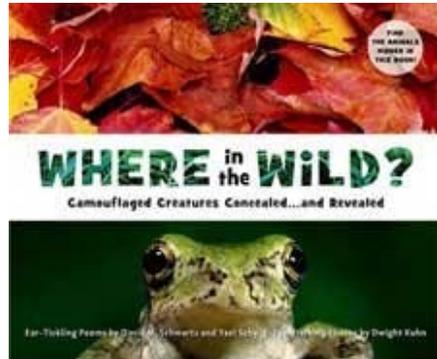


Where in the Wild?

MATERIALS

- Classroom set of *Where in the Wild? Camouflaged Creatures Concealed and Revealed* by David Schwartz and Yael Schy, with illustrations by Dwight Kuhn



PURPOSE

To help students understand that some animals have features that make them harder to find in their surroundings. Some use these features to hide from predators while others use them to help catch prey.

CONTEXT

This lesson makes use of a book called *Where in the Wild? Camouflaged Creatures Concealed and Revealed* by David Schwartz and Yael Schy, with illustrations by Dwight Kuhn (Tricycle Press). This book was the winner of the **2008 AAAS/Subaru SB&F Prize for Excellence in Science Books** (<http://www.sbsonline.com/Subaru/Pages/PrizesHome.aspx>) in the Children's Science Picture Book category. SB&F, Science Books & Films, is a project of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. *Where in the Wild?* introduces animal camouflage through poetry, photography, and informative facts.

Benchmarks for Science Literacy says that all students should have the opportunity to observe a variety of plants and animals, but observing is not enough. Students should have reasons for their observations and they should be reasons that prompt them to do something with the information that they collect by observing.

(*Benchmarks for Science Literacy*, p. 102 (<http://www.project2061.org/publications/bsl/online/index.php?chapter=5#A1>)) This book encourages students to look carefully and after reading it children should be encouraged to look for ways in which living things use camouflage in their own environment. This lesson will help students build an understanding of the idea that camouflage is a form of protection.

This book also can help K-2 students develop their ideas about diversity—it focuses on a single concept and yet it shows how different organisms use a variety of features to “hide.” By examining the animals in this book, young students can begin to look for patterns in the natural world and describe similarities and differences that they observe.

Students may believe that adaptations result from some purpose or design or they

may describe an adaptation as a conscious process to fulfill some need or want. Although at this grade level it would be inappropriate to teach about natural selection, it is important to avoid any language that may lead young students to conclude that camouflage is a purposeful adaptation.

Ideas in this lesson are also related to concepts found in these Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.1 Ask and answer such questions as *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.2 Identify the main topic of a multiparagraph text as well as the focus of specific paragraphs within the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.6 Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.7 Explain how specific images (e.g., a diagram showing how a machine works) contribute to and clarify a text.

PLANNING AHEAD

This lesson uses the following vocabulary words that might need to be introduced to the class, especially younger students. These include: predator, prey, amphibian, camouflage, serpentine, and environment. You may want to include these words in a spelling list before doing this lesson.

MOTIVATION

To introduce the book and the concept of camouflage, ask students to draw an animal that is camouflaged, or hidden in plain sight. Then have students work in small groups to find the camouflaged animals in each others' drawings. This could be coordinated with the Art teacher before the book is presented to the class. Use the students' drawings to lead a discussion on which types of strategies are more successful for making animals difficult to find in different backgrounds or environments.

DEVELOPMENT

Gather the class in a circle and introduce students to the text, *Where in the Wild?* Make sure that all the students are able to see the book. Read the introductory page aloud. This page introduces the students to the concept of camouflage and

also explains the relationship between the poems and the picture. After you have read the page aloud, ask students to look closely at the picture on the left-hand side. Ask them if they can find the animal that is hiding in the picture. (A ladybug can be seen on the top center part of the picture if you look closely.) After they have found the animal, ask them:

Was it hard to find the animal? Why?

Would the animal have been easier to find if it had been in a different part of the picture? Why?

Continue to read the text aloud. Read the book twice. The first time, focus on finding the animals in the picture. As you are going through the book, you can make use of a **podcast interview with authors David Schwartz and Yael Schy and photographer Dwight Kuhn (<http://sbfonline.com/SBFBookTalk-WhereInWild.mp3>)** where the authors and photographer each read a selection from the book. Ask the students to point out the clues they find in the poems. Ten different animals are featured in the text, some are easier to find than others. If students can't find the animals in a few minutes, lift the flap to show them where the animal is hiding.

Then, read the book aloud again, this time sharing the information inside the fold with the class. Ask students to identify the animals as predators or prey and to explain how the hiding behavior benefits the animal.

Next, divide the class into groups and distribute one copy of the book to each group. Tell students that each one of them should select their favorite animal and read their choice aloud to the rest of the group. Allow enough time for this activity so that each student may have the opportunity to read aloud.

ASSESSMENT

To assess student understanding, lead a discussion on the ideas covered in this lesson, using examples from the book where appropriate. You can begin by asking, "Why is it useful for animals to blend in with their surroundings?" Ask students if they know of any other animals that are able to blend into their surroundings and whether they do it by use of color, shape, behaviors, or a combination of these. Many children might know of animals that they have seen on TV from nature programs. Or they may know of animals in their own area that camouflage themselves for protection. Encourage children to discuss these examples and to form questions about these animals that they might like to find out more about. Students should understand that camouflage helps animals stay alive.

You also may give students the opportunity to redraw the pictures they drew in the

Motivation section of this lesson to try to "hide" their animal in a better camouflage.

EXTENSIONS

The online interactive, **Nowhere to Hide**, allows students to manipulate the level of pollution emitted by a factory (i.e., the background color of the screen) and observe the effects on the different colored bugs, moving them toward a better understanding of evolution by natural selection.

To illustrate the effectiveness of camouflage, use a template to cut out an animal shape, such as moths or frogs, from newspaper. Cut at least 10 pieces. Cut an equal number of animal shapes from brightly colored construction paper. Spread out some newspaper sheets on the floor and have a small group of students stand with their backs to the newspaper. Toss all of the animal shapes randomly onto the newspaper. Tell the children that they will act as predators and ask them to turn quickly around and grab the first animal that they see on the newspaper. Most will pick the brightly colored ones, which will illustrate the importance of camouflage.

Have students classify the animals in the book according to several attributes and describe or show the method for classification. For example, students can group together animals by color, by size, by where they live, by what they eat, and so on.

Hide and Seek Butterflies (<http://www.uen.org/Lessonplan/preview.cgi?LPid=16224>), a lesson from the Utah Education Network, nicely reinforces the ideas in this lesson, incorporating data collection and inquiry activities based on butterflies.

The **Where in the Wild Teacher's Guide** (http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/teachers_guides/9781582462073.pdf) contains other useful suggestions for using the book in the classroom.

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