

Suggestions for the application of this unit

1. Brainstorm to find out what your students already know about winter birds and bird feeders.

Begin word charts. Add to them each day. Decide which birds you are going to study. (4-5 for a detailed study)

2. Winter birds is an interesting topic and a good unit to begin research skills with your students. Here is one method. Divide your class into groups. Each group is responsible for one bird. Develop with your class the topics of interest:

- a) size
- b) colour and appearance
- c) habitat, nest and eggs
- d) food
- e) song
- * f) interesting facts (encourage the students to find interesting facts)

3. Students and the teacher collect resources from the school library, public library and home resources.
4. Provide the students with an outline to follow to do individual research at home. You may have to photocopy some information so the students can read about their bird first, before writing anything.
5. Students jot down words and phrases after reading from at least three resources.
6. The group meets to share and compare their jot notes.
7. When the group agrees on the information, they record their information on a large chart.
8. Provide each group with an accurate picture of their bird to show its colouring.
9. Each group presents their information and picture of the bird.
10. After the presentation, the teacher can read about the bird. The students check the information chart for accuracy.
11. If notemaking is desired the teacher can:
 - 1) have the students write about each bird. For each interesting fact they include, they receive a point. Students may colour in, or draw their own picture.
 - 2) provide a fill in the blank story.
 - 3) have the students answer questions on the bird.
 - 4) do a comparison chart of 2-3 birds.
 - 5) do a mixture of the above notemaking techniques.



The Grey Jay or Canada Jay

The grey jay is also known as the Canada jay and the "Whisky Jack".

However, to those who really know this bird, it is called "mouse bird", "camp robber" or "moose bird". The grey jay has a white forehead, black head patch, and grey back with lighter grey

underparts. It is slightly smaller than the blue jay. Its colouring and small bill make this jay look like an overgrown chickadee.

The grey jay is often called the "camp robber" because it is known to invade campsites and steal anything it can carry. It will grab food from plates and frying pans, pry open storage bins and peck chunks from a catch of fresh fish. This bird is very curious and shows little fear of people. To some, it is often known to be a pest.

The grey jay mimics hawks and can make whistling and cooing sounds. It may deceive you if you can only hear the sounds and cannot see the bird. The grey jay is quiet only during the breeding season. The nest holds three to five grey or greenish eggs, with brown spots. The young grey jays stay with their parents until the next breeding season.

Grey jays eat grasshoppers, wasps, mice and berries. They have large salivary glands which help them to paste food into the crevices and hollows of trees.

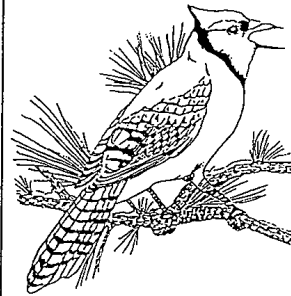


Topics for research or discussion



People think that when woodpeckers drill holes into trees, they are harming the trees.

Is this true?
Explain your answer.



At times, the blue jay has a steel-cold scream that can be heard throughout the woods.

Explain how this scream can be a nuisance.
Explain how this scream can be very helpful at times.



Explain why "camp robber" and "moose bird" are good nicknames for the grey jay or Canada jay.

Topics for research or discussion



The nuthatch is a unique bird.

Explain which characteristic makes it unique.

How did the nuthatch get its name?



