Why Do Birds Have Feathers?

LIFE SCIENCES

Get ready

Bring various types of feathers to class; you can also ask students to bring some – they can look for them when they go for a walk, for example. All collected feathers should be washed in water with soap and dried, e.g., on a radiator, and then held over steam from boiling water (e.g., from a kettle or pot), so that they regain their shape (students can ask their parents for help).
Natural, undyed feathers of pet birds (but not wild bird feathers) can also be bought from online stores.

GET CURIOUS

Observing: Sorting feathers

- [ ] bird feathers (various types)

GET GOING

Experiment: What is the structure of feathers?

- [ ] bird feathers
- [ ] ruler (one per pair)
- [ ] scissors (one per pair)
- [ ] vessels with water (one per pair)
- [ ] kitchen scales (optional)

Talk: The various functions of feathers

- [x] We provide: Slides - feathers (pdf)

Observing: What are the characteristic features of flight feathers?

- [ ] sheet of paper for each student

Constructing: Model of a bird

- [x] We provide: model of a bird (pdf) – print one out for each group
- [ ] scissors (several pairs)
- [ ] glue, adhesive tape – for each group
- [ ] cardboard (for each group, optional
- [ ] bird feathers (in large quantities)
- [ ] thin paper, thin tissue paper (small pieces, preferably in the colors of bird feathers)
- [ ] yarn and thread (small pieces)