

Colors That Hide

by Joshua Young



- 1 The setting sun glowed red. Soon night would fall over the African grasslands. A zebra stood still. It listened. This was a dangerous time of day. This was the time when lions liked to hunt.
- 2 The zebra knew what to do. It ran into the tall grass. Then it stopped and stood still. Like magic, it seemed to vanish. For a while the zebra was safe.
- 3 Why was the zebra safe there? The zebra was safe because of its stripes. They looked a lot like the tall grass and shadows around it. The tall grass made the zebra hard to see.
- 4 A zebra has “protective coloring.” It looks like the things around it. That helps keep it safe. However, the zebra isn’t the only animal whose color protects it. There are many others.
- 5 Baby deer are not strong. They can’t run from danger. However, their color helps hide them. Their brown fur has patches of white. These look like patches of sunlight on the ground.
- 6 Some rabbits grow white fur in winter. This makes them hard to see in the snow. Then there’s the alligator. When it lies still, what does it look like? A log. Why? It looks like a log because of its bumpy skin.
- 7 At night you can see a brown owl as it peeps from a hole in a tree. Its big bright eyes give it away. They shine like little moons. What if the owl keeps its eyes almost closed? Then it’s hidden. It seems to be part of the tree.
- 8 Can you name other creatures whose color hides them? What about white polar bears? What about striped tigers? What about little green frogs? What about snakes?

COMPREHENSION

A Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write *a* or *b*.

- 1** This story shows that an animal's colors can
 - a** be very beautiful.
 - b** keep it safe from danger.
- 2** Grass helps hide a zebra because it
 - a** is taller than a zebra.
 - b** looks like a zebra's stripes.
- 3** The one thing that best helps an alligator hide is its
 - a** skin.
 - b** eyes.

4 Protective coloring can't help an animal if the animal

- a** moves around.
- b** stays very still.

5 If you wanted to use protective coloring, you might wear

- a** red and orange in a lake.
- b** brown and green in the woods.

LEARN ABOUT WORDS

B Often you can find out the meaning of a word by seeing how it is used in a story. The other words in the story give you clues.

Find the word in the story that best fits each meaning. (A paragraph number tells you where to look.) Write the word.

- 1** disappear (2)
- 2** spots (5)
- 3** rough; lumpy (6)
- 4** looks out (7)
- 5** animals; living things (8)

C Read the words you wrote. Which one best fits in each sentence below? Write the word.

- 6** An owl _____ from its hole to look around.
- 7** "Protective coloring" helps animals _____ from enemies.
- 8** An alligator and a log are both _____.
- 9** Other _____ whose colors hide them are birds and fish.
- 10** Trees make the sunshine fall in _____ on the ground.

THINK ABOUT IT

D earth + quake = earthquake

The word *earthquake* means “a shaking of the ground.” *Earthquake* is a compound word. A compound word is made by putting two or more words together.

Look at the two words in **bold type**. Put the two words together to complete the second sentence. Write the compound word.

- 1 The **light** of the **sun** falls on the ground. The _____ falls in patches.
- 2 That **snake** has a **rattle** on its tail. I hope I never see a _____.
- 3 Some **lands** of Africa are covered with **grass**. Many animals live in the _____.
- 4 A **fish** that is colored **gold** is quite pretty. There is a _____ in the fish tank.
- 5 A **bird** with **black** feathers flew above. Then the _____ landed on the fence.

E The **bird's song** was as **sweet** as **honey**.

This sentence helps you understand how sweet the bird's song was. The phrase “as sweet as honey” is a figure of speech. It is a different way of saying that the bird's song was very lovely.

Choose the word from the first two sentences that best fits in the blank. Write the word.

- 6 A breeze is quiet. Thunder is loud.
A lion's roar is as loud as _____.
- 7 Silk is soft. Sandpaper is rough.
A baby deer's skin is as soft as _____.
- 8 A star is bright. The night is dark.
Her eyes are as bright as a _____.
- 9 Water is blue. Snow is white.
A polar bear's fur is as white as _____.
- 10 Grass is green. Logs are brown.
A frog is as green as _____.