

## Join the Flock!

Craft a whimsical mixed media sculpture while using remnants stored in your “nest”!

### (art + science)

Have you ever considered how many different bird species exist on the earth? A current estimate is that our world is populated by 100–400 billion different types. There is such a big difference in those estimates because birds are difficult to count!

As diverse as birds are, they all have the same basic parts: two legs, two wings, a tail, a body, a head, and a beak. Every part of a bird serves a very important function. The beaks of each type of bird are shaped to help them eat the foods that they need and like the most. For instance, a hummingbird’s beak is long and narrow to drink the nectar from deep within a flower. Shorter, cone-shaped beaks are needed for cracking seeds. A woodpecker’s beak is very strong to help it feed on insects that live under the bark of trees.

Birds’ legs are also adapted to their feeding requirements. For instance, flamingos have very long legs for wading in water while looking for food. When looking at a bird, notice its feet and legs. They are used for so many things: walking, hopping, perching on a limb, swimming, catching and holding food, and even for turning their eggs during incubation.

Now, get familiar with the parts of a bird and how they function, then gather an assortment of leftover art materials to create your own feathered classroom flock!

**GRADES 2-8** Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

### Preparation

1. Collect leftover papers, fabrics, wire, string, paints, etc., and make them available in the classroom.
2. Supply glue and scissors.



### Materials (required)

[Sculpture House Armature Wire](#), 16 gauge, 32 ft (33406-0116); share two rolls across class

[Jovi Patmaché](#), 1.5 lbs (34303-1015); share one package across class

[Aleene’s Quick Dry Tacky Glue](#), 4 oz (23884-1104); share four across class

[Plastibands](#), Box of 200 (61411-1002); share one package across class

Paper and/or fabric scraps

### Optional Materials

[Jumbo White Craft Fluffs](#) (61431-0100)

[Creativity Street Stems](#), 12” (60923-)

[Raffia](#) (60908-)

[Twisteez](#) (33407-1050)

[Mini Wire Cutters or Long Nose Pliers](#) (33083-)

[Glass Indian Seed Beads](#) (60725-)

[Creativity Street Natural Feather Assortment](#) (61432-1005)

[Wistyrta Editions 100% Wool Roving](#) (63235-)

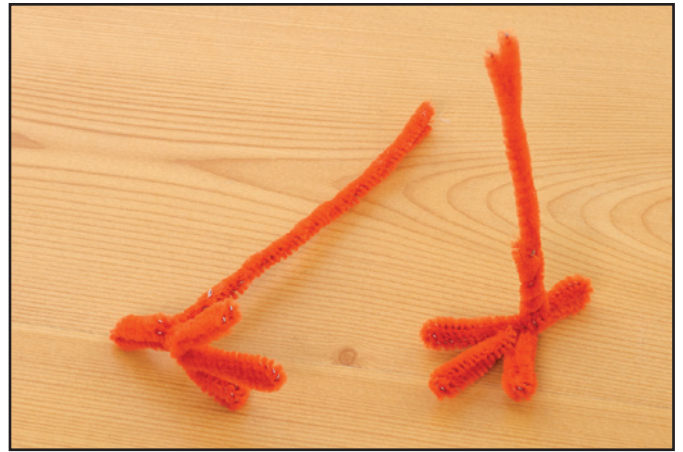
[Brightly Colored Burlap](#) (63202-)

[Amaco Rice Paste Powder](#) (34125-)





**Step 1:** Fashion a head and beak from paper mache'. Poke a hole through the end opposite the beak.



**Step 2:** Make legs out of sculpture wire or doubled up chenille stems.



**Step 3:** Create the body using scrunched up paper and stretch bands.



**Step 4:** Create wings from paper or fabric scraps and assemble the parts using wrapping and glue.

### Process

1. After deciding which bird to sculpt, look closely at its head and beak. Roll a ball of papier mâché mix about the size of a small marble into a sphere and then roll one side of the sphere into a beak shape. At the other end of the ball, poke a hole crosswise all the way through the head. This hole will be a handy attaching place later. Allow the head and beak to dry.
2. Now, begin forming the legs and feet of the bird. Using soft sculpture wire or chenille stems for younger students (two chenille stems used together make sturdier legs) cut a 12" piece. At about the 4" mark, bend the wire and make three toes by bending three loops. Use a needle-nose plier for help if needed. Most birds have a toe in the back of the foot for stability. Make the back toe, then coil what's left of the wire around the other side to make the leg. Make two feet and legs and set them aside.
3. Notice the shape of the bird's body. Start forming the basic body shape by wadding up newsprint or paper toweling. Plastibands will help keep the body

together. Craft fluffs can be used as additional padding where needed. Now, wrap the body in scraps of paper shreds, fabric strips, raffia, string, wire, or yarn.



## Process, continued

4. Using another piece of wire, connect the two legs and make an upside-down U that can go over the body of the bird. Connect the legs to the body using thin wire, glue, or more wrapping. It's helpful to keep wrapping after the legs are attached to the body for added stability.
5. If the head and beak are to be painted, do that before attaching the head to the body in the same way as the legs. Paint eyes and beak, or glue on bead eyes. Run a wire or Twisteez through the hole in the head and attach it by wrapping it onto the body.
6. Wings can be made out of leftover papers, canvas, or muslin. Fabric or paper wings can be stiffened with rice paste for added strength and painted. A tail can be made in the same way. Some balancing may be necessary to get the bird to stand, taking into consideration the weight of the head compared to the weight on the other end of the body.



### Options:

- Make birds “fly” by adding loops to their backs.

## National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

### Creating

**Anchor Standard 2:** Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

**Anchor Standard 3:** Refine and complete artistic work.