

1. This activity is designed as an extension of 'Activity 4: Prepare a birdbath—offer water to birds in the hot summer months' described in the Grade III EVS textbook (NCERT, 2024–2025, pg. 96–97). It can also be connected to 'Chapter 7: Water A Precious Gift' in Unit 3 of the Grade III EVS textbook (NCERT, 2024–2025).
2. It is designed to build and deepen students' affective skills of empathy and care for all living beings around us. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF–SE) 2023 suggests that: "*Empathy and compassion are not only values or dispositions; these are capacities that are developed through deliberate practice*".
3. This activity may be carried out by students as a year-long activity.
4. Start this activity by reading out the story 'The Meditating Heron' to the students. Then introduce the idea of setting up bird baths in school. Invite students to bring used or old shallow mud or plastic containers that are about 10–15 cm deep. Tell them that the containers can be of 2–3 different volumes.
5. Once you set up the baths, work with your students to set up a duty roster for maintaining them. Ensure that students take turns to clean the baths and refill the water in them. Doing these tasks collaboratively helps students build a sense of ownership and responsibility. These are important attributes in caring for others.
6. Share clear instructions for the tasks. Emphasize the instruction that students must observe non-human visitors to the bird bath without feeding or interacting with them. This will help them build skills of observing with attention and sharing space (and resources) with other living beings.
7. Clarify to the students that they should record their observations systematically and regularly in the format provided in **Table I**.
8. Encourage your students to observe visitors to the bird bath for at least 10–15 minutes, three times a day: When they enter the school, during their meal-break, and before they leave school. Encourage them to record their observations as soon as possible after each such session.
9. Plan a session for at least 30 minutes per week.
 - Depending on their class strength and the time available for discussion, divide students into pairs or small groups of 3–4. Facilitate the exercise of peer sharing and discussion. Clarify that students in each pair or group must take turns to share their observations and explanations. Encourage them to listen carefully to each other.
 - Once a month, use this session to invite students to share their responses to questions in the 'Think about' and 'Discuss' sections.
10. Make a note of any student questions that have not been addressed during these discussions. You could take these up at a later point. Or you may consider assigning it to students to explore on their own and share their findings with the class.
11. Encourage students to set up bird baths at home and maintain a journal of their observations for as many years as they can. As they do this, they will begin to recognise and infer patterns and rhythms over time. This can help your students become more aware and

sensitive to changes in their environment. This may build their capacity to respond in meaningful ways to many other changes around them.

12. Encourage students to think of the role their observations of birds play in their ability to care for these animals and be empathetic to their needs. By inviting students to observe their surroundings with attention, we can help them build care, empathy, and compassion.

Contributed by:

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