Fill the Bill

Description
Birds have different types of beaks that allow them to eat different kinds of food. This activity encourages students to explore these different adaptations by experimenting with kitchen utensils and food.

Set Up
Set up 6 stations with 1 food at each station. Prepare a container of utensils to move from station to station with the test subjects (children). Let them use the utensils to figure out which utensil is best to both handle and “open” the food. Rotate through the stations once for testing and then a second time to attempt to match each food with its ideal utensil.

Food materials
- Container with oatmeal floating in water
- Colored water in small vase (could have a flower around the vase)
- Plastic caterpillar (pencils should work too) on log
- Acorns
- Paper outline of a large fish
- Plastic bugs (or smaller items like rice) in container of soil

Utensils
- Small strainer
- Pipette
- Kitchen tongs
- Nutcracker
- Scissors
- Chopsticks

When they are finished, review – show picture of bird, talk about what they eat and demonstrate the matching utensil and adaptation.

Duck – oatmeal in water – strainer  Hummingbird – water in vases – pipette
Eagle – outline of a large fish – scissors  Warbler – plastic caterpillars – tongs
Woodcock – bugs in soil – chopsticks  Cardinal – acorns – nutcracker
All-purpose      Conical (seed-eating)      Needle (Nectar)      Crossbill (Coniferous seeds)
Insect catching      Fruit eating      Dip Netting      Chiseling
Hooked (raptorial)      Scavaging      Curved down (filter)      Spatulate (Dabbles in H2O)