

***Dedicated
to Reducing
Pesticides***

Unit 3 Lesson 4: Staying Alive

Focus Areas: Animal Adaptation; Science, Language Arts, Art
Focus Skills: observing, making generalizations

Objective

To understand how animals adapt to their environment

Essential Question

How do animals adapt to survive predators in their environment?

Essential Understanding

Animals survive predators in their environment by hiding, fleeing, or fighting back.

Background

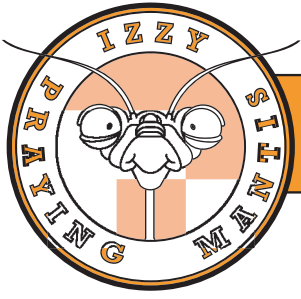
Animals and plants have a variety of ways to escape predators. Some, like deer, rely on swiftness to outrun their enemies. Others have sharp teeth and claws to fight. Some insects can sting or pinch when threatened, and many plants and animals rely on emitting unpleasant smells or tastes to discourage would-be diners. Protective coverings like quills and thorns help protect some potential lunches. Clever coloration, camouflage, allows prey to hide from predators quite effectively.

Vocabulary

adaptation	the manner in which a living thing adjusts to survive in its environment
camouflage	coloration that allows a person, plant, or animal to blend in with its surroundings
predator	a plant or animal that seeks and destroys other plants or animals for food
prey	a plant or animal in the food chain that is a food source for another



University of
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Logistics

Time: 30 minutes

Group Size: 5 to 30

Space: a large room, an outside play area

Materials

Animals in Hiding by Melvin Berger *

picture cards of animals *

art materials for creating an insect

pictures of various habitats

* single copy provided

Preparation

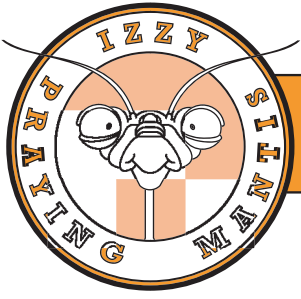
Gather art materials.

Preview *Animals in Hiding*.

Activity

Introduction

1. Poll the group to determine which game, Tag or Hide and Seek, they like best.
2. Tell them that other living things (plants and animals) have similar games but, unlike the games we play for “fun” with our friends and family, the games played by plants and animals are for protection.
3. Display the words: **PREDATOR**, **PREY**, and **CAMOUFLAGE**, and review the meaning of each. **Note:** You may wish to discuss human use of camouflage. (hunters, army uniforms, etc.)
4. Read and share the book, *Animals in Hiding* by Melvin Berger.

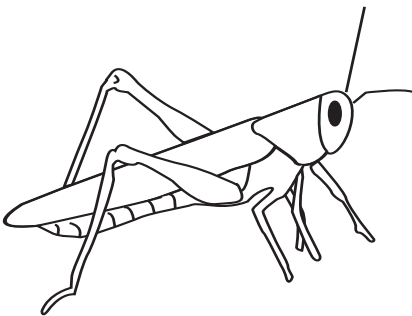


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Activity

Involvement

1. Tell the group that they are going to “disguise” a creature to “hide” in a habitat.
2. Select an area and brainstorm what the creature would need to “hide” in this area. (size, shape, coloration) **Note:** You may decide to use just large sheets of construction paper, areas within the room, or environmental backgrounds of specific habitats (forest, beach, grass, pavement, etc.).
3. Divide the group into teams of three or four and give each group a distinct area.
4. Allow time for the group to create a life form and camouflage it to suit that habitat using the art supplies provided.
5. Allow each team time to hide their creature. **Note:** At least a portion of their creature must be visible without moving books, furniture, etc.
6. Have the teams stand in the center of the area and survey it to find the hidden creatures.
7. Tell the group members to go and stand by one of the creatures they found.
8. Direct each team to now put their disguised creature in a different habitat.
9. Repeat steps 6 and 7.
10. Discuss why it was easier to find the creatures in round two of the “game.”





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Follow Up

Brainstorm about some other protective devices used by plants and animals.

You may ask leading questions such as: How do skunks keep enemies away? (spray a bad smell)

What do bees do when they're threatened? (sting)

What do cacti have to protect them from being nibbled? (thorns, spines, or prickles)

If you play too rough with your cat, what might it do? (scratch)

What does a grasshopper do to make someone put it down? (grasshoppers "spit," so do camels)

What does a crab do to make someone put it down? (pinches)

