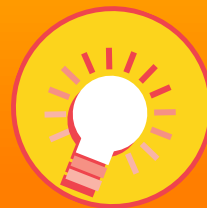


Cleaning birds after an oil spill (Wildlife)



Find out about the meaning of stories and articles



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Caring for our environment

Matches the requirements of the Literacy Strategy and designed to integrate with your normal subject studies. (This material is independent of any specific text book and can be used alongside any publisher's books including our textbook.)

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Unit 10: Cleaning birds after an oil spill

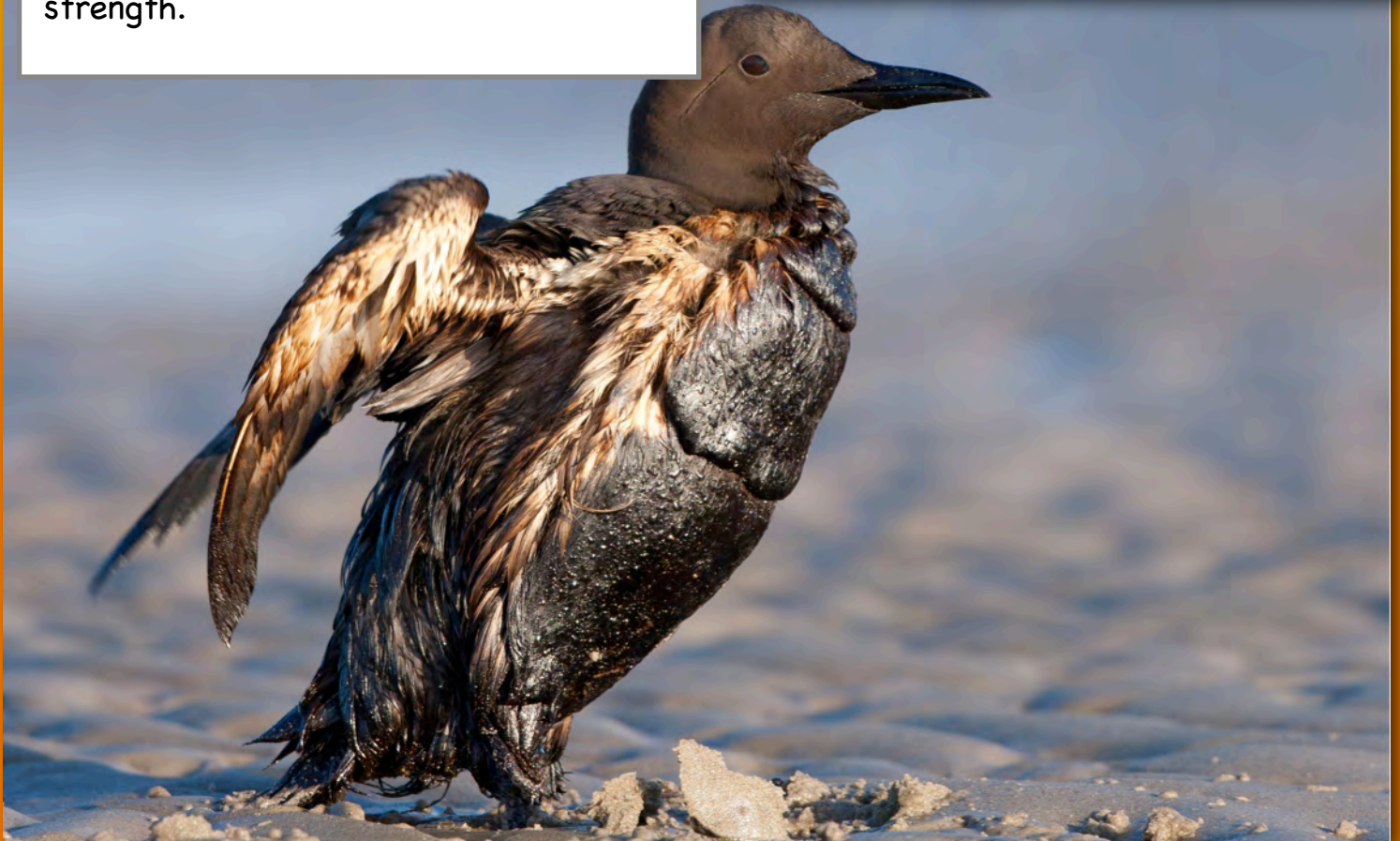
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After an oil spill...

