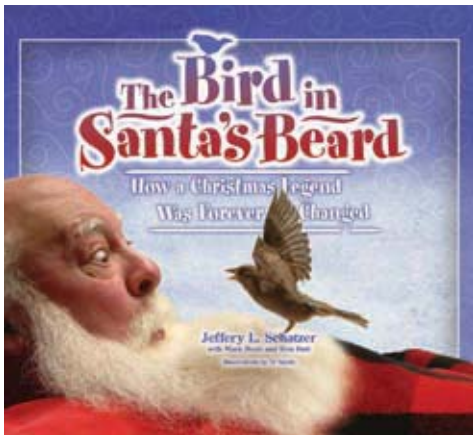


The Bird in Santa's Beard

written by JEFFERY SCHATZER

Teacher and Parent Guide



created by JEFFERY SCHATZER

CONTENTS

Bird Math	1
Onomatopoeia	2
Birdseed Cookies	3
Bird Bath Boogie	4
Bird Word Find	5
Bird Beaks and Bills	6–7
Bird Poetry	8–11
Bird Rhyme	12
Bird Travels	13–15
Answer Key	16

Bird Math



NAME _____

EXERCISE 1: House sparrows eat various kinds of seed supplemented by some insects. Some studies have shown that 17% of a house sparrow's diet is weed seed. If a house sparrow consumes 110 pounds of food, how much of that food would likely be weed seed?

EXERCISE 2: The average house sparrow is 4.25 inches in length. One inch is equivalent to 2.54 centimeters. How many centimeters long is the average house sparrow?

EXERCISE 3: House sparrows generally have 3 broods of eggs each year with an average of 4 eggs per brood. If there are 3 pairs of house sparrows in your yard, how many total baby house sparrows could there be in one year?

EXERCISE 4: If you see 10 house sparrows, 8 purple martins, 3 cardinals, and 4 finches, how many birds have you seen in total?

Onomatopoeia



NAME _____

Onomatopoeia is a sound word—or a type of word that sounds like the thing being described. In the book *The Bird in Santa's Beard*, the flight of the bird is described using the onomatopoeia: “frup-frup-frup.”

EXERCISE 1: Match the following descriptions to the onomatopoeia that describes them.

DESCRIPTION

A bumble bee flying

Large fireworks exploding

A dog barking

A happy cat

A light bulb breaking

A door bell

A bird sound

A camera taking a picture

ONOMATOPOEIA

Tweet-Tweet

Buzz

Ding-dong

Boom

Purr

Click

Woof

Pop

EXERCISE 2: Create your own onomatopoeia. What onomatopoeias can you create that would describe the following sounds?

A coin dropping onto a hard floor? _____

A hammer pounding wood? _____

A squeaky door opening? _____

Birdseed Cookies



Birdseed cookies are fun to make and offer house sparrows and other birds food that is good for them and easy to eat. These cookies can be used to help birds survive during winter months when food is difficult to find. They are great decorations for outdoor trees. Birdseed cookies also make great Christmas gifts for family and friends.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup peanut butter (smooth or crunchy)
- 2 cups birdseed
- Plastic cookie cutters
- Ribbon

DIRECTIONS

Mix the peanut butter and birdseed together in a bowl. When thoroughly blended, spoon the mixture into plastic cookie cutters. Tie one end of a ribbon to the cookie cutter handle. The birdseed cookie can then be tied to a tree branch outdoors. When birds eat the entire cookie, you can refill the cookie cutter with more birdseed mix.

Bird Bath Boogie



An Extreme Exercise In Entertaining Using Alluring Alliteration And Assonance

NAME _____

Alliteration is the repetition of the initial consonant in a sentence or phrase. For example: Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. The first letter, “p,” is a consonant. In this example, the consonant “p” is repeated six times. If you use a vowel rather than a consonant repetitively, it is called assonance.

In the title of this exercise (Bird Bath Boogie—An Extreme Exercise in Entertaining Using Alliteration and Assonance) the phrase Bird Bath Boogie is an example of alliteration using the consonant “b” three times. The other part of the title (An Extreme Exercise in Entertaining Using Alluring Alliteration and Assonance) offers two examples of assonance using the vowels “e” then “a.”

EXERCISE 1: Underline the alliteration in these sentences.

1. The bird’s wings flapped as it fluttered into the fluffy beard.
2. The mean monster made me mad.
3. The house was filled with bottles, boxes and big blocks.
4. Sam smiled and snickered as he slid south on Sunday.

