

Name: _____

HIDE AND SEEK

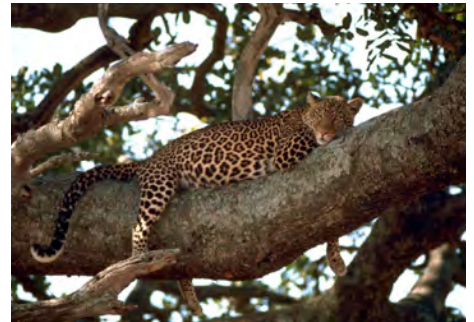
In the wild, it often comes down to predator and prey, the hunter and the hunted. As you can imagine, most organisms want to stay alive. They have developed ways of adapting to severe habitats, and hiding or escaping from those who would like to eat them. So how do they do it?

One very helpful adaptation is called camouflage. You may have been surprised by an animal that was using camouflage in the past. It blended into its surroundings so well that you nearly missed seeing it at all. Its coloring, markings, or other physical features resemble its habitat so much that you can look directly at it without seeing it at first. This is often good enough to fool a predator that is scanning an area to look for food. This helps prey to hide from its predator. But did you know that it often works the other way around, too? Predators can use camouflage to trap their prey.

If a predator wants to eat a certain animal, and that animal cannot see it lying in wait, it can pounce on its prey unexpectedly, devouring it before it even knows what is happening.

Another popular adaptation is mimicry. Mimicry is when an animal has markings or other physical characteristics that allow it to look like some other kind of animal or plant. If it can make its predators believe that it is something that preys on them, or would at least be difficult or painful to catch, its predator will often go off in search of an easier target.

Sometimes animals are able to survive when their habitat changes because they adapt to the new conditions. For example, birds that were accustomed to nesting on high cliffs or in tall trees have survived industrialization of their habitat by learning to nest in the crevices of tall buildings. Raccoons easily adapt to residential areas that have taken over their woodland homes. They often help themselves to any food they can grab, whether it is in trashcans, or inside people's homes!



The spots on a leopard's coat allow it to blend into its habitat.

What's the Main Idea?

What is the main idea of the text?

List two supporting details for the main idea.
