

A Migratory Bird Poem



The Great Salt Lake is an invaluable resource for migratory birds. In this activity students will learn to recognize some of the birds that spend time in the Great Salt Lake area and in other places, talk about the needs of the birds and their offspring, observe the birds via video, and then write a poem about their observations.

Grade Level	K-2nd Grade
Activity Length	Up to two class periods, 20-30 minutes each
Materials	Computer to watch video Board to write down student responses. Printout of Poem Template if students are doing independent writing

Standard K.2.2 Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about patterns in the relationships between the needs of different living things and the places they live. Emphasize that living things need water, air, and resources and that they live in places that have the things they need.

Standard 1.2.2 Construct an explanation by observing patterns of external features of living things that survive in different locations. Emphasize how plants and nonhuman animals, found in specific surroundings, share similar physical characteristics.

Standard 2.2.1 Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about patterns of living things in different habitats. Emphasize the diversity of living things in land and water habitats. Examples of patterns in habitats could include descriptions of temperature or precipitation and the types of plants and animals found in land habitats.

This activity will also address many reading, writing, and listening standards for K-2



How to Use this Activity

Teachers will want to vary this activity depending on the abilities of the students. All levels should watch the video(s) as a class group and discuss them together. You may want to focus only on one bird depending on the needs of your students.

After watching the video write a poem together. After that the older students may be able to write their own poem individually or work with a small group.

Using this lesson for Distance Learning Options:

1. Watch a video or videos together online.
2. Older students can work in small groups through Zoom, or other online platform, in breakout rooms, and come up with five description words about the bird(s), five action words or phrases about the bird(s), and five words or phrases about how the bird makes them feel.
3. Younger students may just talk about the birds with friends or people in their households. They can make an attempt to write a cinquain (description on next page) if they wish.

Activity Alternatives

Students who may not be able to work on a group poem may want to watch the videos and then discuss the different features of the migratory birds. They can act out the movements of the birds. They can also practice reading, individually or as a group, an adult created poem.



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Teachers, it is suggested that you brainstorm together, and then the poem(s) can be written as a group with the whole class, especially with younger students. Students can also work individually or in groups as they are able.

You will be writing a version of a type of poem called a cinquain. It is easy!

This is all you have to do:

First Line: Write one word that tells what your subject is.

Second Line: Write two words or short phrases that describe the subject.

Third Line: Write three words or short phrases that tell an action about the subject.

Fourth Line: Write a short phrase that expresses a feeling about the subject.

Fifth Line: Write one word that is either a synonym for your first word, or a word that describes a type of your subject.



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I recommend coming up with your first and fifth lines first. Here is an example using the subject of tree. To start, come up with the first and fifth lines.

First Line: Tree

Fifth Line: Pine

Then, add in your other three lines:

First Line: Tree

Second Line: Evergreen, Needles

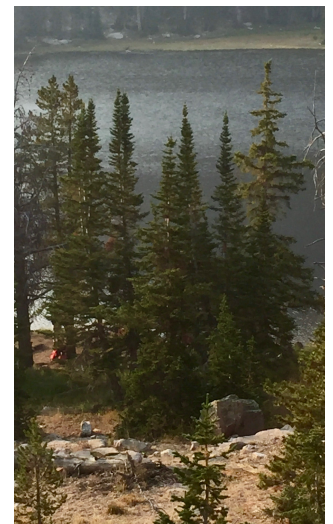
Third Line: Reaching for the sky

Fourth Line: A beautiful forest friend

Fifth Line: Pine

Here is the finished poem. You can add in photographs or drawings if you wish!

**Tree
Evergreen, Needles
Swaying, Growing, Reaching for the Sky
A Beautiful Forest Friend
Pine**





Here are some migratory birds that you might want to write about:

Eared Grebes (also called black-necked grebe)

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eared_Grebe/overview <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Azr29hbYj5s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dvd80IuBsCU>

- Eared Grebe babies ride on one parent's back for the first four days after hatching, and the other parent will bring the food.
- Eared Grebes have red eyes
- They love to be in large groups with other grebes
- Grebes LOVE to eat the brine shrimp in the Great Salt Lake.
- They are not good at flying, and have long periods of time during the year that they cannot fly at all.

American White Pelican

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/American_White_Pelican/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ninho8ZvNFE&feature=emb_logo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UAxQVGd6uwU>

- If you take two average seven-year-olds (about 4 feet, or 48 inches tall), have them lie down in a line with their feet touching, their total length from head to head is still shorter than the wingspan of some white pelicans.
- 10-20% of all the American White Pelicans nest on Gunnison Island in the Great Salt Lake.
- Even though they nest near the Great Salt Lake, they have to fly to other places nearby to find fish to eat.
- Sometimes pelicans work together to herd fish in the water.
- They do not carry fish in their beaks.
- For part of the year adults will have a horn on their beaks that will later fall off.

Black-necked Stilt

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Black-necked_Stilt

<https://academy.allaboutbirds.org/foraging-and-flocking-the-black-necked-stilt/>

- Stilts have extremely long legs for their size.
- Adults will pretend to be injured to lure enemies away from their babies.
- Both parents take care of the eggs and the baby birds.
- They mostly eat very small creatures like insects, tiny snails and crayfish, tadpoles and small fish. They especially love the brine shrimp and flies in the Great Salt Lake.
- Stilts sometimes act like popcorn! A group of them will surround a predator and jump up and down and flap their wings to try to drive it away from their nests.

Snowy Plover

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mrt7d0cRORU&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifQpcrCzTOY&feature=youtu.be>

- Snowy plover chicks are some of the cutest baby birds ever! They look like cotton balls with legs.
- Plovers don't really prefer nesting around fresh water. They love salty places like the Great Salt Lake!
- The adults will weigh up to two ounces. That is as much as two AA batteries held together. They are pretty little!
- Their nests are often just little scrapes in the sand or rocks.



**NATURAL HISTORY
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NAME(S): _____

A MIGRATORY BIRD POEM

subject of poem

two words or phrases to describe

three words or phrases that tell action

short phrase to express a feeling

another name for the first line, synonym

^ Add a photograph or a drawing here ^

