

**Project FOCUS
Best Lessons
THIRD GRADE**

Title of Lesson: Adaptations - Camouflage with Lentils

Theme: Life Science

Unit Number: **Unit Title:** Habitats of Georgia

Performance Standard(s) Covered (enter code):

Enduring Standards (objectives of activity):

Habits of Mind

- Asks questions
- Uses numbers to quantify
- Works in a group
- Uses tools to measure and view
- Looks at how parts of things are needed
- Describes and compares using physical attributes
- Observes using senses
- Draws and describes observations

Content (key terms and topics covered):

Adapt
Adaptation
Characteristic
Camouflage
Survive

Learning Activity (Description in Steps)

Abstract (limit 100 characters): Students will play a game in which they are on the hunt for camouflaged lentils.

Details:

Before class, mix even amounts of red and green lentils. Spread 1/3 of the mixture on the grass, 1/3 on similarly sized area of red clay/dirt, and 1/3 on the dirt (other options listed below).

In class, review the concept of camouflage as an adaptation. Explain to the students that they are going to play a game. They will be birds, flying around looking for food for their family. The only thing this particular type of bird eats is lentils (you can call them seeds, bugs, etc. if you think that would be less confusing for your students). Show them the lentils so they will know what they are looking for.

Divide the class into three equally sized groups. The first group will "hunt" in the grass, the second will "hunt" on the red clay, and the third will "hunt" on the dirt. Each group will have 60 seconds to find as many lentils as they possibly can in their designated area.

When the students return to the classroom, have each group deposit all of the lentils they collected onto a piece of paper labeled with the area their group "hunted" in. It is visually helpful for your students if you then quickly count up the lentils as well as sort them into piles of red and green. Encourage the students to observe the results and ask questions. What colors did they find the most? Did it matter where the lentils were? Does a red lentil or green lentil have a better chance of surviving? Have the students explain their findings.

Materials Needed (Type and Quantity):

- Dry red lentils - 1 bag
- Dry green lentils - 1 bag
- Stopwatch
- Grassy outdoor area
- Optional: red dirt/clay-filled area and color-contrasting area (soil, woodchips, carpet, blacktop, concrete... anything, as long as it is not the same color as the lentils!)

Notes and Tips (suggested changes, alternative methods, cautions):

- Note: You should NOT use beads, paperclips, or scraps of paper for this activity, as the students will inevitably leave some litter behind.
- Optional: Have the students draw a picture to accompany their observations.
- Optional: You can modify this lesson into a relay race. Spread all the lentils on the grass only. Then divide the class into teams, line them up, and tell them they can only pick up ONE lentil on their turn. When they return with their lentil, they drop it into a bucket and the next person goes, until everyone has had a turn or two. Afterwards, observe which color lentil was picked up the most and discuss why this was.

Sources/References:

- 1) Originally submitted by Becky Rahn, edited by Jessica Valle (2010)
- 2)
- 3)