When oil spills into the ocean from tankers, pipes or oil drills, birds can be seriously hurt. The oil covers the birds' feathers, so they are no longer waterproof, and makes it impossible for the birds to fly, stay warm or to find food. Even a very small amount of oil can be dangerous for birds.

Here is the story of one volunteer, who helped to clean birds after a big oil spill.

“On the first day after the spill, volunteers try to catch as many birds as they can. On the second and third days we make sure the birds get plenty of food and water to build up their strength.

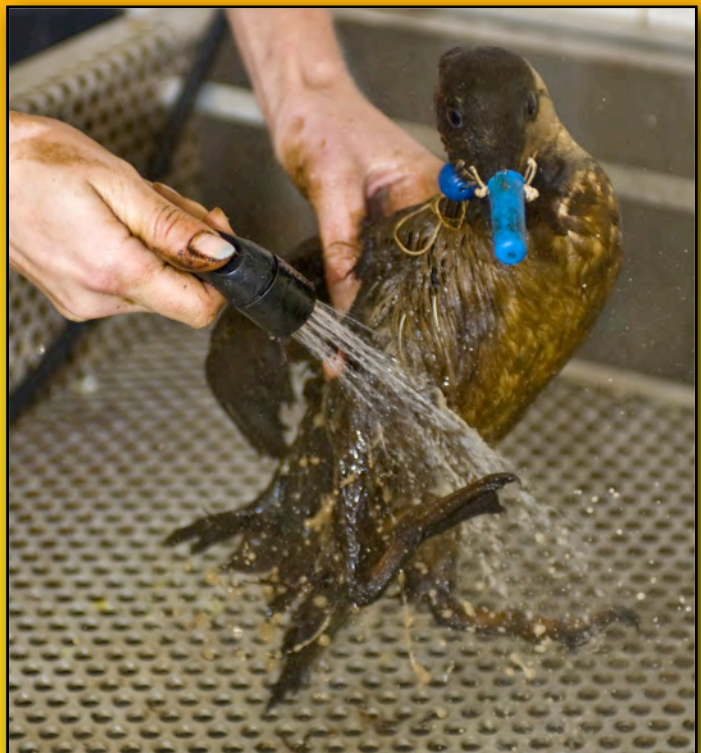
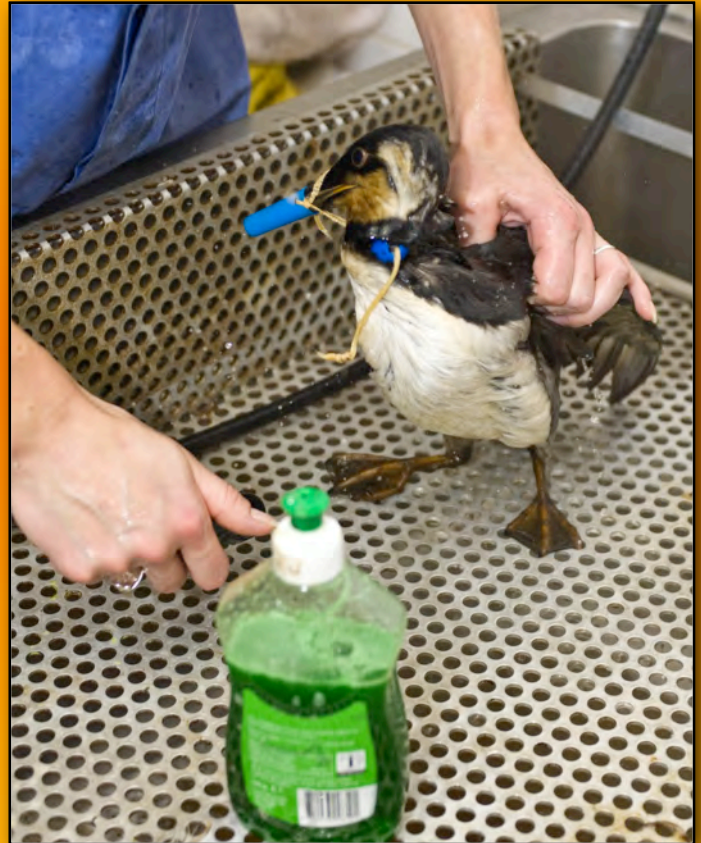


