

SCIENCE FAIR CENTRAL

MAKE. CREATE. EXPLORE.



CAMOUFLAGED CRITTERS

What We Want to Find Out

How can animals hide from predators?

Procedure

First, sketch out a template of an animal -- such as a butterfly, bear, or bird -- and cut out the image. Next, invite your child to color his or her critter to blend in with a location somewhere in your home. You may want to find a location first and then color the critter to blend in. You might need to point out different patterns or textures to include. When he or she has finished coloring, place some tape on the back of the critter so that the animal can stick to its "hiding place." Finally, challenge another family member to find the critter. Ask your child: Why do you think it is important for some animals to blend in or camouflage to their surroundings?

Science Behind the Fun

Camouflage is an adaptation that allows a living thing to blend into its surroundings. Color helps camouflage an organism so it can blend in with its environment. Patterns can camouflage an animal's outline. This might help an animal avoid predators, or help a predator sneak up on its prey. By coloring the critter to match the environment somewhere in your home, your child is modeling camouflage.

Materials

- Coloring materials
- Flexible craft medium
- Tape

Tips

To prevent your child from coloring off the critter paper, lightly secure a paper underneath with tape that you can remove after coloring is done. Encourage your child to think about locations with solid colors, and also patterns he or she would need to replicate. Do flat surfaces work better than others? Could shadows be used to help the critter blend in?

Still Curious?

Try searching out some aquatic examples of animals using camouflage: <http://ocean.si.edu/ocean-news/how-octopuses-and-squids-change-color>

