

Mimicry is the capacity that many animals have of modifying their appearance and adapting it to the environment in which they live.



An animal which is a good mimic has a better chance of escaping its predators (men or animals). So it lives longer. And on the other hand its ability to disguise itself gives it a better chance of attacking its victim without being seen.

A chameleon's skin "photographs" its surrounding and then perfectly copies its patterns, tones and colours. The hare and the weasel are also mimics in a way, because in the winter their fur becomes white like the snow. Tigers, leopards, giraffes and other animals which have coats with spots or stripes are having protective colouring. Their coats copy the mosaic of light and shadow that the sun creates among the

leaves of the jungle or the grass of the savannah. We call this camouflage. The same goes for the bears, the foxes and the arctic wolves whose coats are as white as the polar ice packs.

The champions of mimicry are many of our lovely butterflies. One looks just like a rotting piece of wood; another whose wing patterns perfectly imitate the pine twigs on which it lives, and yet another which, when resting, lays its wings out in such a way that it looks like an oak leaf.



Some butterflies have a more active defence system. When threatened, they open their wings and show off brightly coloured spots, like big eyes, which confuse the predator, and frighten it away.

appearance: Erscheinung
camouflage: Tarnfarbe
capacity: Fähigkeit
coat: Mantel, Schicht, Fell
environment: Umwelt
frighten: fürchten
fur: Fell
hare: Hase
leaves: Blätter
oak: Eiche

pattern: Muster
pine: Föhre, Kiefer
predator: Raubtier
protective: schützend
rotting: verfaulend
shadow: Schatten
spot: Fleck
stripe: Streifen
surrounding: Umgebung
to adapt: angleichen

to confuse: verwirren
to create: schaffen
to disguise: verhüllen
to escape: entweichen
to look like: aussehen wie
to modify: ändern, anpassen
to show off: angeben, prahlen
to threaten: bedrohen
twig: Zweig
victim: Opfer

Note: A wolf - two wolves; one leaf - many leaves; a butterfly - some butterflies; a fox - three foxes.

Translate:

1. Das Fell des Tigers sieht wie die Umgebung aus.
2. Hat der Hase eine gute Chance, dem Wolf zu entweichen?
3. Dieser Schmetterling sieht wie ein faulendes Stück Holz aus.
4. Das Muster des Felles imitiert die Zweige.
5. Tiger, Leoparden, Wölfe und Füchse sind Raubtiere.