On the morning of the fourth day, it is time to clean the birds and they are brought into the cleaning room and placed on a table. If the oil is very thick, we rinse the birds with vegetable oil. The vegetable oil makes the oil softer, so we can wipe it off.

Then the bird is washed in a basin of warm water mixed with dish washing soap. It takes two people to do the cleaning. One person holds the bird, while the other scrubs. We use toothbrushes to reach the feet and underneath the bird. We have to change the water in the basin four or five times for each bird.

Once the oil is gone, the bird gets a final rinse in warm water only. This is to wash off the soap. Then we check one more time to make sure no spots of oil were missed. It takes about 45 minutes to an hour to clean one bird.

On the afternoon of the fourth day, the birds are taken to a clean room and put under heat lamps and blowers to dry. On the fifth, sixth and seventh days, we keep the birds in a clean cage. On the eighth day, when the birds are strong and healthy, we let them go.





Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write a sentence in which you found the word 'waterproof'.

b From that sentence, write what you think 'waterproof' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'waterproof'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'waterproof'.

e Give some examples of something 'waterproof'.



Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: seriously	badly

3

Summarising

(the gist of the story)

To summarise means to rewrite the story in a shorter version using as many of our key words from Task 2 as needed.

1 Write a heading for your summary.

2 Now write the main idea in one sentence.
e.g. "This story tells us..."

3 Now add some detail to the main idea by writing more sentences after it.



**Finally,
can you rewrite your
summary to make it better?**

- 1. Look out for errors such as using the same word too often – use alternatives.**
- 2. Make sure you have summarised the author's purpose in your OWN words.**
- 3. Make sure your summary is in a logical order.**
- 4. Is your summary informative AND interesting to others?**

**There is
nothing wrong
with rewriting; even
the best authors
rewrite their
work.**

123
4

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.



On the morning of the fourth day, it is time to clean the birds and they are brought into the cleaning room and placed on a table.

On the first day after the spill, volunteers try to catch as many birds as they can. The birds must be kept warm.

On the eight day, when the birds are strong and healthy, we let them go.

On the fifth, sixth and seventh days, we keep the birds in a clean cage.

On the second and third days we make sure the birds get plenty of food and water to build up their strength.

On the afternoon of the fourth day, the birds are taken to a clean room and put under heat lamps and blowers to dry.



Get to the facts

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the facts of the story.



