

Grade 6 – Father Goose

- 1- Read the text *Father Goose* on pages 2 and 3.
- 2- Answer the following comprehension questions:
 - a. How did Bill teach the geese to fly with him?
 - b. What type of airplane did he use?
 - c. Why did Bill get involved in this project?
 - d. Explain in your own words what imprinting is.
 - e. In what ways do you think parents “imprint” their children?
- 3- In the text, you see that a baby goose is called a gosling. On page 4, match some animals with their young.

Send me your work at melanie.custeau2@csmc.qc.ca .



warm up

Looking at the picture, why do you think this story is called "Father Goose"? What connection does the name have to "Mother Goose"?

From the time he was a child, Bill Lishman had been fascinated with birds. He loved to watch the gulls flying around his family's farm in Ontario. He longed to be able to swoop and soar in the blue skies, just like the birds.

In October 1993, Bill's dream finally came true. On that day, Bill, along with friend and fellow pilot Joe Duff, took off from his farm in two ultralight airplanes. As Goose

Leaders, the two men led a flock of 18 Canada geese in a V-formation all the way south to Virginia. The next spring, in April 1994, the geese flew back to Bill's farm on their own, to greet their adopted father!

The migration experiment was filmed for TV. Barbara Walters, host of the show *20/20*, called it "the most beautiful story we have ever shown in our 20-year history." A movie was made of the story. *Fly Away Home* was a big hit in the theatres.

All photos courtesy Operation Migration Project

Bill taught the geese to migrate by using a method called “imprinting.” In the 1950s, scientist Konrad Lorenz noticed that a gosling becomes attached to the first thing it sees within 24 hours after it is hatched. The gosling thinks that this object is its parent. Lorenz called this “imprinting.” He soon discovered that goslings could be tricked into believing anyone was their parent.

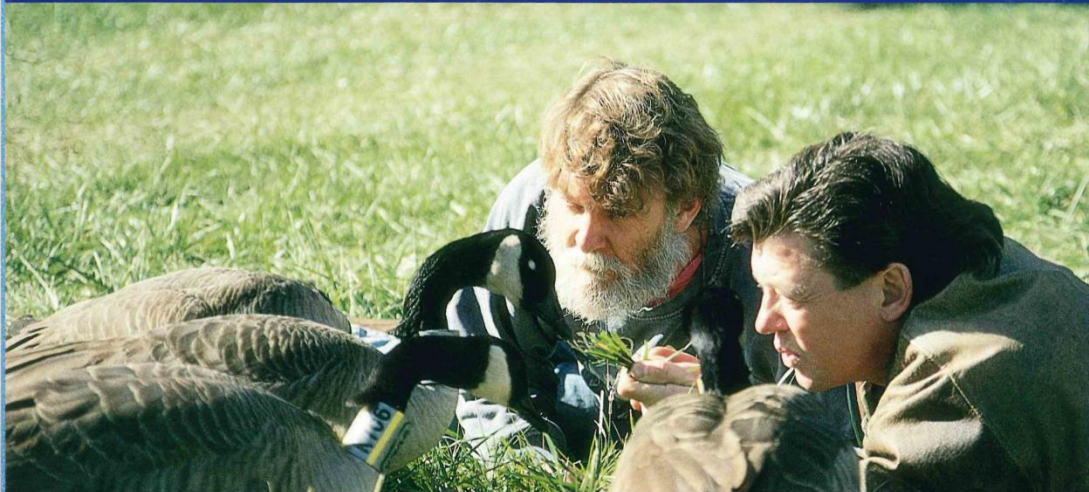
When Bill learned about imprinting, he decided to experiment with it. Over the years, bird habitats have been changed by humans. As a result, many birds that used to migrate south in the winter lost their ability

to do so. Bill decided to “imprint” himself with some geese and teach them how to migrate once again.

In 1987, Bill found Canada goose eggs and hatched them. He imprinted himself as the father — and the goslings did follow him around. Getting them to fly behind him, however, was a different story. The noise of the light plane frightened them off!

Bill did not give up. He hatched goslings year after year and worked with them. By 1988, he succeeded in getting the geese to fly behind his plane! He became Father Goose!

▼ Bill (left) imprinted himself as a father to his geese.



Animals and their young

Match the animals with their young.

Animal

1- goose 2- chicken 3- duck 4- owl 5- peacock
6- eagle 7- pigeon 8- swan 9- turkey 10- hawk
11- deer 12- bear 13- bee 14- cow 15- butterfly
16- dog 17- cat 18- frog 19- horse 20- kangaroo

Young

a. cygnet b. chick c. cub d. gosling e. eyas
f. peachick g. owlet h. squab i. fawn j. calf
k. kitten l. duckling m. poult n. larvae o. colt
p. eaglet q. joey r. tadpole s. pup t. caterpillar

1. ____ 2. ____ 3. ____ 4. ____ 5. ____
6. ____ 7. ____ 8. ____ 9. ____ 10. ____
11. ____ 12. ____ 13. ____ 14. ____ 15. ____
16. ____ 17. ____ 18. ____ 19. ____ 20. ____