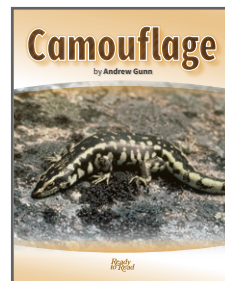


Camouflage

by Andrew Gunn



Shared reading

Shared reading provides students with opportunities to behave like readers and to engage in rich conversations about texts that they are initially not able to read for themselves. It encourages enthusiasm for and enjoyment of reading, builds knowledge, strengthens comprehension, and fosters understanding of the features of a wide range of texts (including narrative, poetry, and non-fiction). It gives students access to texts that would otherwise be too difficult for them to read independently.

Shared reading involves multiple readings of a text, led by the teacher, with increasing interaction and participation by students. After many shared reading sessions, students develop increasing independence as they become able to read the small books that accompany the big books.

Overview

This non-fiction text describes what camouflage is and provides several examples of creatures that use it. The ideas in this book build on the ideas about camouflage in the shared book *Stick Insects*. As well as reading *Camouflage* for interest or to support content-area learning, you can use it to familiarise students with the purposes and features of non-fiction and to broaden their range of reading material.

There is an audio version of the text as an MP3 file at www.readytoread.tki.org.nz

Cross-curriculum links

Science (Living World) – levels 1 and 2 – Ecology: Recognise that living things are suited to their particular habitat.

Related texts

- Non-fiction texts about camouflage and/or predators: *Stick Insects* (shared); *Too Many Possums* (Purple 2); “Catching Mustelids” (JJ 43)
- Stories and poems that involve predators: *I Want to Fly* (Blue 2); *The Lion and the Mouse*, *Two Tiger Tales* (Purple 1); *Did You Shake Your Tail Feathers?* (Purple 2); “Hoiho” (a poem in JJ 43)
- Other examples of reports. There are many Ready to Read and *Junior Journal* examples at Purple and Gold levels. Some with a focus on the Living World are listed here: *Extraordinary Earthworms*, *The White-tailed Spider*, *Undersea Gardens* (Ready to Read, Gold 2); “New Zealand Sea Lions” (Gold 2, JJ 38); “Wild Orphans” (Gold 2, JJ 41); “Pōhutukawa” (Gold 1, JJ 45); “Tākapu” (Gold 2, JJ 45); “The Gulls of Sulphur Bay” (Gold 2, JJ 46)

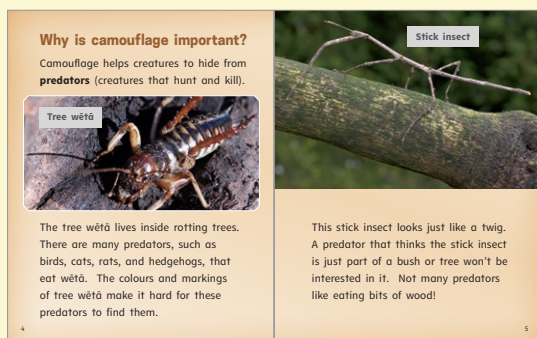
Text characteristics

Unlike guided texts, shared reading texts are not levelled and may be used with a wide range of students. Many of the text characteristics of *Camouflage*, as described here, are similar to but more complex than those in texts for guided reading.

A mix of explicit and implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make connections between the ideas in the text and their prior knowledge and to make inferences (for example, that camouflage varies according to where animals live, that different animals have different predators, that the way creatures move – or don’t move – is an aspect of camouflage)

The format of the text as a report, with an introduction, a series of main points (organised under headings), and a conclusion

Some settings, contexts, and information that may be unfamiliar to students



Visual language features (such as a contents page, subheadings, labelled photographs, and a caption) and bold print for key vocabulary (with accompanying definitions or explanations)

Ideas and information organised in paragraphs

Some unfamiliar words and phrases, including subject-specific vocabulary and phrases associated with camouflage (for example, “markings”, “hard to see”, “don’t notice”, “coloured patches”, “countershading”, “light colours”, “dark colours”, “blends in with”, “matching”), the meaning of which is supported by the context, the sentence structure, the visual language features, or explicit definitions or explanations

A variety of sentence structures, including compound and complex sentences, so that students are required to notice and use linking words and phrases (such as “This is called”, “and”, “that”, “just like”, “like”, “so”, “These”, “where”, “This helps”, “such as”, “but”, “This means”) and punctuation to clarify the links between ideas

The above spread:

Text copyright © Crown. Photographs: (tree wētā) by Sid Mosdell from <https://goo.gl/wuEV0i> (cropped) and (stick insect) by Brian Gratwicke from <https://goo.gl/CcJ1rY> are used under a CC BY 2.0 licence

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Teacher support material for *Camouflage* Ready to Read, 2015

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Reading purposes and learning goals

(What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically” about texts?)