EXERCISE 2: Finish the following sentences with alliterative words.

1. Funny friends _____
2. Cool cats _____
3. Slimy snakes _____
4. Big boys _____

EXERCISE 3: Try your hand at assonance. Write three words that begin with each of the following vowels. You get extra credit if they are words that somehow belong together.

1. A _____
2. E _____
3. O _____

Bird Word Find

NAME _____

H C A R D I N A L X N
U B I L O O N D U V H
M D J L H A W K W G C
M N U U B B O R O R O
I I N G I E R A L O G
N T C O O F R L L U N
G R O S B E A K A S I
B A S D L S P I W E T
I M P Y U O S L S V N
R N R E E O N L W O U
D H E K J G E D A D B
R E Y R A A V E R G O
A E D U Y D A E B N G
L D R T S A R R L I I
L A I D B N L T E N D
A K E L G A E O R R N
M C F I N C H O E U I
S I A W R E N C R O W
A H C T A H T U N M Y
W C W A X W I N G O M

Blue Jay	Hawk	Osprey
Canada Goose	Hummingbird	Owl
Cardinal	Indigo Bunting	Raven
Chickadee	Junco	Sparrow
Coot	Killdeer	Swallow
Crow	Lark	Warbler
Eagle	Loon	Waxwing
Finch	Mallard	Wild Turkey
Grosbeak	Martin	Wren
Grouse	Mourning Dove	
Gull	Nuthatch	

Bird Beaks and Bills



What exactly is a bird's beak or bill? The upper and lower jaws of birds are called mandibles. In most birds both the upper and lower mandibles move. Most mammals (like humans) only move one jaw. Open and close your mouth and see which jaw moves.

Birds have a wide variety of diets. Because of this variety, their bills and beaks are shaped differently. Sparrows and other seed-eating birds have short, strong bills that can easily crack open a hard-shelled seed. Birds that catch and eat flying insects typically have flat bills. Some birds flit through the leaves on trees, searching and devouring insects. These birds need long bills so that they can easily reach out and grab bugs crawling on a leaf. Generally these bills are not as strong as the seed-eating birds' since insects are normally soft.

Some birds eat meat and fish. Raptors, such as eagles and hawks, have hooked bills that are sharp, making it easy to rip apart their prey. Some birds, such as herons and egrets, quietly stalk fish. These birds have long and pointed bills that are useful for spearing fish. Pelicans use their pouches on the lower mandible as fishing nets. Ducks have a different type of bill that is wide and flat. Ducks use their bills to filter the water for food.

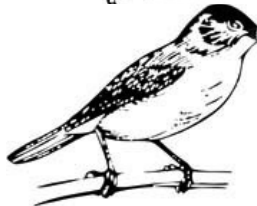
Some birds have highly specialized beaks and bills. Woodpeckers use their beaks to create holes in order to feed on insects inside wood. Hummingbirds have long, narrow beaks that can reach deep into flowers to eat nectar.

Bird Beaks and Bills continued



NAME _____

EXERCISE: Match the bird body with the correct beak or bill.



Bird Poetry



SOME BROWN SPARROWS

Some brown sparrows who live
in the Bronx Zoo visit often
the captive Victoria Crested
Pheasant, visit captive Peacocks,
Cockatoos. They fly through bars
to visit also monkeys, jackals,
bears. They delouse themselves in
cage dust, shaking joyously;
they hunt for bread crumbs, seeds
or other tidbits. Briefly,
they lead free sparrow lives
and fly free.

—Bruce Fearing, p. 1960

from **THE CANYON WREN**

We paddle forward, backstroke, turn,
Spinning through eddies and waves
Stairsteps of churning whitewater.
 above the roar
 hear the song of a Canyon Wren.

