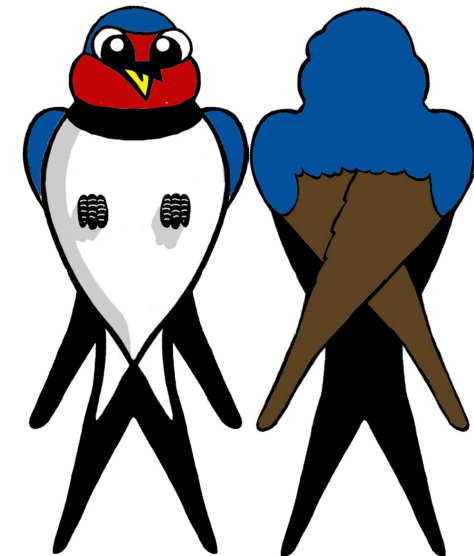
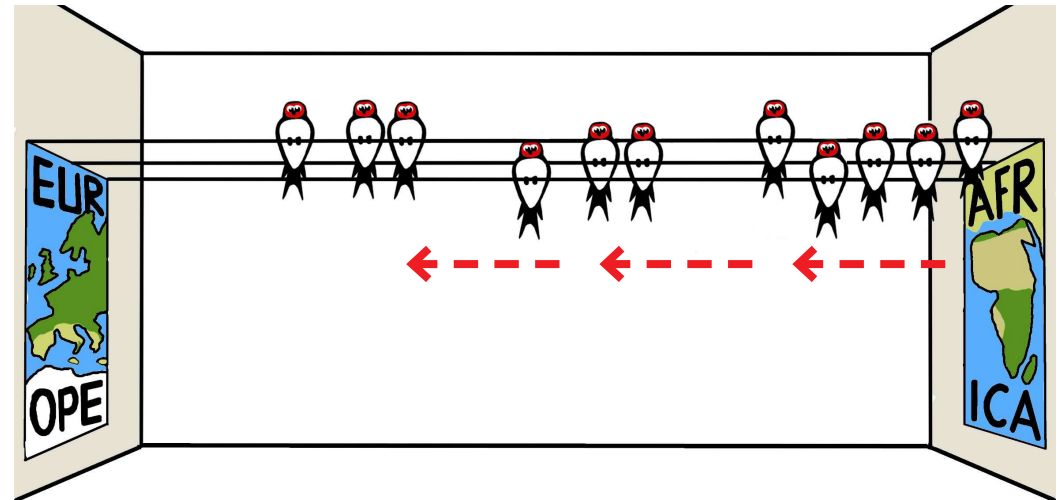


Out of Africa

This game is best played in spring, to coincide with birds flying north to their nesting ground.

- Hang a map or picture of Europe on one classroom wall and a matching picture of Africa facing it on the opposite wall (see diagram). Children share what they know about these lands. Ask what they think the classroom space in between the maps represents: it's the Mediterranean Sea!
- Thread each swallow model through lengths of string spanning the width of the classroom – “between the two continents” – as in the diagram, so you will have as many strings as children in the class (or pairs, or groups, up to you). Leave no slack or knots in the strings. These lines will be the birds' perches, but also their migration route. Children mark their string every 10cm with a marker that shows.
- Start by huddling all the swallows on the 'African' side, ensuring that the children understand what's going on: it's spring and birds are gathering on the African coast before they cross the sea.
- Now every day, before moving any swallows, discuss where the birds are and what is happening. Then, every day for about a week, groups of these swallows start 'migrating' across the classroom until they reach 'Europe'. Singly, in pairs or in groups children roll dice once daily and 'migrate' their swallows along the line markers correspondingly. This progress reflects the fact that not all swallows leave Africa at the same time. Continue until all swallows reach Europe.
- During the process children should realise that migrating birds get tired and hungry and need land where to rest and look for food. That's why Malta's position in the middle of the sea is so important for birds.



Here's how your perching swallow will look in colour.