Select from and adapt the suggestions in this teacher support material according to your students’ strengths, needs, and experiences – their culture, language, and identity (*Reading and Writing Standards for years 1–8*, Knowledge of the Learner, page 6).

Each reading purpose is accompanied by learning goals. The learning goals are the sorts of behaviours that you want your students to demonstrate after multiple readings of this text.

Often the first reading of a shared text will be with the whole class. The focus is on making meaning. The teacher leads the reading, with students invited to join in as they feel confident, so that they can focus on tracking and understanding the information and main ideas. Further reading to develop understanding of the topic, and deeper exploration of language and text features, can be left for subsequent readings.

A suggested purpose for the initial reading

To find out what camouflage is and why it is important

Possible learning goals

During the first reading, the students can:

- **make connections** between their prior knowledge and information in the text and visual features in order to identify some facts about camouflage
- **ask questions** and notice some answers (locate information) in the text
- use the descriptions in the text to **visualise** how some creatures use camouflage
- notice some ways the text and visual language features work together to make meaning.

Introducing the text

- Provide support for English language learners by exploring the photographs and visual language features and introducing some topic vocabulary before using the book with the wider group. Encourage students who share a first language other than English to discuss the topic in that language. Read the first two pages aloud and use the photos to clarify the concept of camouflage. Browse through the rest of the photos, introducing the names of the creatures. Support the students in pronouncing and practising the names.
- Collect any resources you think will support the reading with the wider group, for example, photos or video clips of creatures that are mentioned but not shown in the text (a hedgehog on page 4 and stoats on pages 7 and 10).

- Read the title and discuss the photo on the front cover. *What do you notice about the skink? Is it easy to see?* Ask the students what they know about camouflage. Record their ideas in the “K” column of a KWL chart (what we know; what we want to learn; what we have learnt).
- Confirm that this is a non-fiction text and briefly discuss what features the students might expect to see. Look through the book together (noting the contents page, headings, words in bold print, the caption, and the labelled photographs) to confirm or clarify their ideas.
- Return to the contents page and discuss its purpose. Read the first heading and page number and turn to the page. Prompt the students to check that the heading matches the heading on the contents page.
- Share the reading purpose. Check if the students have any questions to add to the KWL chart.

Reading and discussing the text

- Many of the ideas in this text are likely to be new and of great interest to students. Allow plenty of time for questions and discussion. You may choose to spread the reading over more than one session.
- Pages 2 and 3 – Use a pointer to support tracking of the print. Draw the students’ attention to the word “camouflage” in bold print on page 3. Explain that important words in a non-fiction text are often in bold print the first time they appear, and this means the word is explained either on the page (as in this book) or in a glossary. Read the first paragraph on page 3 and clarify the connection between “This” (in line 3) and the “colour, markings, or shapes” that make creatures hard to see.
- To clarify their understanding of how camouflage works, have the students check the gecko’s colour, markings, and shape and compare the two photos. *What is it about the gecko that makes it hard to see in the first photo?*
- Pages 4 and 5 – Read the heading and encourage the students to use what they have learnt from the previous page (about why camouflage was important for the gecko) to predict why it will be important for these creatures. Draw attention to the bold print for “predators” and the definition in parentheses. Have the students examine the photographs and discuss what makes the wētā and stick insect hard to see.
- The end of page 5 is a good point to stop if you want to spread the first reading over more than one session. Add any ideas or questions to the chart. From page 6, the focus is on how other creatures use camouflage.

- Pages 6 and 7 – Encourage the students to use the photographs (and their prior knowledge) to infer how creatures can hide on a rock! After reading page 7, summarise the main points: *What is it that makes the tuatara hard to see? The skink?* Prompt the students to notice that it's not just the appearance of the tuatara but the fact that it keeps very still.
- Pages 8 and 9 – The concept of countershading is complex and students may need several readings to build their understanding. Ask them to visualise what the sea looks like (usually dark blue or green). *Now imagine there is a penguin swimming under the water. Is it easy to see its dark back in the dark sea?* Use the bottom illustration to support the idea of light shining through the water so that it looks white, just like the penguin's belly.
- Continue reading in this way, using prompts, thinkalouds, and intonation to clarify links between ideas.
- If necessary, draw attention to “prey” and “praying” on page 11. Explain that while these words sound similar, they are spelled differently and have different meanings.
- Page 12 – After reading page 12, have the students share with a partner which creature they think is the best or most interesting “camouflage expert”. Remind the students of the purpose for reading and add any new information or questions to the KWL chart.

