



# Bird Beak Adaptations

## Introduction

Animals and plants have special adaptations to help them survive in their habitat. An adaptation can be behaviors or physical characteristics, for example living in groups or having thick fur. In this lesson you will investigate how the shape of a bird's beak is adapted to help them survive.

## Opening Questions

What does a bird need to survive? How does a bird's beak help them survive? Picture some birds you've seen, what do their beaks look like?

## Activity

Gather the listed household items to see how different shaped beaks might be better suited to eat some things but not other things.

## Materials

- **Beak Tool-**
  - Spoon
  - Straw
  - Chopsticks
  - Tweezers
  - Clothespins
- **Food Items-**
  - Toothpicks
  - Marbles
  - Cup of water
  - Marbles
  - Bottle caps
  - Pipe-cleaner or yarn pieces

## Procedures

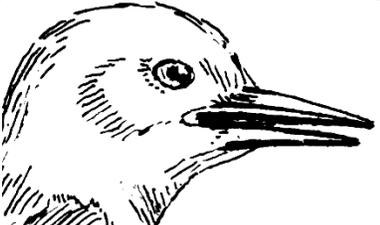
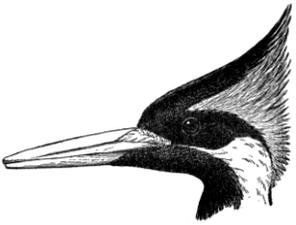
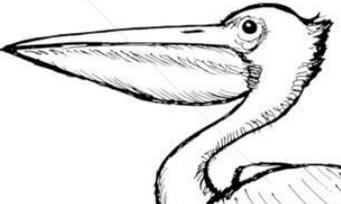
- Put a food item onto a shallow container
- Start with one beak tool and try to pick up each "food item"
- Think about which food item was easiest to pick up with that beak
- Continue with every beak tool

## Reflection

Why were some food items difficult to pick up and others easy? How did the shape of the beak tools help pick up the food items? Take a look at the table below showing different beak types.

## Conclusion

Bird's need to eat in order to survive. Their beaks are adapted to eat specific foods found in their habitat. Bird's have many adaptations to help them survive.

Shape	Type	Adaptation
	Tearing Meat	Sharped, curved bill for tearing meat
	Probing	Long, slender, downward curving bill for probing sand/mud for organisms
	Catching Insects	Short thin, pointing bill for catching insects
	Cracking Seeds	Short, thick cone bill for cracking seeds
	Filtering	Long flat bill that filters small organisms from the water
	Nectar Feeder	Long, slender bill for licking up nectar deep in flowers
	Drilling Holes	Long and chisel-like bill for drilling holes in trees to find insects
	Scooping	Large bill with pouch for scooping water

