

WORKSHOP EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Built by The Home Depot Kids Workshop

April 2022: Window Birdfeeder

Ages 5-12

CONNECT.

Do you have a favorite kind of food? Do you eat it all the time or just on special occasions? Why do you like it so much?

Like humans, birds also prefer some types of food over others. However, while *people* tend to choose their favorite food based on its taste, *birds* are more likely to select their favorite food based on the shape of their bill and their nutritional needs.

INVESTIGATE.

Let's see what type of food the birds around your home like best.

You'll need:

- Your window birdfeeder
- Ruler
- Permanent marker
- Notepad and pencil
- At least three different kinds of bird food (try to select at least two with a variety of ingredients)

1. To determine which bird food your birds prefer, you will track how much they eat! Place the ruler inside your birdfeeder with the "zero" end against the birdfeeder's floor. Then use the permanent marker to label each centimeter on the back wall until you get to the window.
2. Select one type of bird food and fill the birdfeeder.
3. Grab your notepad, create a chart that includes the following categories, and fill in the first three columns.

Bird Food Name	Main Ingredients	Initial Food Amount (in cm)	Start Date	End Date	Total Eaten (in cm)
----------------	------------------	-----------------------------	------------	----------	---------------------

4. Then place the birdfeeder on the outside of a window in your home and wait for the birds to discover it. This may take anywhere from a few hours to several days.
5. Once you spot a bird at your feeder, your experiment begins! Record the start date on your chart. Then decide the length of your experiment and record the end date as well. Anywhere from a few days to a couple weeks should work well.
6. When the end date arrives, record how many centimeters of food (if any) were eaten.

Exact measurement is an important part of a carpenter's job, just like what you will do in your birdfeeder project! Carpenter's plan, design, and build or repair wood structures such as homes or furniture.

Visit [PathtoPro.com](https://www.pathtopro.com) for more information on trade careers.

7. Then empty the remaining food and repeat the experiment with the other types of bird food. For each one, be sure to:
 - Fill in the first five columns of your chart when you begin.
 - Fill the birdfeeder up to the same centimeter marking.
 - Observe the birdfeeder for the same number of days and then record how many centimeters (if any) were eaten.
8. When you have experimented with each type of bird food, review your results:
 - Which food did the birds like best? Why do you think this may be the case?
 - If your experiment included mixes, were there any common ingredients that the birds seemed to like the most? How about the least?

INNOVATE.

You'll need:

- Your window birdfeeder
 - Notepad with your experiment results
 - Your remaining bird food from the experiment above
 - Small pail, mixing bowl, or container
 - Measuring spoon
 - Additional "make-your-own" bird food ingredients.
 - *Tip:* Ideas include sunflower seeds, shelled peanuts, cracked corn, millet, dried fruit, and/or any other ingredient that the birds liked in your original experiment.
1. Now it's time to create your own bird food! Consider what you learned about the birds' preferences and add your own creative ingredients, too. If you're unsure if an ingredient is safe for a bird to eat, research it first.
 2. Then use the measuring spoon and pail to create your bird food mixture. As you do, use your notepad to keep track of how many spoonfuls you include of each ingredient. After giving it a good mix, add it to your feeder!
 3. Keep an eye on your birdfeeder once you've filled it. When a week has passed, observe the food that remains.
 4. You may now decide how to continue. You can keep filling the feeder using the same combination of food or you can try to modify it each week. As you gain a better understanding of what the birds around you prefer, you may have to refill it more and more frequently!