Suggested purposes for subsequent readings

You can return to this text many times with different purposes. Subsequent readings of the big book may be with a group of students who have similar learning needs rather than with the whole class. **Select from and adapt** the following suggestions.

Suggested reading purpose

To find out more about how camouflage helps some creatures to survive

Learning goals

Over a number of sessions, the students can:

- **locate** specific information, for example, information about a particular creature
- **make connections** between ideas
- **make inferences** about the connections between the types of camouflage and where the creature lives and/or the sorts of predators it has.

Choose or adapt from the suggestions below for each session.

- Reread pages 2–5 and review the main ideas about how camouflage helps creatures survive. Review their understanding of predators, drawing on the definition, their prior knowledge, and information in the text. Discuss the three examples of camouflage on these pages. *What does this section tell us about how the gecko hides from birds? What predators does the wētā need to hide from? What about the stick insect?* Provide a framework for summarising the information (see below). You could work through one example together, then have the students work in pairs to complete the next two.

How camouflage helps creatures survive			
Creature	Where it lives (habitat)	Camouflage	Predators
Gecko	In the tree tops	Has green colours like the tree tops and white bits like sunlight.	Birds
Wētā			
Stick insect			

You could repeat this activity with pages 6–10. Note that the focus changes to camouflage being used for hunting on page 11.

The students could follow up this session by finding out about creatures that use camouflage for hunting or that use camouflage in other habitats such as snow, desert, or grass.

Suggested reading purpose

To explore the structure of this report

To explore how the non-fiction text features help us to understand the ideas

Learning goals

Over a number of sessions, the students can:

- **identify** the structure of the report (the beginning, middle, and end)
- **identify** and **summarise** main points
- **identify** how the non-fiction text features help the reader.

Choose one of the suggestions below for each session.

- Explain that a report has a beginning, a middle, and an end. As you reread the text with the students, identify these aspects, as shown in the chart below. Explain that the middle of the report is mostly a series of examples of how different creatures use camouflage.

Section of the book	Purpose
The beginning (the introduction)	Explains what camouflage is and why it is important
The middle	Shows how creatures use camouflage
The end (the conclusion)	Summarises the topic (often repeats an idea from the beginning)

- Use the first two headings as a guide for summarising the main points on pages 2-4. Support the students to create a heading for the middle section by asking “*What is this section mainly about?*” Together, create summaries for each section. Some examples have been provided.

Headings	Summary of main ideas
What is camouflage?	Camouflage is when creatures have colours, shapes, or markings that make them hard to see.
Why is camouflage important?	Camouflage protects creatures from predators.
How do some creatures use camouflage?	Tree wētā live inside rotting trees. They have colours and markings that make them hard to find. Some stick insects look like twigs. Tuatara are grey and knobbly like rocks and they stay very still.

- Reread the book with a focus on how the text features help the reader. Build a chart of the features as you discuss them. For example:

Book features that help us	
Book features	How they help us
Contents page	Tells us what information is in the book and what page it is on
Headings	Tell us what the page or section is about Help us check we are on the right page
Words in bold print	Show that the word is important and that it is explained in the book
Captions and labels	Help us understand what is in a picture or photo or diagram
Photographs	Show us what things look like

Suggested reading purpose

To explore some of the ways the writer has used language to help us understand the information in this report

Learning goals

Over a number of sessions, the students can:

- explore** how the text supports the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary
- explore** how descriptive language supports the meaning.

Choose one of the suggestions below for each session.

- As you reread the text, pause after reading the sentences that include words in bold print. Highlight the sentences and ask the students to locate the part that tells them where they will find the words’ meanings. Support them in finding phrases, such as “This is called” (page 3), “which means” (page 8), “This means” (page 10), and the bracketed definitions on pages 4, 7, and 11.
- Prompt the students to notice how the author uses descriptive language to help them visualise the creatures and their habitats, for example, “inside rotting trees”, “looks just like a twig”, “grey and knobbly”, “black with coloured patches”; “... light colours on one side and dark colours on the other”, “the darker sea below it”; “brightest moonlight”. The students could choose a photograph of a creature and habitat in the book and practise using precise language to describe it.
- You could build up a web of words associated with camouflage, beginning with examples from the book (such as “hard to see”, “hide”, “colours and markings”, “protect”, “blends in”, “matching”) and adding their own examples (for example, “disguise”, “tricking”, “keeping safe”).
- Explore words that help to link ideas and provide further information. As you read, draw attention to the use of the words “such as” on pages 4 and 10 to indicate a list of examples. The word “like” is used in a similar way in the final sentences on pages 6, 7, and 8.