

**Title of Session:** Nuts About Nature-It's December: Who Gives a Hoot?

**Moderator:** Bill Hilton Jr.

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Room: Tree House Conference Room

**BjB:** If you are new to Tapped In discussions, please read the 10 steps above this chat window

**BjB:** Welcome to Nuts About Nature. Our discussion leader is Bill Hilton Jr.

**BjB:** We usually start all the discussions in Tapped In with introductions

**BjB:** I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In

**DonnaLC:** I'm a 7th grade science teacher from Houston

**DorothySz:** I am a science teacher in New York

**CareyLR:** I am a pre-service teacher at North Georgia College & State University

**BrendaDGst3:** Hi Bill, I'm from Univ of Akron, joining for JanetSN class

**LeslieG:** I teach PE at the college level currently working on my masters. I'd love to incorporate some Nature into my classes ..I love to take them outside when I can

**TracyI:** I am a nurse studying to be a teacher

**CliffT:** I'm a science teacher in Milwaukee Wisconsin

**LauraAW:** I teach 4th grade

**LauraAW:** all subjects

**BillHi:** Leslie, Tracy, Laura . . . . What's your location?

**LeslieG:** North Georgia

**TracyI:** Tyler TX

**LauraAW:** Georgia

**AngelaKM:** I currently teach an at-risk program for students in 9th grade. I am working on my master's at North Georgia. I teach in Gainesville and live in Atlanta.

**BillHi:** Anyone else not introduced?

**SusanR:** K to 8 Occasional Teacher from Ottawa, Ontario

**SusanR:** ..Occasional

**BjB** hands the virtual floor over to Bill

**BrendaDGst3:** FYI - Univ of Akron is in Ohio

**BillHi:** Thanks, BJ.

**BjB** . o O ( the topic tonight is It's December...Who gives a hoot )

**BillHi:** Okay, by way of introduction, I'm Bill Hilton Jr., executive director of Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History near York, South Carolina.

**BillHi:** I taught high school and college biology for many years and do a lot of teacher training workshops around the country.

**BillHi:** So tonight we have at least six states and two countries represented. Pretty neat!

**BillHi:** "Nuts About Nature" is intended to provide a forum for discussing how to teach in the out-of-doors and/or how to bring nature inside the classroom.

**DonnaLC:** We're studying about the Earth's biomes now

**BillHi:** In general, anything related to that topic is fair game.

**PennyRa:** A guy at my school was great with including the outdoors I was just hesitant.

**CareyLR:** I'm not in a classroom right now but would like ideas for the future

**TracyI:** me too

**LauraAW:** same here Penny

**BillHi:** Okay, I'm going to start with a lead question.

**CliffT:** to bring nature into the out doors I brought in lizards and frogs

**NoemiB:** Hi everyone! I am also not in the classroom but have made several lesson plans on the biomes, habitats, etc.

**BrendaDGst3:** I am a teacher assistant for preschool class & we love to do nature stuff - but it's mostly outside

**BillHi:** Okay, but save your confessions for later.

**LeslieG:** I'd like to set up a nature trail either at one of the local schools or somewhere around so kids could go out and use it...maybe a fitness/nature trail together are there websites that could help me out?