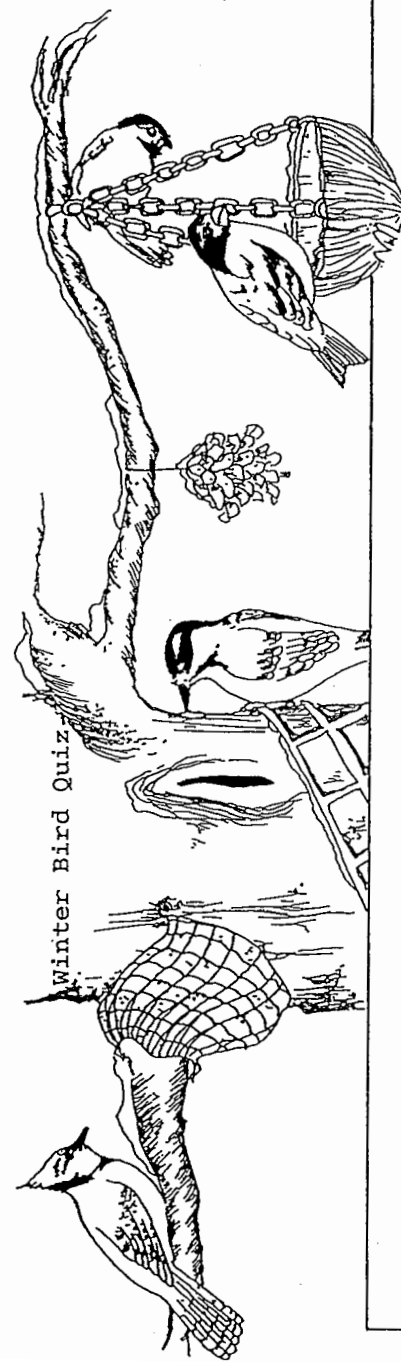
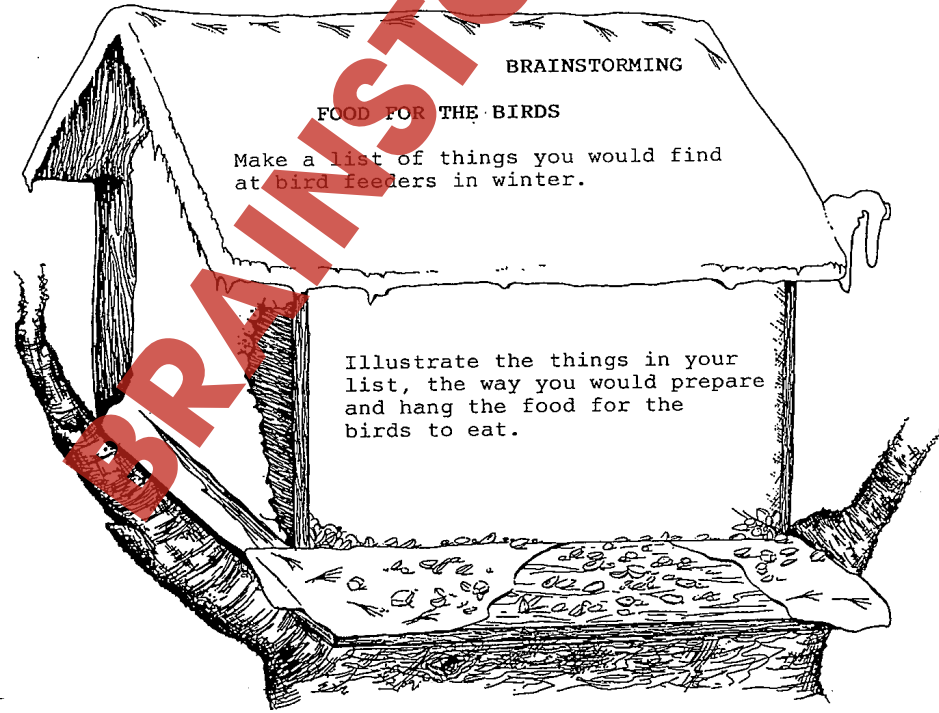
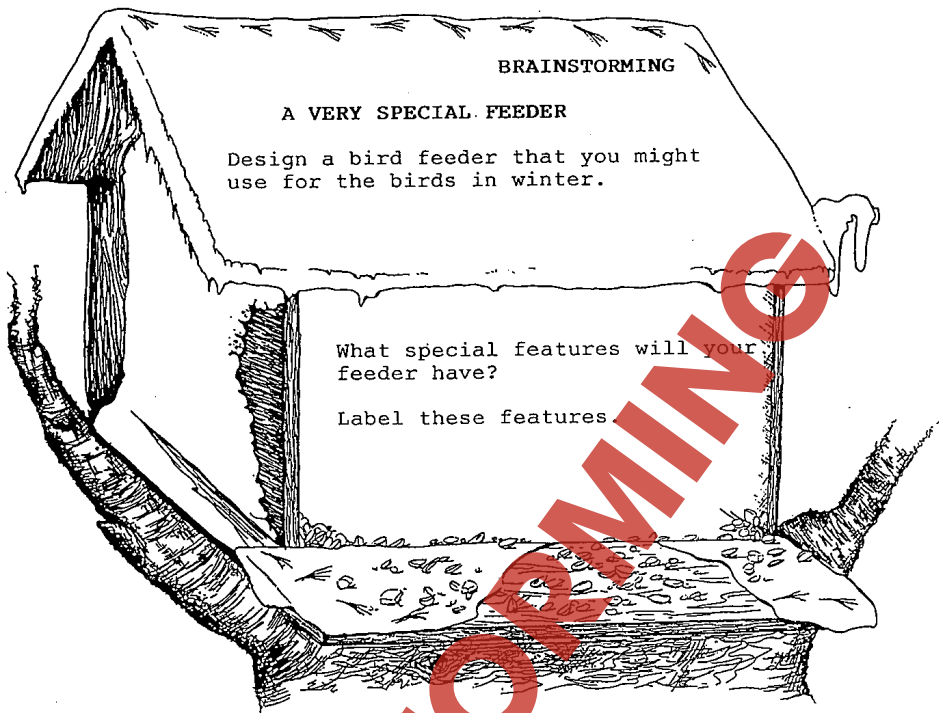
What characteristics have made the chickadee known for being:

- 1) a friendly bird
- 2) an acrobat
- 3) an intelligent bird



Why do you think people in Canada are beginning to see more cardinals around their woods and backyards in winter?

Give reasons for your answer.



1. a hardy bird that nests in the trunk of decayed trees

2. this bird is often called a snowbird

3. an acrobat around branches

4. The male of this species has a red patch on the side of its head.

5. This bird moves head first down the trees.

6. This bird has a red bill.

7. This bird will invade campsites and steal food and belongings.

8. This family of birds have long tongues for probing trees for insects.

9. This noisy bird imitates the songs of other birds.

10. This small and cheery bird will eat from you hand.



Problems at the Bird Feeders

Tell what you would do to guard your bird feeder from these problems?

1. Bad Weather

2. Cats, Squirrels, Mice

3. Overcrowded Feeder

4. Spoilage of the Feed

5. Can you add any other problem?