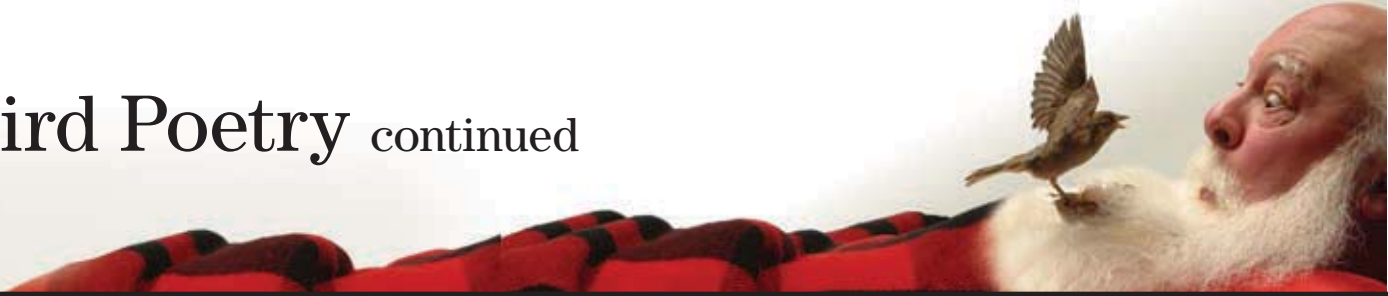
A smooth stretch, drifting and resting.
Hear it again, delicate downward song

ti ti ti ti tee tee tee

Descending through ancient beds.

—Gary Snyder, p. 1983

Bird Poetry continued



THE EAGLE: A Fragment

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

—Alfred, Lord Tennyson, p. 1842

A SPARROW TOOK A SLICE OF TWIG

A Sparrow took a Slice of Twig
And thought it very nice
I think, because his empty Plate
Was handed Nature twice—

Invigorated, waded
In all the deepest Sky
Until his little Figure
Was forfeited away—

—Emily Dickinson, c. 1872

COME! WITH EACH OTHER

Come! With each other
Let us play—little sparrow
without any mother!

—Issa, c. late 18th or early 19th century;
transl. Henderson modified for the
English language

Note: Haiku is one of the most important forms of traditional Japanese poetry. Haiku is, today, a 17-syllable verse form consisting of three metrical units of 5, 7, and 5 syllables.

Bird Rhyme



NAME _____

MY SPECIAL PET

I have a very special pet that's not too skinny or too fat

My pet is very friendly but not a fish, dog or a _____

My pet walks on two legs and makes a gobbling sound

It eats seeds and other things it finds down on the _____

People like to see my pet, but on Thanksgiving Day

I have to get up early and put my pet _____

Folks would like to eat my pet with dressing and some pie

And if they did, then I'd be sad and maybe I would _____.

My special pet is a _____. Draw a picture of your special pet.

Bird Travels



Many birds migrate. Migration is the movement of groups of animals (especially birds or fishes) from one region to another. This movement is primarily for feeding or breeding purposes.

House sparrows (like Mama Clara) remain in their home area all year round. Birds that do not migrate are referred to as “permanent residents” or “residents.”

Birds that migrate fall into three general categories:

SUMMER RESIDENTS—These are birds who arrive in the north in the spring, nest during the summer and return south in the fall. Birds such as purple martins are summer residents.

WINTER RESIDENTS—Some birds actually spend their summers in the far north and winter in the United States. White-throated sparrows are winter residents who spend their summers in Canada and their winters in the United States.

TRANSIENTS—Transients are migratory birds that nest in the far north and winter much farther south. These birds are typically seen only during their migration periods when they are passing through our area. Though the arctic tern is only 12–15" long and weighs approximately two pounds, it is one of the most famous of the transient birds. Each year the arctic tern migrates from the northern polar regions all the way to Antarctica. This is a distance of over 22,000 miles.

Answer Key



Bird Word Find Answers:

H	C	A	R	D	I	N	A	L	X	N
U	B	I	L	O	O	N	D	U	V	H
M	D	J	L	H	A	W	K	W	G	C
M	N	U	U	B	B	O	R	O	R	O
I	I	N	G	I	E	R	A	L	O	G
N	T	C	O	O	F	R	L	L	U	N
G	R	O	S	B	E	A	K	A	S	I
B	A	S	D	L	S	P	I	W	E	T
I	M	P	Y	U	O	S	L	S	V	N
R	N	R	E	E	O	N	L	W	O	U
D	H	E	K	J	G	E	D	A	D	B
R	E	Y	R	A	A	V	E	R	G	O
A	E	D	U	Y	D	A	E	B	N	G
L	D	R	T	S	A	R	R	L	I	I
L	A	I	D	B	N	L	T	E	N	D
A	K	E	L	G	A	E	O	R	R	N
M	C	F	I	N	C	H	O	E	U	I
S	I	A	W	R	E	N	C	R	O	W
A	H	C	T	A	H	T	U	N	M	Y
W	C	W	A	X	W	I	N	G	O	M

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