

Read this selection about birds' nests and answer the questions that follow.

Magpie & the Bird Nests

a folktale retold by Michael J. Caduto

Back when the animals were first learning how to live, Blackbird came to visit Magpie.

“What are you building?” asked Blackbird.

“I am making my nest,” replied Magpie.

“What is a nest for?”

“It is a place in which to raise my young,” replied Magpie.

Blackbird flew throughout the forests, fields and marshes. “Come and see the magnificent nest that Magpie is making,” she told the other birds. Soon, they were all gathered in the branches, watching Magpie build her nest.

First, Magpie went to the shore of the pond and gathered some mud. She began to fashion this into a small bowl.

“Now I see how a nest is made,” said Thrush, who flew off to build a nest of her own. To this day, Thrush uses mud to make her nest.

Then, Magpie went from bush to bush, gathered small sticks and wove them into the mud nest.

“I think this is a very clever nest in which to live,” exclaimed Blackbird. She flew off and has since made her nest of mud and twigs.

Magpie made many more trips to the pond, gathering bits of mud in her beak. At last, the nest was lined with an inner coating of mud.

“That will be much stronger for we birds who are bigger than some of the others,” said Owl. She went back to her pine tree and fashioned a layered nest of mud, sticks and mud.

Magpie began to tire, but she felt that her nest needed some adornment. She flew down to the ground and gathered the

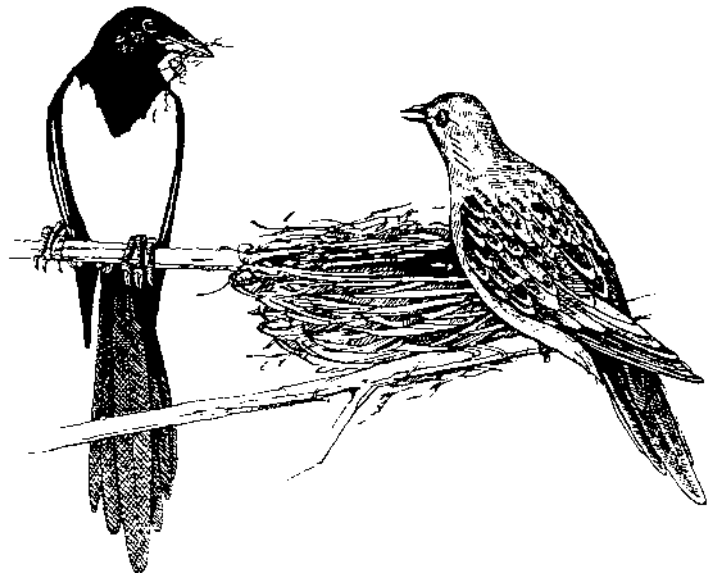
smallest twigs she could find. With these, Magpie wove a covering for her nest.

“What a fine looking nest,” said Sparrow. “I think it is finally completed.” With that, Sparrow flitted home and built a nest of the same kind.

Magpie needed some rest. She cozied up in her nest for a little while but could not quite find a comfortable position. “I think the inside of the nest needs something soft,” she explained to the birds who were still watching. With her beak, Magpie plucked some feathers from her own breast and used them to line the nest.

“Ah,” said Starling, “that’s the nest for me.” Since that day, Starlings have made soft, cozy nests lined with feathers.

Each time Magpie fussed with her nest, adding a bit here, tweaking a little there, another bird flew off and built its nest according to what it had learned from Magpie. Only one bird waited patiently to see how the nest would look when it was complete.



“Make two, Maggie, make twoooo,” moaned Turtle Dove. Again and again she called. Finally, Magpie could stand it no longer.

“One nest is quite enough,” she said.

Again, Turtle Dove said, “Make two, Magpie, make twoooo,”

“Why ever would I need two?” asked Magpie.

Without pausing, Turtle Dove repeated, “Make two, Magpie, make twoooo.”

At wit’s end, Magpie cried, “Make it yourself!” Then she flew as far from Turtle Dove as she could go. “No longer am I going to teach the other birds how to build a nest. They will have to figure it out for themselves.”

To this day, each bird makes its own unique kind of nest. But none makes a nest as fine and complete as that of Magpie.

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| <p>1. What is the main purpose of this selection?</p> <p>A to explain why nests are lined with feathers</p> <p>B to explain why birds build different kinds of nests</p> <p>C to explain why magpies fly around ponds so often</p> <p>D to explain why Magpie built only one nest</p> | <p>3. Why did Magpie make so many trips before her nest was complete?</p> <p>A The other birds kept taking her materials.</p> <p>B The other birds refused to help her.</p> <p>C She was a very slow worker.</p> <p>D She took great care to build a good nest.</p> |
| <p>2. Why does Magpie make a nest?</p> <p>A to have a place for her children</p> <p>B to get out of the rain</p> <p>C to hide from other animals</p> <p>D to find a use for the mud all around her</p> | <p>4. What is the most likely reason that “two” is spelled “twoooo” when Turtle Dove speaks?</p> <p>A to show the sound that Turtle Dove makes</p> <p>B to show that Magpie is listening</p> <p>C so Magpie will make another nest</p> <p>D so all the birds will hear it</p> |

5. What is the ***most likely*** reason Turtle Dove wanted Magpie to make two nests?
- A so Magpie would have enough room for all of her children
 - B so Turtle Dove could have a cozy nest without doing the work
 - C so all the birds could live together
 - D so Turtle Dove could make sure she knew how to make a nest
6. What would ***most likely*** have happened if all the birds had waited for Magpie to finish her nest?
- A Magpie would have made a nest for them all.
 - B The other birds would have helped Magpie make the nest.
 - C All the birds would have made the same type of nest.
 - D Turtle Dove would have made her own nest.

7. Which of the following statements is true?
- A Blackbird tried to make a better nest than the other birds.
 - B Owl was wise to wait until Magpie finished the nest.
 - C Starling learned how to make a good nest by watching Magpie.
 - D Magpie tried to keep the directions for making a nest secret.

End of Set

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*Answers to
Grade 3 Reading Comprehension Sample Items*

Passage Title	Question Number	Correct Answer	Category	Thinking Skill	Objective Number
Magpie & the Bird Nests	1	B	Cognition	Generating	2.04
Magpie & the Bird Nests	2	A	Cognition	Knowledge	2.04
Magpie & the Bird Nests	3	D	Interpretation	Knowledge	2.04
Magpie & the Bird Nests	4	A	Critical Stance	Integrating	3.03
Magpie & the Bird Nests	5	B	Interpretation	Analyzing	3.01
Magpie & the Bird Nests	6	C	Interpretation	Generating	2.02
Magpie & the Bird Nests	7	C	Interpretation	Analyzing	2.02