

Who Has Got Top Billing?

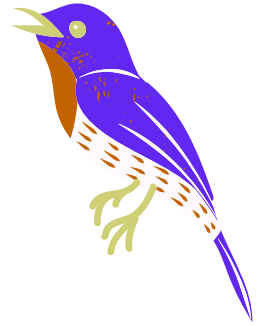
Bird 'bills' or beaks come in all different shapes and sizes and that's because birds eat different foods! Different foods need different tools to eat them. We're going to have a go at experimenting with different tools to see why that is...

You will need:

- Different small objects to act as 'food' like sunflower seeds, dry beans, string, small soft toys etc. (a few of each type)
- Different objects/tools to act as bills/ beaks such as tweezers, spoons, chopsticks, clothes pegs, a small net e.g. for fish etc.
- A dish to be your bird's stomach.
- A timer e.g. stopwatch or a phone

What to do:

- 1) Spread all the 'food' out on a tray.
- 2) Try to pick up each of the food types with the different bills in turn and put it in the dish.
- 3) Use a timer to track how long it takes to remove each type of 'food' with each 'bill'. (You can use the table on the next page to record your results). Which bill was best for each food?





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Put your 'foods' down the first column and your 'beaks' along the top row. Then fill in your times. Then compare them to find out which bill is the best for which food!

	Bill 1: _____	Bill 2: _____	Bill 3: _____	Bill 4: _____	Which bill was best?

Was any particular bill better than the others?

This experiment is not perfect. If there was a 'bill' that was hard to hold in your hand and use, it might mean you 'ate' more slowly than a bird would. Can you think of any way to improve this experiment to make it more like real birds feeding?

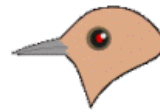
Who Has Got Top Billing?

The different bills/beaks you used represent the ways that different types/species of bird feed. Their bills are specifically shaped to help them eat their favourite food.

Think of the birds you know of. Can you think of any birds that have a similar shaped bill to one of your tools? e.g. long and thin, short and thick, curved bills etc. Which tool does their beak look like? How do they use their bill to eat? (Use the picture of the different types of bill to help you and look up any unfamiliar words on the internet).



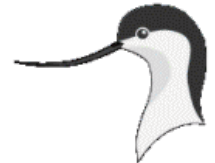
Generalist



Insect catching



Surface skimming



Mud probing



Grain eating



Coniferous-seed eating



Probing



Filter feeding



Nectar feeding



Fruit eating



Aerial fishing



Pursuit fishing



Chiseling



Dip netting



Scavenging



Raptorial