**BillHi:** Here's the question:

**BillHi:** Think from the perspective of a first grader.

**LeslieG:** I can definitely do that!

**LauraAW:** lol

**CliffT:** ok me too

**PennyRa:** ok

**CareyLR:** ok

**BrendaDGst3:** works for me too

**NoemiB:** I am ready.

**DorothySz:** sounds good

**CliffT:** me too

**SusanR:** I have spent 5 years teaching GRADE ONE!!

**BillHi:** Okay, gang, we will get no where tonight if you keep interrupting.

**BillHi:** DON'T apologize!

**BillHi:** What kinds of birds would a first grader be likely to be able to identify accurately?

**PennyRa:** robin and blue jay

**LeslieG:** blue jay

**LauraAW:** bluebird

**TracyI:** cardinal

**CareyLR:** red bird

**SusanR:** robin..sparrow

**CareyLR:** eagle

**NoemiB:** Turkey, is it a bird?

**DorothySz:** pigeons

**CliffT:** the robin,

**LeslieG:** brown thrasher

**DonnaLC:** seagulls

**BrendaDGst3:** turkey

**NoemiB:** Ducks

**CliffT:** cardinal

**AngelaKM:** Eagle

**CliffT:** geese

**LeslieG:** chicken

**AngelaKM:** black, blue, red, brown

**CliffT:** crows

**SusanR:** hawk

**CareyLR:** buzzard?

**SusanR:** vulture

**BillHi:** C'mon. A first grader is not going to know a Brown Thrasher!

**SusanR:** owl

**CliffT:** no they are not

**LeslieG:** they would if it was their state bird!! GA

**CliffT:** pigeon

**BillHi:** Touché' Leslie.

**LeslieG:** haha just kidding!!

**CliffT:** penguin

**CliffT:** big bird

**BillHi:** I see some of you folks can't even spell the names of birds, much less identify them.

**NoemiB:** Okay, what is the answer?

**BrendaDGst3:** I'd say Big Bird

**BillHi:** Well, some first graders probably do know Blue Jay and cardinal.

**DonnaLC:** Or where the first grader lived or saw a lot of.

**BillHi:** Most would also know penguin and eagle.

**DorothySz:** basically it is based on their experiences

**BillHi:** How about hummingbirds?

**LeslieG:** maybe they're small come around mom's flowers

**CliffT:** no not really

**TracyI:** ostrich?

**BillHi:** Cliff, are you saying NO to hummingbirds?

**CliffT:** yes I'm saying no to humming birds.

**CareyLR:** why

**BillHi:** Anybody disagree with Cliff?

**AngelaKM:** Unless the child encountered them on a frequent basis, I would say no.

**CliffT:** I have never seen one

**KellyW:** where do you live?

**LeslieG:** they look different I think a first grader would know them..at least here in GA

**CareyLR:** but a child would know of one because of the feeders

**TracyI:** my four year old knows what a hummingbird is

**BillHi:** But have first graders seen any Disney films lately?

**LauraAW:** sure

**PennyRa:** yes

**NoemiB:** I used to see them, but since they linger around flowers, I used to think they were big butterflies.

**CliffT:** Wisconsin Milwaukee

**CliffT:** yes

**DonnaLC:** I was an adult before I saw a hummingbird.

**LeslieG:** exactly what I was thinking Tracy

**CliffT:** I love Disney films

**DorothySz:** me too

**TracyI:** my four year old can identify most birds

**BillHi:** Cliff, the co-star of a recent Disney film was a hummingbird.

**TracyI:** Pocahontas

**BillHi:** Correct.

**NoemiB:** Which film is that? I am clueless too?

**PennyRa:** So know of any great bird websites?

**CliffT:** yes I forgot

**BillHi:** Penny, stay on track.

**AngelaKM:** Is it in Lilo and Stitch?

**CliffT:** no

**PennyRa:** I'm trying -I don't know what you are talking about.

**TracyI:** POCAHONTAS

**CliffT:** I love that movie

**LeslieG:** why?

**CareyLR:** we are talking about hummingbirds

**BillHi:** Okay, the point is that kids may have no experience with hummingbird in the real world but may know of them from TV or movies.

**CliffT:** I haven't seen it in a while so I forgot about the hummingbirds

**LeslieG:** Ok now I get it..sorry

**NoemiB:** I think that I will test that theory.

**CareyLR:** isn't TV and movies where kids learn a good bit from

**CliffT:** yes besides their parents

**DonnaLC:** I believe that

**BillHi:** Of course.

**CliffT:** and going to the zoo to see the birds

**BrendaDGst3:** That is a great way to make connections to children's 'real life'

**CareyLR:** so how do you use this in the classroom?

**DorothySz:** without reinforcement and real life connection children won't know the difference

**BillHi:** Patience, Carey, I'm trying to get there.

**CliffT:** cut out pictures and talk about the birds on the level of a first grader

**BillHi:** So we've determined that a first grader doesn't have to have first-hand experience with a bird to know what it is.

