

Birds of a Feather

A.D. Martin Sr. Forest Aviary

Like an actual forest, the species of birds you find in this aviary will vary with the time of year.





1. What factors might affect which birds you find in the forest aviary today?

2. Take a close and careful look as you walk around this space. How many different bird species can you observe in the forest aviary today? How did you decide that any one bird was a different species from another?

3. As you walk around the aviary, make a list of 5 or more bird species that you see in order of size (from small to big). How did you define "big" when you made your list?

4. Use your observations to design a guide for identifying bird species in the forest aviary. One commonly used guide for identification is known as a dichotomous key.

Note: the prefix "di" refers to the Number "2". See the example provided below. Each step in the key consists of a pair of statements and one's response to each statement will determine which statement one goes to next. Your goal with your dichotomous key is that someone else who visited this aviary could easily use your key to help them easily and accurately identify the bird species.

			
Bird W	Bird X	Bird Y	Bird Z

Dichotomous Key to Representative Birds	
1. a.	The beak is relatively long and slender..... <i>Certhidea</i>
b.	The beak is relatively stout and heavy.....go to 2
2. a.	The bottom surface of the lower beak is flat and straight <i>Geospiza</i>
b.	The bottom surface of the lower beak is curvedgo to 3
3. a.	The lower edge of the upper beak has a distinct bend <i>Camarhynchus</i>
b.	The lower edge of the upper beak is mostly flat <i>Platyspiza</i>

5. Use a dichotomous key to build an imaginary bird! Answer the following questions about your imaginary bird. Reminder- your answers will determine factors like what your bird can eat, whether it can camouflage or not, and more – choose wisely!

1. What beak shape will your bird have?

Cone shape or Sharply pointed

2. How long or short will the beak be?

Short Medium Long

3. How long will the bird's wings be?

Short Medium Long

4. Will your bird have webbed feet?

Webbed Not Webbed

5. What color feathers will your bird have?

Bright, vibrant colors Dull, stealthy colors

Now sketch your bird based on your answers.

Bird Name: _____

Discovered By: _____





Birds of a Feather

A.D. Martin Sr. Forest Aviary

Like an actual forest, the species of birds you find in the Dallas Zoo Forest Aviary varies with the time of year.

1. What factors might affect the birds you find in the forest aviary today?

Answers will vary. Weather will vary with the time of year and affect the kinds of birds and vegetation within the aviary. With seasonal change in temperature and precipitation comes changes in the amount of vegetation which can affect the kinds of bird species suited for the environment at that time. Additionally, the weather changes will directly affect the kinds of birds in the forest aviary, as not all birds are adapted to the seasonal changes.

2. Take a close and careful look as you walk around this space. How many different bird species can you observe in the forest aviary today? How did you decide that any one bird was a different species from another?

Answers will vary. Learners can observe the posted signage or directly count the number of different bird species they see. Learners can use adaptations like coloration, foot shape, beak morphology and characteristics such as size and body shape to differentiate bird species.

3. As you walk around the aviary, make a list of 5 or more bird species that you see in order of size (from small to big). How did you define "big" when you made your list?

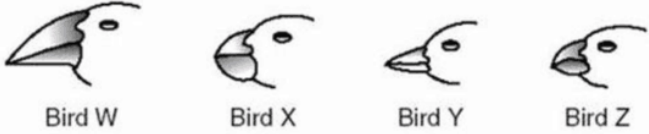
Answers will vary. Accept all logical answers. Highlight the fact that even something as "objective" as size depends on how you choose to define size. So learners may use criteria such as leg length, beak length, height, width, and they are all acceptable.

4. Use your observations to design a guide for identifying bird species in the forest aviary. One commonly used guide for identification is known as a dichotomous key.

Note: the prefix "di" refers to the Number "2". See the example provided below. Each step in the key consists of a pair of statements and one's response to each statement will determine which statement one goes to next. Your goal with your

dichotomous key is to make it easy for other visitors to accurately identify the birds they see.

Answers will vary. Processes may take on the form of a dichotomous key. For more information on dichotomous keys and how to make one, visit <https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Dichotomous-Key>



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5. Use a dichotomous key to build an imaginary bird! Answer the following questions about your imaginary bird. Reminder- your answers will determine factors like what your bird can eat, whether it can camouflage or not, and more – choose wisely!

Have children discuss their decisions and how they made their choices. What type of food would their bird eat? Can they camouflage easily in their habitat or not? etc.

Encourage learners to notice adaptations such as feet (webbed or not), wing (size and shape), beak, and feather color.

The Cornell University Ornithology Lab is an extensive and valuable resource. <http://www.birds.cornell.edu>

