Build Your Own Bird Feeder

Description

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Help the group make bird feeders to keep the birds in the community happy and healthy.

Supplies

- Enough pine cones for each student to have one
- Birdseed
- Vegetable shortening
- Two Popsicle sticks for each student
- String
- Paper plates

How to Play

1. **Prep Work:** Put two Popsicle sticks and an even amount of vegetable shortening in the corner of every studentâ??s plate.
2. Take your group to an outside location because this activity is messy.
3. Pass out plates and pine cones to every student.
4. Pass out a string to each student and show them how to tie a loop so that the bird feeder can hang, either on the stem or around the top of the cone. Students can use this string to hold the pine cone still for the next steps.
5. Show the group how to spread vegetable shortening on a pine cone using a Popsicle stick.
6. Once students have finished spreading the vegetable shortening, show them how to roll the pine cone in birdseed to get it covered.
7. Evenly distribute birdseed to each studentâ??s plate and have them roll their pine cone in the birdseed.

Support your students with the essential life skills they needâ??anytime, anywhere.

8. After everyone has made their bird feeder, walk the group to available trees where the pine cones can be hung. If no trees are available, put each studentâ??s bird feeder in a plastic bag for them to hang when they get home.
9. Since this is a messy activity, set aside time for students to clean up their area and wash/clean their hands.
10. Have reflection time close to the location of the trees where some of the pine cones were hung so the group can observe and see if any birds find the new feeders.

Activity Prompts for Reflection

- Is there anything you would do differently if we did this activity again?
- What is a good choice you made while completing this bird feeder?
- What is another good choice that you could make to help our environment and the animals living in it?
- Can someone share something they do with their friends or family that helps the environment or animals in the environment?

Other Ways to Play

- Already have a string tied to the pine cone to make this step easier for younger students.
- Use toilet paper rolls instead of pine cones for easier spreading and rolling.
- Try to find a quick educational video or book to read about birds before or after the activity.
- Have the group search in the neighborhood for pine cones before the activity begins.
- Have students make signs with fun facts about birds to post beside the bird feeder.

Additional Notes

- Use the SEL Activity Prompts to tie other SEL competencies to this activity.
- If you have extra time you can share some fun facts about birds with the group:
    - Hummingbirds can fly backward
    - Owls canâ??t move their eyes, but they can turn their head almost all the way around
    - Most birds have hollow bones which help them fly
    - Chickens can make over 20 different noises to communicate with each other
    - Penguins canâ??t fly, but they can swim

Category

1. Activities
2. Responsible Decision-Making

Sel-competency

1. Responsible Decision-Making

Allotted-time

1. 30 minutes

Themes

1. General