



Camouflage

Teacher notes

The coverings of animals vary in colour, pattern (stripes, spots etc) and type (fur, feathers, skin or scales etc). Coverings help to camouflage the animal and are suited to the habitat the animal lives in.

There are different types of camouflage:

Cryptic colouration

This is when the natural colour of an animal matches the habitat they live in. For example lizards and skinks are green which blends in with the green leaves. Another example is lions that are light brown matching the soil and grasses of the savannah habitat.

Disruptive colouration

Many animals can not see colour, just shades of black and white. Animals that have striped and blotchy patterns break up the outline shape of the animal making it harder to see them, particularly when they are many in a large group. Many predators hunt during dusk and dawn. At this time the position of the sun creates long shadows so animals with stripes are harder to see as they can appear to blend into the surrounding environment/shadows.


Counter shading

Some animals have the upper parts of their bodies' one colour and the bottom a different colour. This can be seen in fish where their upper colour blends in to the surrounding water. When predators look down on the fish it makes them harder to see. Likewise when predators are below a fish and look up and see the silver under belly. The fish under belly looks like water with the sun shining on it – making them harder to see.

Disguises and mimicry

Parts of the animals' bodies that resemble parts of the habitat they live in for examples stick insects appear to blend in to the branches.





Resource 2: Camouflage

Tiger

What habitat does a Tiger live in?

Giraffe

What habitat does a giraffe live in?

Zebra

What habitat does a Zebra live in?

Kea

What habitat does a Kea live in?

Instructions: Draw the camouflage pattern you see and answer the questions.

