Juan’s parrot Penny sat in her big cage. She watched Juan as he wiggled his tooth. He wiggled it again and again. Pulling it was not going to be easy. “Yikes,” said Juan. “YIKES,” squawked Penny. “Want to play?”
Juan did not want to play. Penny was getting louder, and Juan was getting mad. “Not yet, bad bird!” he shouted. Juan stomped into the kitchen and sat at the table. He looked at a basket filled with fruit and suddenly had an idea. First he bit into a plum. Nothing happened. Then he bit into a peach. Still nothing happened.
Finally he bit into an apple, and his tooth moved.

Just as he started to bite into the apple for the third time, his tooth flew out of his mouth. It flew out the kitchen door and past Penny’s cage.

Juan ran toward the spot where his tooth had landed, but it wasn’t there. He looked under the pillows on the couch and behind the TV. He looked everywhere but found no tooth.
Juan’s mother told him his tooth would turn up because lost things always do. Juan hoped his mother was right. She would not fib about such things. He was about to go look under his bed when Penny began to beg. “Want to play?” she squawked even louder than before.
“Okay, you silly bird,” said Juan. He opened Penny’s cage and let her out.
“Yikes!” screeched the bird.
Juan smiled. He rolled an old paper towel roll toward Penny. She picked it up with her feet and brought it to her beak. Then she put it on the ground and gave it a jab with her beak. It rolled toward Juan. Back and forth went the paper towel roll until Penny grew tired of the game. Juan was ready to quit the game too. He wanted to find his tooth.
Juan was about to put Penny back into her cage when he noticed she hid something in her beak. “What do you have?” he asked. Penny was about to hop back to her cage but thought better of it. Instead she dropped a shiny white tooth into Juan’s hand.
“My tooth!” said Juan.  
“My tooth!” squawked Penny.
When parrots live in the wild, they copy jungle sounds. When they live with people, they copy the sounds their owners make. The birds sound like they are talking! Parrot owners plan to spend lots of time with their birds. They have fun teaching the birds to talk.
Even people who do not own parrots are glad to see these beautiful birds. Parrots can have green, blue, yellow, white, or gray bodies. Their feathers can be touched with a rainbow of colors.
Parrots have large heads with strong beaks. They use their beaks to crack hard nuts or crunch seeds. Parrots also use their beaks as a tool.
Have you ever watched a parrot inside a cage? It will use its beak to grab the cage and climb up the side! And if a parrot doesn’t want to be touched, watch out! It can snap at you with its mighty beak!
Parrots like to eat seeds and fruit. They have thick and muscular tongues. Parrots use their tongues to strip seeds off plants. They use their tongues to split and mash fruit too.
Parrots have four toes on each foot. Two of the toes point forward, and two toes point backward. Parrots use their feet like hands. They look clumsy when they walk, but parrots are quick and excellent climbers.
Pet parrots are like children. They pass the time playing with toys. Parrots will hang from the top of their cage with one toe to play with a favorite toy. Safe toys are important. Smart parrot owners make safe toys for their birds. Toys can be made from bells, paper towel rolls, and plastic milk jugs.
Parrots can pick up almost anything that is small enough to handle. They stop and collect the things they find. Since parrots need time out of their cages, their owners have to be careful. They have to make sure to keep things out of their bird’s reach. Some parrots like to play hide-and-seek. They pluck up things and hide them from their owners! Who do you think will win the game?
After reading the article about parrots, what facts did you learn? What do parrots look like? What do they eat? What do they like to do?

Imagine that you have a pet parrot. What would you teach it to say? Would you make it some toys to play with? What kinds of toys would you make?

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