

## Birds and Worms *(adapted from Project Learning Tree)*

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LEARN ABOUT ADAPTATIONS AND VARIATIONS THAT HELP ANIMALS SURVIVE

### First Grade NGSS DCI Addressed:

#### [LS1.A](#) Structure and Function

- [1-LS1-1](#)

#### [LS3.A](#) Inheritance of Traits

#### [LS3.B](#) Variation of Traits

- [1-LS3-1](#)

### Pre-Trip Information:

- [Camouflage: Animal Hide and Seek Video](#)

**Objective:** Students discover the value of camouflage as protective coloration.

**Materials:** \*bag of “worms” (100 worm sized pieces of yarn, approximately 10 of each color)

\*Poster paper with the names of each color of worm.

**Set Up:** \* Pick a start area and spread the “worms” out approx. 20 feet away.

**Facilitating the Activity:** Set the stage – introductory questions:

- Ask: Why are frogs green, owls brown, and polar bears white? *To camouflage*
- Ask: What are the benefits of camouflage? *To blend in to the habitat to hide better or hunt better.*
- Ask: What are the best colors for an animal to be out here at River Camp to camouflage? Brown or Green.
- Tell the kids... Lets find out!

### Doing the Activity

- Split the students up into two groups and have them form two single file lines.
- Tell them they are all Western Scrub Jay’s that live here at the San Joaquin River.
- Ask: What do Scrub Jay’s eat? *Worms, insects, etc.*
- Tell them that there are lots of “worms” spread out in the grass in front of them. Show them one.
- Explain the relay race activity to them:
  - The first scrub jay eats (picks up) one “worm” and runs back to tag the next person in line.
    - After tagging the next person in line, the player should go to the back of the line, still holding onto their worm(s).
  - Once the player at the front of the line is tagged they run out to grab a worm, then come back to tag the next player.
  - The first group to have all scrub jays get a worm (to finish the relay race) wins this round.
- After the first round have each player drop their worm in the appropriate colored area on the poster paper.

- Ask: What do you notice about the colors that were chosen?
- Play a second round. This time have them pick up 2 worms. After the round have them drop their worm in the appropriate colored area on the poster paper.
- Ask again: What do you notice about the colors that were chosen?
- Play again. Mix it up and have them grab 3 worms or have each person go twice. Be creative!
- After the round have them drop their worms on the poster paper again.
- Ask: What colors do we have the most of? The least of?
- Leave those worms on the poster paper and take the kids out into the grass to search for the rest.

### **Activity Debrief**

- Ask: Which color(s) were the best camouflaged to survive in the grass environment? *Brown and Green*
- Ask: Why were they the best suited? *Because they blended in.*
- Ask: What color(s) would be the best suited if we did this on the road? *Lighter colors. If you have the time try it on the road.*
- Ask: What did you learn from this activity – give a couple of students a chance to answer.**

Post Trip Activities to be done in classroom:

- Print out various animal shapes and have students choose one to color, then have them use art & craft supplies to create a home for them that they will blend in to so that it is hard to see the animal they colored.