1 Where does the oil come from?

2 What kind of soap is used to wash the birds?

3 What is used to clean underneath the birds?

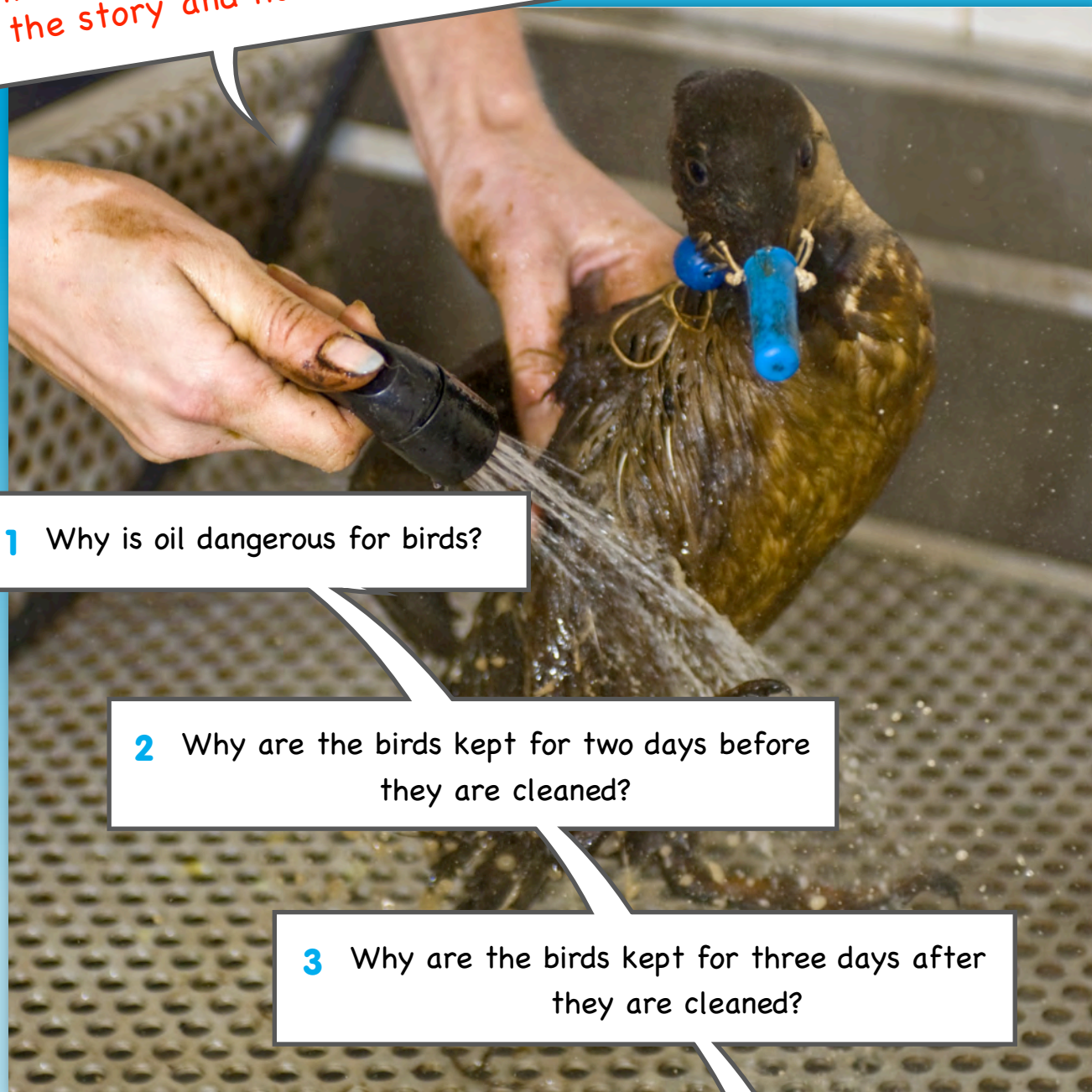
4 How many people does it take to clean one bird?

5 How long does it take to clean one bird?



Whys and wherefores

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the meanings in the story and how it was written.



1 Why is oil dangerous for birds?

2 Why are the birds kept for two days before they are cleaned?

3 Why are the birds kept for three days after they are cleaned?

4 Why is vegetable oil sometimes used to help clean the birds?



Opinions matter

Answer these questions to give your views and to develop the story.



1 Do you think cleaning oil off of birds is a difficult job?

2 How much oil can be dangerous for birds?

3 Why does it take two people to clean one bird?

4 Why are the birds put in a separate room to dry?

5 Do you think oil spills are dangerous for other sea animals?



Talking it through

It often helps if a group of people get together and discuss a problem.



Discussion topic: Cleaning an oil spill

When there is an oil spill, it costs a lot of money to clean oil off all of the birds that are injured. It also takes a lot of time. Do you think this is worth the money and the time?



Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.



A big oil spill

You live near the sea. One day, there is a big oil spill. They are asking for people to volunteer to help clean birds. You decide to volunteer.
(Now continue the story and describe how you clean the oil off the birds....)

After an oil spill...

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