



Activities
Vision in Birds of Prey



What you need

Each group of students (2–3 per group) should have:

- One paper strip with one dot and one paper strip with two dots (photocopy the accompanying master sheet).
- A 25 metre tape measure.
- Sharp eyesight!

What to do

1. Student A and Student B must collect one paper strip each (one strip with one dot and one strip with two dots).
2. Student C (who doesn't know which person has the strip with two dots) must stand 25 metres away.
3. When Student C is 25 metres away, Students A and B hold up their strip of paper with the dots facing Student C.
4. Student C must walk slowly towards the strips of paper, looking carefully at each strip. When Student C can see two separate dots on one strip, they must stand still and point at the strip with two dots.
5. Measure the distance between the strip of paper with two dots and Student C standing still on the spot. Record this distance on a class results table. Can you design a results table for this activity?
6. Swap roles, so each person in the group has a turn at being Student C (picking the strip with two dots).

What to notice

(Example of results table)

Experiment	Distance (metres) at which two dots were seen

What was the longest and shortest distance recorded?

What was the average distance?

Was anyone able to pick two dots at distances greater than 18 metres away?

What's happening

Humans have one of the best visual abilities of any animal apart from birds of prey such as eagles and kestrels.

The American kestrel can tell that there are two dots spaced 2 millimetres apart (like the dots used on this strip) from 18 metres away. Most humans with good vision can distinguish two dots from about 6 metres away. This ability to tell two dots apart is called resolution.



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