



SUMMER | Critters

Hide and Seek: Butterfly Camouflage

Summary:

There are many critters busy at work to keep our plants healthy in our gardens. They are small, though, and are often camouflaged. Today, we're going to practice finding little creatures in the great big world.

Before Visiting the Garden:

Gather: A green blanket, a magnifying glass

Explore: *Shantavia Beale II* by Kehinde Wiley: Can you find the lady in the painting? Does she blend in with the background? Also consider bringing images of butterflies blending in with various plants.

Read: *Butterfly, Butterfly: A Book of Colors* by Petr Horacek

In the Garden:

Butterflies help keep the plants in our garden healthy by helping move pollen between plants. Often times, we don't even see them because they do such a good job of camouflaging themselves in the plants around them. Camouflage helps keep our pollinators safe by helping them blend in and stay hidden from predators.

Questions to Explore:

- Can you find any butterflies in the garden? How many are there?
- What color are the butterflies? Use your magnifying glass to look closer.
- What color are the flowers around the butterflies?
- Do the colors on your clothing match any of the plants in the garden? Or the butterflies?

Activity:

Play a game of "camouflage and seek!"

- Wrap your tiny gardener in the green blanket and bring them into the garden.
- Have your gardener stand next to one of the green plants in the garden. Can you see them? Have them describe what it feels like to be camouflaged, and discuss what it might feel like to be a camouflaged butterfly. Would you feel braver? Like you could get away?
- If they are able, have your gardener find a new spot to hide, and go search for them. Do they like being camouflaged?

Beyond the Garden | Visit a Theater

One form of camouflage is costume! Visit your local theater and watch a play. Talk about how the actors camouflage themselves to become other people and tell a story. Can you put on a play at home?

Continue Exploring | Supporting Materials

Check out these amazing examples of camouflage: <http://education.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/camouflage/>