**PennyRa:** yes

**LeslieG:** alright

**BrendaDGst3:** If they learn what the cartoon bird is they can see the real pictures, like Cliff said, from magazines & books

**CliffT:** and you have them color in pictures of birds

**DorothySz:** yes

**BillHi:** And there's another kind of bird that EVERY kid knows that only one of you mentioned.

**PennyRa:** chicken?

**CliffT:** big bird

**BillHi:** Wild bird (sorry).

**LeslieG:** hahaha

**LauraAW:** huh  
**PennyRa:** turkey?  
**DorothySz:** what  
**BillHi:** Don't encourage Cliff.  
**CliffT:** or turkey  
**BillHi:** Turkey is a correct answer ONLY in North & Central America.  
**LauraAW:** penguins??  
**CareyLR:** turkey's only live in North and Central?  
**DorothySz:** pigeons?  
**BillHi:** We already mentioned penguins.  
**BillHi:** Pigeons are not universal.  
**TracyI:** what was the question?  
**LeslieG:** blue jay  
**AngelaKM:** dove?  
**SusanR:** crow  
**CliffT:** if you take them to the zoo or read books on them then they will know what they are  
**BillHi:** Already mentioned Blue jay, Cardinal, eagle.  
**DorothySz:** sea gulls  
**LeslieG:** parrot  
**PennyRa:** we give!  
**BillHi:** Who gives a hoot!  
**PennyRa:** owl  
**CareyLR:** owl!  
**LeslieG:** OWL  
**SusanR:** owl  
**CliffT:** owls  
**LeslieG:** boy we got it then! haha  
**DonnaLC:** owl  
**SusanR:** the wise owl  
**CliffT:** my favorite is the snowy owl  
**BillHi:** Owls are universally distributed but I'm willing to bet that not one in 100,000 first graders has ever seen one in the wild.  
**NoemiB:** You are right! I can think of several picture books with owls in them.  
**LauraAW:** I've never seen one!  
**CareyLR:** why is that Bill?  
**PennyRa:** I've seen them at the zoo.  
**TracyI:** come to my house I have plenty  
**BrendaDGst3:** I've only seen a few in my lifetime & live in the country OH  
**BillHi:** What's your guess, Carey?  
**CliffT:** I have we have seen them up here in Wisconsin  
**CareyLR:** they are losing their homes?  
**LeslieG:** I have a few at my house..not in my house..at my house  
**KellyW:** nocturnal  
**BrendaDGst3:** They are nocturnal  
**BillHi:** Nocturnal is correct.

