Engineer a Nest

**Materials:** plastic egg or balled up piece of paper, collected natural materials

**Background Information:** All animals and plants need a place to live. Most choose, or are born into, particular habitats. Habitats are places in nature that provide food, protection from predators and unfavorable weather, and a home in which to raise young. The animals and plants that live in a particular habitat have adaptations that allow them to survive there. Some animals build homes in their habitat. One common type of animal home is a nest. Lots of different animals build nests, including squirrels, raccoons, alligators, orangutans, insects, and most species of birds. Nests are typically built as a place to lay and keep eggs or young safe.

**STEM Career Connection:** A wildlife biologist is someone who studies and manages wild animals and their habitats.

**Literature Connections:** *A Nest is Noisy* by Dianna Aston, *Animal Homes* (Ranger Rick: Animal Fun for Young Children) by Jennifer Bove

**Challenge:**
1. Get a plastic egg or ball up a piece of paper to use as your egg.
2. Go for a walk around your school, home, or neighborhood. Look for nests in trees, on the ground, or in other locations. Make observations of the nests.
3. During or after the walk, collect natural materials you can use to construct a nest for your egg. Good materials include grass, leaves, and sticks.
4. Find a spot and use your collected materials to construct a nest for your egg. Be sure to make your nest comfortable, safe, and protective for your egg.

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