicating with each other and other animals. Birds use songs, body movements, preening, dancing, and calls to "talk."

For Sandhill Cranes, leaping and dancing can mean "I Like You." Or, for many bird species, a stretch of the wings means "I'm ready to take-off and start flying."

One of the more noticeable forms of communication for many birds are their calls and songs. Most birds have many different calls or songs to convey different messages. For example, birds often have warning calls to warn other of incoming danger, a territory call to establish and defend their territory, a courting call to impress and court a potential mate, and another song to communicate with their offspring and family members.

Birdwatchers often pay attention to a bird's songs and calls as it is an easy way to find and identify birds. For example, in the middle of summer, it can be hard to see birds through all the leaves of trees. By hearing a bird's call or song, birdwatchers can begin to identify what type of bird it is and where it is located.

## ACTIVITY

Ask students what ways they communicate with their friends, parents, siblings, and other people. Discuss with students why communication is important.

Ask students if other animals communicate in the same ways humans do? How do birds communicate?

Explain to students that they will each be "turned into" a bird and are looking for a friend. One way birds find others of the same species is by using their call or song.

Give each student one "Bird Call Matching Card." If you are not using all the cards, make sure each student has a matching student with the same bird call.

Ask students to get up and move around while making their call. They should repeat the call often as this is the only way they are going to know who is the same bird species as they are.

Once students have found their match, you may want students to work together to research their bird species.

## EXTENSIONS

- Have a bird calling contest in your class or school. Encourage students to learn about the birds they are calling and when the birds use specific calls (warning, courting, territory calls).
- Have students identify birds they see in their neighborhood or around the school. Then, using computer audio recording software, have students make a bird song identification CD for the birds they have identified.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: WEBSITES

- Cornell Lab of Ornithology: All About Birds - Bird Songs and Sound?  
[www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/studying/birdsongs](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/studying/birdsongs)
- PBS The Life of Birds: Songs  
[www.pbs.org/lifeofbirds/songs](http://www.pbs.org/lifeofbirds/songs)
- USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center; Bird Identification InfoCenter  
[www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/id/framlst/framlst.html](http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/id/framlst/framlst.html)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: CD's

- Peterson Field Guides – A Field Guide to Bird Songs: Eastern and Central North America Audio CD by Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology  
Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (1990)  
ISBN-10: 0618225943  
ISBN-13: 978-0618225941
- Common Birds and Their Songs Book and CD by Lang Elliott and Marie Read  
Publisher: Houghton Mifflin (1998)  
ISBN-10: 0395912385  
ISBN-13: 978-0395912386
- Bird Song Ear Training Guide: Who Cooks for Poor Sam Peabody? Learn to Recognize the Songs of Birds from the Midwest and Northeast States (Audio CD) by John Feith  
Publisher: Caculo (2006)  
ISBN-10: 0975443402  
ISBN-13: 978-0975443408

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: BOOKS

- The Songs of Wild Birds by Lang Elliott

Publisher: Houghton Mifflin (2006)

ISBN-10: 0618663983

ISBN-13: 978-0618663989

- The Singing Life of Birds: The Art and Science of Listening to Birds by Donald Kroodsma  
Publisher: Houghton Mifflin (2005)  
ISBN-10: 0618405682  
ISBN-13: 978-0618405688
- The Art of Pishing: How to Attract Birds by Mimicking Their Calls by Pete Dunne  
Publisher: Stackpole Books (2006)  
ISBN-10: 0811732959  
ISBN-13: 978-0811732956

## PERMISSIONS & CREDITS

- Project BEAK, its content, and Teacher Resources and Activities are produced by the Nebraska Partnership for All-Bird Conservation; ©2009.



## Bird Call Matching Cards

American Robin:

Cheerily, cheeriup, cheerio, cheeriup  
Cheerily, cheeriup, cheerio, cheeriup

Barred Owl:

Who cooks for you, who cooks for you,  
alllll?

Northern Cardinal:

Puurdy, puurdy, puurdy. Chip, Chip.  
Puurdy, puurdy, puurdy.

Black-capped Chickadee:

Chicka-dee-dee-dee-dee.  
Chicka-dee-dee-dee-dee.

Red-winged Blackbird:

Conk-a-reeeee. Conk-a-reeeee.  
Conk-a-reeeee.

Morning Dove:

Oo-wah-hooo, hoo-hoo.  
Oo-wah-hooo, hoo-hoo.

Killdeer:

Kill-deer, kill-deer, kill-deer.  
Kill-deer, kill-deer, kill-deer.

Eastern Towhee:

Drink your teeeeee!  
Drink your teeeeee!

Common Yellowthroat:

witchety-witchety-witchety-witch.  
witchety-witchety-witchety-witch.

American Robin:

Cheerily, cheeriup, cheerio, cheeriup  
Cheerily, cheeriup, cheerio, cheeriup

Barred Owl:

Who cooks for you, who cooks for you,  
alllll?

