

BIRD REFLECTION ASSIGNMENT

To do in class after the field trip, before the final classroom visit

1. **Students will read a paragraph to reflect on the topics introduced over the course of the school year.** The reading is available on the next page and online at <http://oceanconnectors.org/resources> (under *Birds*).

The reading contains new vocabulary, indicated by *italics*, so it is best if teachers read the material in advance and prepare to work through it with the children.

2. After reading, **students respond to the reflection questions inside their journals using complete sentences.** Reflection questions are included at the end of the reading and on the website.
3. **The answer key is contained in the printed User Guide only** (not online). Please review the answers together in class.
4. This lesson covers 6th grade California Common Core standards in Reading, Writing, Science and Technical Subjects, and Next Generation Science Standards.

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This year you learned about birds, their habitats, and how people can help protect both for the future. Birds are highly vulnerable to habitat loss and pollution. Human developments have resulted in the destruction of coastal environments in many areas of the world, thus reducing the amount of habitat for birds to nest, *forage*, and take shelter. Humans also produce pollution that causes negative impacts at many levels of the food web. Pollution includes different things such as *soil*, chemicals, pesticides, litter, and anything that does not belong in the ecosystem. Pollution travels through *watersheds* into the ocean. Everyone lives in a watershed, a large area of land that drains into a specific body of water, like a river or an ocean. Water drains from the highest point downhill to the point where land meets the ocean, known as *sea level*.

Habitat *restoration* is one way that people are trying to undo past damage to the environment. Restoration typically involves litter removal, *invasive* plant removal, and installing native plants. In addition to providing food and shelter for native species, some native plants also filter pollution. *Invasive* plants are harmful because they compete for space with native plants and they change the dynamics of the ecosystem. Since watersheds lead to the ocean, you can help simply by picking up trash in your own neighborhood. Responsible pet owners always clean up after their dogs and cats because pet waste contains bacteria. When you visit natural areas, remember to stay on marked pathways and trails to minimize your impact.

Answer the questions below in your journal using *complete sentences*.

1. Why are coastal environments important to birds?
2. List three examples of pollution.
3. How does pollution enter the ocean?
4. What is a *watershed*?
5. What is the purpose of habitat *restoration*?
6. List three parts of the typical habitat restoration process.
7. Why are invasive plants harmful?
8. What is one of the simplest ways to help the environment?
9. If you own a dog or a cat, how can you be a responsible pet owner?
10. How do you think the ecosystems of today differ from ecosystems of the past?