

On the Wing

by Douglas Florian

Watercolor paintings accompany poems about twenty-one different varieties of birds.



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *How many different kinds of birds can you name?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder if this is a painting of a real bird or an imaginary one?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words in *On the Wing*

- tide: the rising and falling of the surface of the ocean
- hue: color
- inconspicuous: not easily seen
- ridiculous: silly
- supreme: of highest quality
- assent: agreement
- magnificent: superb or outstanding
- serene: calm and peaceful
- glide: to move in a smooth, effortless way
- inflate: to enlarge
- regard: to hold in esteem or respect
- hover: float, suspended in the air
- culture: high degree of taste and refinement
- lithe: flexible
- mimic: imitate
- converse: to talk
- terse: abrupt, brief and to the point
- opportune: right for a particular purpose
- fortunate: lucky
- descend: to come from an ancestor
- massive: very large
- casque: a helmet like structure
- election: chosen by a group
- keen: intense or piercing
- peculiar: unusual or odd
- crest: an ornamental tuft or ridge on the top of a bird's head
- vivid: very brightly colored
- spacious: roomy

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Which bird in this book was your favorite to see and hear about?
- Which bird doesn't need a mask for Halloween?
- Why do Woodpeckers peck holes in stumps of rotting wood?
- About how big is the Hummingbird?
- Why do you think the Hill Mynah is described as having a tape recorder in his head?
- Have you seen any of these birds in real life? If so, which ones?



Do

Paint With Feathers

Provide paint, feathers, and paper for the students. Instruct them to use the feathers as a paintbrush to paint pictures of the birds of their choice.