






Birdsong in Spring

A resource for parents and teachers within the 'Spring' theme for learning focusing on developing aural awareness of five birds common to Ireland.

Introduction

Listening to birdsong is a wonderful way of awakening children's awareness of the world around them. It is interesting to note that hits on Birdwatch Ireland have gone up 350 per cent during lockdown as Society as a whole takes more notice of the Natural World.

This resource provides some simple activities that will help develop student's attention and concentration as they listen to the birdsong of the following five birds, that are common and widespread in Ireland:

<p><u>The Blackbird</u></p> 	<p><u>The Crow</u></p> 	<p><u>The Cuckoo</u></p> 
<p><u>The Owl</u></p> 	<p><u>The Robin</u></p> 	<p>Birdsong in Spring</p> <p>Put your mouse on the picture of a bird and press Ctrl and Click together to watch a video of the birdsong.</p>

Aims of the lesson:

- To help students recognise the birdsong of five birds common to Ireland.
- To develop student's attention and concentration using the following musical elements to highlight differences between the various birdsongs:
 - Duration (long/short, patterns, rhythm)
 - Tempo (fast/slow)
 - Pitch (High/Low)
 - Structure (same/different)
 - Timbre (Tone colour)
 - Texture (one sound/several sounds)

Activity 1:

Listening Activity: Listening to birdsong

Note: For sound files please see accompanying 'Resource Document'

Listen to the birdsong of the following birds in turn using the questions highlighted to direct the student's attention to each birdsong:

The Crow

1. Do you hear one crow or many crows? (Texture)
2. Is what you hear more like a song, or more like people talking? (Timbre)

The Blackbird

1. Do you hear one long sound or many short sounds? (Duration)
2. Are the sounds all the same/Do you hear many different sounds? (Structure)
3. Do you hear high sounds/Do you hear low sounds? (Pitch)
4. Does the Blackbird sing higher or lower than the crow? (Pitch/Timbre)

The Owl

1. Do you hear long sounds/short sounds/long and short sounds? (Duration)
2. Which comes first, the long sound or the short sounds? (Duration)
3. Does the owl use a high sound/low sound? (Pitch)

The Robin

1. Would you say this song is sweet or rough? (Timbre)
2. Is it a fast song or a slow song? (Tempo)
3. Is it a high song or a low song? (Pitch)
4. Does the robin's song remind you of any other birdsong?

The Cuckoo

1. How many different sounds can you hear? (Pitch/ Structure)
2. Can you hear a pattern/the same sounds being repeated (Duration)

General Questions:

Do you have a favourite birdsong?

Why is it your favourite?

Activity 2:

Art Activity: Creating five stick bird figures

Note: For pictures please see accompanying 'Resource Document'

1. Print out the Resource Document.
2. Using a scissors cut around the bird in each square.
3. Using prit stick or glue and a cereal box, stick the picture of the bird onto the cardboard from the cereal box (see picture in Resource Document)
4. Cut again around each bird image.
5. Affix a lollipop stick to each bird image using cellotape (see picture in Resource Document).

Note: Alternatively draw your own birds and use some cardboard at back to help stand up

Activity 3:

Game: Can you guess the bird?

1. Each student holds five lollipop sticks with bird images created from the last activity.
2. The Teacher/Parent plays a birdsong
3. The students hold up the lollipop stick with the image of the bird they think is singing.

Activity 4:

The Birdie Dance https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=40Yc6D_EWHw

Students are encouraged to use hand movements and free dance movements to accompany the Birdie Dance above. This can be done really simply in place or in space depending on whether students are seated or standing. Students move hands and clap during Section A. Students can sway gently or make up their own dance moves for the Section B.