

Helping Young Survive - Critical Thinking (K-2)

Read the text aloud to young students and ask them to look at the picture. Then ask them what the parents and young are doing to help the offspring survive.

Barn swallow parents work together to build an open cup nest of mud and grass up under an overhang or on a ledge or shelf. They line it with grass stems and feathers. Nests are found under porches, in barns and under bridges. Barn swallows will nest in nest boxes put out in open fields. Both parents will sit on the eggs in the nest to keep them warm. This is called incubation. Once the chicks hatch, the parents take turns bringing them insects to eat. When a parent approaches the chicks, they will raise their heads, open their mouths and peep loudly. Parents then stuff the insects into the chicks open mouths. When they've had enough to eat, the chicks settle down to rest. At night, when it gets colder, the parents will sit on the nest, over the chicks and keep them warm. Barn swallows will stay with their chicks until they can fly and feed on their own.



Helping Young Survive - Critical Thinking Guide

These are the survival tricks students should learn from the reading and picture. Help them with prompts and talk about how each helps the chicks survive. Use this page for students to color and remember what they learned.

1. Barn swallow parents work together to build the nest.
2. Nests are built up high out of reach of predators.
3. Both parents incubate the eggs and keep the chicks warm.
4. Both parents take turns feeding chicks.
5. Chicks see parents and open their mouths and calls loudly when hungry.
6. Parents will feed chicks until they stop calling.
7. Parents stay with chicks until they can fly and feed on their own.

