

Blackbird's Nest

by Olive Harvey

illustrated by Jessica Wallace



Book Summary

Blackbird's Nest is an expository text about the life cycle of the blackbird, presented as a poem.

Features of the Book

- The rhythm and rhyme.
- The possessive apostrophe – “blackbird’s.”
- The use of commas to mark a pause.
- The use of descriptive language – “lonely,” “empty,” “speckled,” “big,” “bare,” “small,” and “dead.”
- The rhyme – “grew” and “flew.”
- The distinct sequence of events in the blackbird’s life cycle.
- The use of alliteration – “Four bare babies in a blackbird’s nest.”
- A variety of blends – “bl,” “sp,” “gr,” “fl,” and “sm.”
- The challenge of the verb change on page 7.
- The high-frequency words – “sat,” “from,” and “what.”

Purpose

Blackbird's Nest can be used in a guided reading setting to introduce and reinforce the following skills and strategies:

- S** predicting the meanings of new or unfamiliar words from the context of the story;
- S** using structural cues to monitor that reading is making sense;
- S** using a range of punctuation to read expressively;
- S** incorporating diagrams and tables into pieces of writing to support ideas.

Introducing the text

Discuss the concept of a life cycle, particularly the life cycle of a bird.

Discuss the illustration on the cover.

- What kind of bird might this nest belong to?
- Whose nest could this be?

Read the title and cover text together.

Reading the text

- S** Predicting the meanings of new or unfamiliar words from the context of the story.
- S** Using structural cues to monitor that reading is making sense.
- S** Using a range of punctuation to read expressively.

Title page – There are two birds.

- What do you notice about them? (different colors)

Pages 2 and 3

- How many eggs are in the nest?
- What do they look like?
- What is the blackbird doing?
- Why is the blackbird sitting on them?

Page 4

- What has happened to the eggs?
- Do the babies look like birds?

Discuss the alliteration “bare,” “babies,” and “blackbird’s.”

Page 5

- What do you notice about the babies?
- What is happening?
- How have they changed?

Pages 6 and 7

- What has happened to the babies?

Note the rhyme “grew” and “flew.”

Page 8


- What is left in the nest?

Children now read the book independently.

Revisiting the text

Read the book out loud together to enjoy the rhythm. Improvise on the rhythm of the text from pages 3, 5, and 7. The children will enjoy making up their own rhymes with this meter.

Following Up

- S** Incorporating diagrams and tables into pieces of writing to support ideas.
-  Illustrate the events in the story in sequence and present them as a life cycle. Return the children to the book for help with labeling their diagram.
- E** Complete the blackline master opposite.