

The Little Bird's Trick on Us

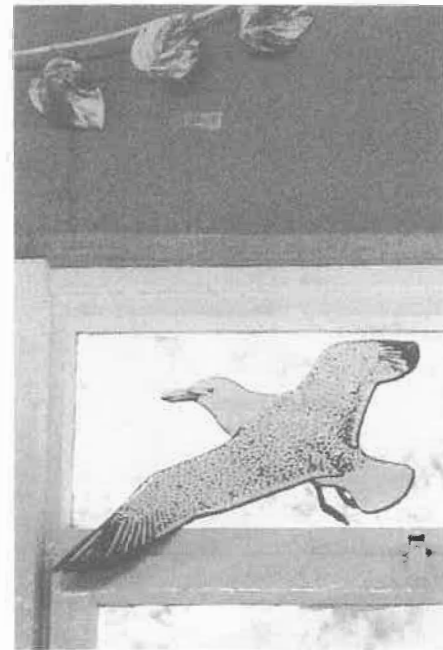
Protagonists: Alan (4.1), Maria Teresa (3.8), and Veronica (3.8), are playing next to the wall of the dress-up clothing space.

What does the paper bird glued to the window glass have to do with the shadow on the wall?

- Is it possible to stop the shadow-bird?
- Who is moving it?
- Why is it so difficult to capture the bird?



1. "Come see, there is a little bird."



2.



3. "It is that one that sends the shadow here." She points to the paper bird attached to the top of the glass.

The discussion on this day regarding these questions shows one of the many ways children compare theories and laws that they sense are weak and can be improved. The children soon learn four things,

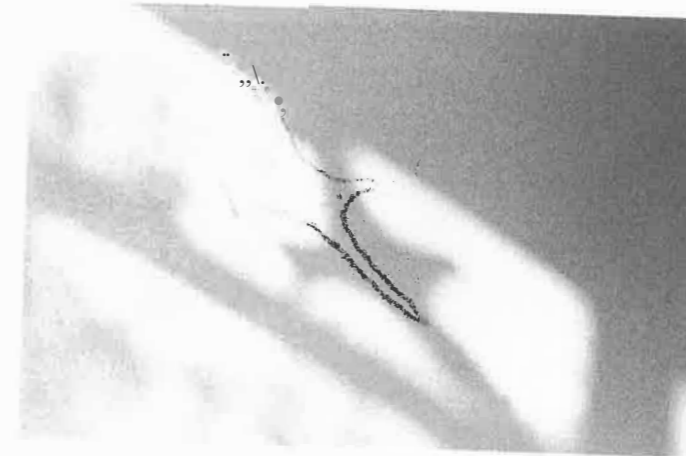
- That it is indispensable to have and express in words their own thoughts about things.
- That to understand things often means to change their own words and their own thoughts.
- That these changes often take place while speaking with other children or an adult.
- That when such changes do take place, one often feels a sort of subtle movement that involves the body, the emotions, the mind, and the relationship with things and with other people.



4. Teacher, "It is the shadow of that little bird. Let's make an outline with color so we can see it better. Then we can go out to play, and when we come back inside, we will return to see it."



5. After a while, the children come back in.



6. "The shadow is not here anymore!" "But I see the beak. Wow, it looks like an eagle!," "It is him . . . it is the sun that starts from there and hits here., "But it is still the same shadow . . . I think it moves . . ."



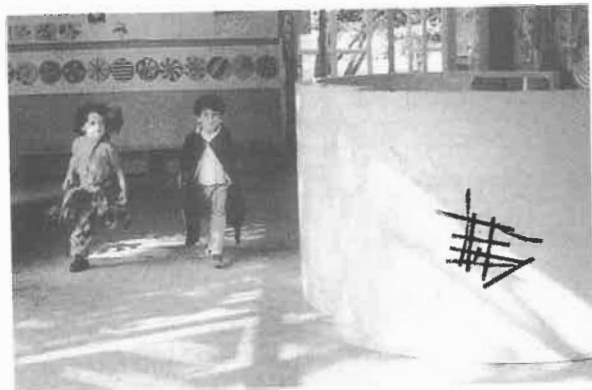
7. "Because the bird flies away, it came here to the dressing up place."



