

Connecting With Your Child

Hunting for Hidden Animals

To help your child learn more about animal structures, have them practice hunting “prey” that have different structures and functions. They can pretend to be a bird hunting prey in your backyard or local green space.

1. You will need string, pipe cleaners, or yarn in four different colors. Three of the colors should be bright, loud hues that are easy to see on the grass. The fourth color should be similar to the color of your lawn or green space. You will also need a stopwatch or timer and a bag for each child participating.
2. Cut the string, pipe cleaners, or yarn into 4-inch pieces. Scatter the pieces in a large area of your yard, such as a 10 meter by 10 meter area. This will be the hunting zone. Try to make sure the four different colors are equally distributed in the hunting zone. Make sure the children are not watching you as you spread out the items.
3. Tell the hunters they will have 30 seconds to hunt for as many of the “prey” items as they can and place them in the bag. While they hunt, they must move constantly through the hunting area, except for when they stop to pick up an item. After 30 seconds, count how many of the brightly colored prey items they were able to pick up.
4. Next, give the hunters 30 seconds to hunt for the prey items that are the same color as the yard or the green space. As before, they must move constantly through the hunting area, except for when they stop to pick up an item. After 30 seconds, count how many of these items they were able to pick up.

Here are some questions to discuss with your child:

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2. What kind of structures or characteristics allow animals to blend into the environment around them?
3. Which color represented camouflaged animals?
4. Which type of “prey” were you able to catch the most of?
5. How does camouflage help animals avoid being eaten?



You can use other kinds of colored objects, such as these playground balls.