Northern Cardinal:

Puurdy, puurdy, puurdy. Chip, Chip.  
Puurdy, puurdy, puurdy.

Black-capped Chickadee:

Chicka-dee-dee-dee-dee.  
Chicka-dee-dee-dee-dee.

Red-winged Blackbird:

Conk-a-reeeee. Conk-a-reeeee.  
Conk-a-reeeee.

Morning Dove:

Oo-wah-hooo, hoo-hoo.  
Oo-wah-hooo, hoo-hoo.

Killdeer:

Kill-deer, kill-deer, kill-deer.  
Kill-deer, kill-deer, kill-deer.

Eastern Towhee:

Drink your teeeeee!  
Drink your teeeeee!

Common Yellowthroat:

witchety-witchety-witchety-witch.  
witchety-witchety-witchety-witch.

## Bird Call Matching Cards, continued

Wood Thrush:

Tut, tut, oh-lay-oh-leeeee.

Tut, tut, oh-lay-oh-leeeee.

American Goldfinch:

Per-chik-or-ree. Per-chik-or-ree.

Per-chik-or-ree. Per-chik-or-ree

White-Breasted Nuthatch:

Yank-yank. (pause) Yank-yank.

Yank-yank. (pause) Yank-yank.

Cedar Waxwing:

Bzeee-bzeee-bzeee-bzeee.

Bzeee-bzeee-bzeee-bzeee.

Yellow Warbler:

Sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet-than-sweet.

Mallard:

k-QUACK-Quack-quack-quack.

k-QUACK-Quack-quack-quack.

Pileated Woodpecker:

Kuk kuk keekeekeeekeeekeekuk-kuk. Kuk kuk keekeekeeekeee kuk.

Ferruginous Hawk:

K-wiiiiiiiiiiww. K-wiiiiiiiiiiww.

K-wiiiiiiiiiiww. K-wiiiiiiiiiiww.

Lark Bunting:

Pwid pwid pwid pwid too too too too  
kree kree kree pwido pwido.

Wood Thrush:

Tut, tut, oh-lay-oh-leeeee.

Tut, tut, oh-lay-oh-leeeee.

American Goldfinch:

Per-chik-or-ree. Per-chik-or-ree.

Per-chik-or-ree. Per-chik-or-ree

White-Breasted Nuthatch:

Yank-yank. (pause) Yank-yank.

Yank-yank. (pause) Yank-yank.

Cedar Waxwing:

Bzeee-bzeee-bzeee-bzeee.

Bzeee-bzeee-bzeee-bzeee.

Yellow Warbler:

Sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet-than-sweet.

Mallard:

k-QUACK-Quack-quack-quack.

k-QUACK-Quack-quack-quack.

Pileated Woodpecker:

Kuk kuk keekeekeeekeeekeekuk-kuk. Kuk kuk keekeekeeekeee kuk.

Ferruginous Hawk:

K-wiiiiiiiiiiww. K-wiiiiiiiiiiww.

K-wiiiiiiiiiiww. K-wiiiiiiiiiiww.

Lark Bunting:

Pwid pwid pwid pwid too too too too  
kree kree kree pwido pwido.

## Bird Call Matching Cards, continued

Indigo Bunting:

Fire! Fire! Where? Where? Here. Here.  
Fire! Fire! Where? Where? Here. Here.

Dickcissel:

Dick dick ciss ciss. Dick dick ciss ciss.  
Dick dick ciss ciss. Dick dick ciss ciss.

Tufted Titmouse:

Peter peter peter peter.  
Peter peter peter peter.

Whip-poor-will:

Whip-poor-will. Whip-poor-will. Whip-  
poor-will. Whip-poor-will.

Greater Prairie Chicken:

oooa-hoooooom (like the sound of  
air blown over the top of a bottle.)

Mallard:

k-QUACK-Quack-quack-quack.  
k-QUACK-Quack-quack-quack.

Northern Bobwhite:

bob WHITE! bob WHITE!

Canada Goose:

HONK. HONK. HONK. HONK.

Red-eyed Vireo:

(quickly) Here-I-am, in-the-tree, look-  
up, at-the-top.

Indigo Bunting:

Fire! Fire! Where? Where? Here. Here.  
Fire! Fire! Where? Where? Here. Here.

Dickcissel:

Dick dick ciss ciss. Dick dick ciss ciss.  
Dick dick ciss ciss. Dick dick ciss ciss.

Tufted Titmouse:

Peter peter peter peter.  
Peter peter peter peter.

Whip-poor-will:

Whip-poor-will. Whip-poor-will. Whip-  
poor-will. Whip-poor-will.

Greater Prairie Chicken:

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air blown over the top of a bottle.)

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k-QUACK-Quack-quack-quack.  
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Northern Bobwhite:

bob WHITE! bob WHITE!

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