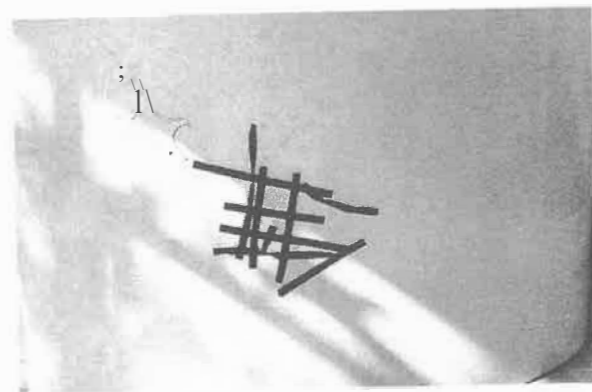
8. "Come on! Let's stop him." Teacher, "How can we stop him?"



9. "We need to place some tape. We'll put a lot of it and then he cannot move. We'll make a cage for him."



10. The children go to the courtyard to play, but after a while return to check ...



11. "The bird freed himself! We must really stop him with our hands or ... with something ... " "Let's go to the kitchen to get some bread. We can give him some crumbs so he will stop and eat."



14. "He is coming down. Soon he will find the crumbs and eat them." "Take them, eat, they are good!"



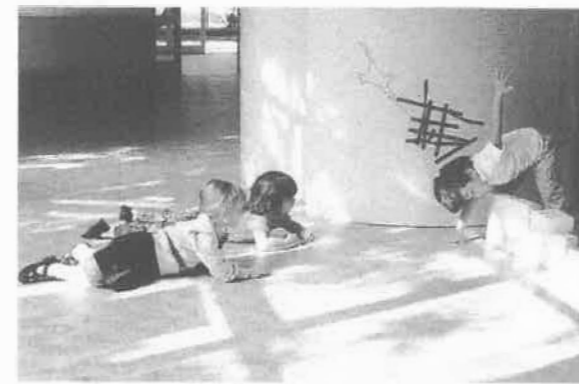
13.



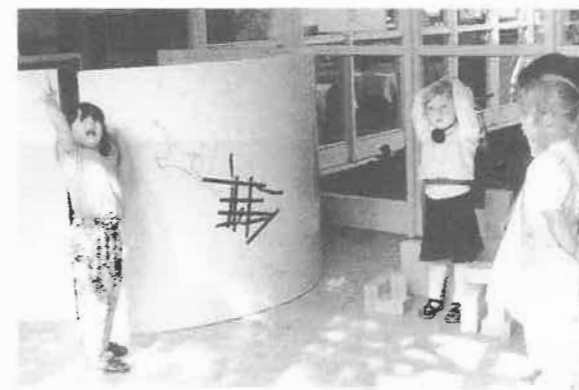
14. "He did not stop. Should we make a little house for him?"



15. "We can put armchairs, a bed, and a TV ..."



16. "He did not go into the house. Look! He went on the walls of the house. Should we make a more beautiful house?"



18. "We cannot stop the bird. We placed some tape on him and he did not stop; we gave him bread crumbs and he did not stop; we built a house for him and he did not stay ..."



40. The children follow the advice of Elisa. "It is going away ... he went away. I really do not know how to stop him."



17. "I will jump on him! Or I will get a ribbon and tie it around his neck." "No, come on, he likes to be free and in any case, he does not stop." "Let's go call the big kids (the ones in the 5-year-olds' class) to see if they have a way to solve this problem."



19. "The shadows of birds run away. When the bird runs away, also the shadow runs away. If, for example, the shadow of the bird moves and sees bread on the ground and people around them, the bird hears noise and runs away."

41. The following day the children realize that the shadow of the bird moves, following the same trajectory that they had traced the day before.

"I know why he goes in the same road: because he is always a pretend bird. It is the same shape on the window."

"He goes along the same route because he likes it. The next day when the sun comes back, the ray of sun understands that he has to go over the road of the day before. It is the sun that is at the wheel."