**NoemiB:** since little I was told a folktale about owls that made me afraid of them.

**CareyLR:** oh, ok

**DorothySz:** I don't think that a child living in New York City will identify an owl

**DonnaLC:** They are easily recognized because of their big eyes in books.

**LauraAW:** I think they would....

**CareyLR:** they are all over. I think that a child ANYWHERE can identify one

**BrendaDGst3:** owls are in a lot of cartoons too

**LauraAW:** I agree

**TracyI:** most kids know Winnie the Pooh

**CliffT:** yes

**LeslieG:** books cartoons..advertisements

**BillHi:** Okay, so where does this lead us?

**BillHi:** Don't answer!

**CliffT:** they can also see owls at the zoo

**NoemiB:** How do we help students make connections to owls aside from books, cartoons, etc

**PennyRa:** Didn't Smokey the Bear use an owl?

**CliffT:** I think he did

**BjB** listens to Bill

**BillHi:** Thank you, BJ.

**BillHi:** Some kids like owls because they associate them with cartoons, Harry Potter, wisdom, etc.

**BillHi:** Some kids fear owls because they are mysterious.

**BillHi:** Some kids associate owls with darkness and spooky stuff.

**BillHi:** Some kids are afraid of the out-of-doors even in the daytime.

**NoemiB:** Huh?

**DorothySz:** What is the point of this?

**CareyLR:** so do we try and teach kids that owls and the outdoors are not scary?

**BillHi:** So how can you use owls to excite kids about learning about nature?

**PennyRa:** Do you want us to answer?

**BillHi:** yes.

**DonnaLC:** Bring an owl into the classroom.

**BillHi:** Stick with it, Dorothy.

**PennyRa:** take 'em out

**BjB:** study owl pellets

**LauraAW:** not

**CareyLR:** you can show kids how helpful owls are to the environment

**CareyLR:** and the food chain

**AngelaKM:** For first graders, the owl can be the guide, the teacher

**SusanR:** Kids are fascinated

**LeslieG:** maybe the wise owl could be the oh what's the word...'mascot' and teach about nature

**CliffT:** owls are in the Alice in Wonderland movie too and they are weird and kind of scary in that movie

**CliffT:** no don't bring an owl to the classroom

**LeslieG:** yeah yeah the guide

**LeslieG:** not a real owl

**BjB:** owls are in Native American literature

**BrendaDGst3:** owls are associated with wisdom - like a teacher or as a first grader may see a teacher

**CareyLR:** study the habitats of owls and build one if possible

**CliffT:** you can talk the Indians and owls why they are so important to one another during a history lesson too

**LauraAW:** my students love Harry potter....

**LeslieG:** have all the kids make owl masks and wear them

**CliffT:** so that way you can do a whole day on owls

**BillHi:** Owls are actually no "wiser" than other birds and may even be "dumber" than most.

**LeslieG:** yeah with owls well owl masks anyway

**TracyI:** really

**BillHi:** Why do you think they got the reputation of being wise?

**LauraAW:** big eyes

**LeslieG:** because they hunt at night when everyone else is sleeping

**PennyRa:** Because they do appear to just sit back and take it all in.

**BrendaDGst3:** stereotyped wise but they can do some pretty neat things like turn their head all the way around

**DonnaLC:** They look smart.

**BillHi:** Big eyes in front of their heads.

**NoemiB:** Actually along with habitats, owls would be a great accompaniment to a lesson, since there are a variety of them and are easy to draw...

**CareyLR:** is that the only reason, Bill

**CliffT:** because they can see very well at night with those big eyes and they have 14 vertebra in there necks so they can turn there heads almost all the way around

**BillHi:** Thinking of animals in human terms.

**CareyLR:** oh ok

**BillHi:** And applying human characteristics to them.

**CareyLR:** wow

**PennyRa:** Never thought of it.

**LauraAW:** personification

**BillHi:** I contend that you can use owls to teach any subject matter to any age group.

**PennyRa:** Grammar?

**BrendaDGst3:** you could also do animalfication - get the student to sit still & quiet like an owl

**BillHi:** Somebody help Penny with using owls to teach grammar.

**CareyLR:** would that work Brenda?

**LauraAW:** Brenda. that sounds good

**BrendaDGst3:** maybe for a short time Carey but would help

**CareyLR:** cool

**BillHi:** Brenda, that's "reverse anthropomorphism," which isn't a bad thing to teach.

**BrendaDGst3:** Thanks Bill I did make that up

**LauraAW:** any ideas for owls and grammar?

**NoemiB:** Bye everyone; you all have great ideas. I enjoyed the discussion for being my first one.

**LeslieG:** Grammar like verbs and nouns or writing or what?

**PennyRa:** verbs and nouns

**BillHi:** It's pretty simple. When you are trying to teach a grammar concept, use information about owls in getting the concept across.

