

**Student Comprehension Worksheet: A 'Perfect Comeback'**

**Directions:** Read the online *Science News* article "[In a 'perfect comeback,' some birds use antibird spikes to build their nests](#)" and answer the following questions as directed by your teacher. A version of the article appears in the September 9 issue of *Science News*.

**Before Reading**

- 1. Why do you think birds build nests? Come up with two possible benefits of those nests to the birds. If you were a nest-building bird, come up with three specific materials that you might use, then explain what benefit each of these materials would provide. (It doesn't have to be one of the two mentioned previously.)**
  
- 2. Imagine that two school friends both notice the same pattern, which is that they both seem to perform better on tests when they wear green. From these observations, the pair makes the following claim: On average, students who wear green score higher on tests. Do you feel confident about the accuracy of this claim? Explain your answer. What steps (be specific) could be taken next to test these claims?**

**During Reading**

- 1. As of this story's publication, how many spike-decorated nests had been discovered in Europe? Where might you usually find such spikes?**
  
- 2. In what country was the first spike-decorated nest discovered? Describe how this discovery was made.**
  
- 3. So far, what two bird species have been observed constructing such nests?**
  
- 4. While two bird species seem to construct spiked nests, Auke-Florian Hiemstra believes these species use the spikes for different purposes. For what purpose might each bird species use these spikes, according to Hiemstra?**

**5. These anti-bird spikes serve as a substitute for what type of natural material, according to the scientists?**

**6. What does the term “citizen science” mean? How does this story describe one use of citizen science?**

**7. What are some next steps that Hiemstra would like to take to learn more about this phenomenon?**

**After Reading**

**1. A hypothesis is a possible explanation for a phenomenon, based on limited evidence. Identify one hypothesis made by scientists in this article.**

**2. What evidence do the scientists use to support their hypotheses?**

**3. What could scientists do to increase confidence in the claims made in this article? How could scientists go about that process?**