**SusanR:** I came across a nice literature list on Owls for Penny.. use the Reading List to teach the principles of grammar ..<http://www.lacellefamily.com/owls.html>

**TracyI:** how?

**CareyLR:** you could have an owl tree with nouns and verbs on it

**PennyRa:** Thanks for the website.

**LeslieG:** yeah like tell about the owl and information this and that..then have the kids pick out verbs and nouns..not very exciting, but it's about owls

**SusanR:** root words...tree trunk..

**PennyRa:** Old English books did that sort of thing.

**BillHi:** Leslie, actually it IS exciting to talk about owls, and that helps cement the grammar learning!

**LeslieG:** I thought so, I mean I would have really dug that!

**BillHi:** Before everybody disappears, let's look at my Web site so we can at lets see what an owl looks like: <http://www.hiltonpond.org/ThisWeek001129.html>

**CareyLR:** they are very pretty birds

**DonnaLC:** And small, but beautiful.

**KellyW** left the room (signed off).

**LeslieG:** those feet don't look small

**BillHi:** If you read down this page, you'll see information that could be used to teach: biology, geography, music, art . . . . What else?

**PennyRa:** I just saw that type of owl at Dollywood.

**BjB:** math

**LauraAW:** good connections Penny

**CareyLR:** math- graphing

**AngelaKM:** charts, ratios

**BrendaDGst3:** writing - about the owl

**BillHi:** Good, Brenda.

**LauraAW:** physics...

**LauraAW:** flying

**BillHi:** Physical education maybe?

**BrendaDGst3:** yes movements

**BillHi:** Anatomy?

**CareyLR:** that is a good one Bill

**SusanR:** visual arts

**LeslieG:** thanks

**CareyLR:** have to go, school lab is closing. thanks for a great first time session

**BillHi:** And all those other things you brought up long ago like food chains, etc.

**LeslieG:** well muscles and anatomy

**BillHi:** How about vocabulary?

**LauraAW:** sure



**BillHi:** Well, you get the point, I hope.

**LeslieG:** how they move their body-other anatomy stuff

**SusanR:** Drama..

**PennyRa:** pellets and bird parts

**BillHi:** One reason American kids do so poorly in science is because science is thought of as a separate subject. In actuality, it should be integrated into all other subjects, and vice versa.

**BillHi:** You can use owls to help fix that!

**BrendaDGst3:** as a preschool teacher - fine/gross motor skills, the owl can be the theme & use cross-curriculum

**PennyRa:** I think it's lack of teacher time to do the integrating

**LeslieG:** owls flying across the curriculum.

**BillHi:** It doesn't take any more time to integrate, just creativity.

**LauraAW:** and the standardized test

**BillHi:** Good phrase, Leslie.

**LeslieG:** thanks

**LeslieG:** thanks

**PennyRa:** It does if you don't know that much about that one area yourself

**DonnaLC:** In a couple of weeks we're dissecting owl pellets.

**AngelaKM:** Penny, I agree, even creativity takes time

**TracyI:** why is everyone fascinated with pellets?

**BillHi:** Okay, we've lost a bunch of folks. before we quit, please bookmark <http://www.hiltonpond.org> and visit often.

**BillHi:** Penny, that's why we have "Nuts About nature."

**BjB:** Bill has a wonderful newsletter that I recommend

**LeslieG:** online or in the mail?

**SusanR:** Thanks Bill..stimulating discussion...

**DonnaLC:** I can use this discuss with my students when we talk about owls.

**BjB:** to add to what Bill just said about having Nuts About Nature...that applies to many of the discussions in Tapped In...from preservice to veteran teachers

**BillHi:** You can subscribe to "This week at Hilton Pond" by sending an e-mail to [thisweek@hiltonpond.org](mailto:thisweek@hiltonpond.org) with SUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

**LeslieG:** oh cool

**LauraAW:** thanks bill

**BrendaDGst3:** I have your web & & have enjoyed this 1st time discussion but I have to go also. Thanks

**DonnaLC:** Thanks Bill.

**BjB:** Thanks, everyone, for joining the discussion

**BillHi:** Thanks to all for coming. see you in January. Have a good winter break.

**PennyRa:** Thanks Bill.

**TracyI:** thank you Bill