



BUILD A BUG: CAMOUFLAGE & MIMICRY SCIENCE ACTIVITY



**FRALIN LIFE SCIENCES
INSTITUTE**
VIRGINIA TECH™

BUILD A BUG: CAMOUFLAGE & MIMICRY SCIENCE ACTIVITY

Lesson Overview:

This activity introduces insect camouflage and mimicry—adaptations that help insects survive by hiding from predators or mimicking other creatures. Together, you and your child will design and build a camouflaged insect suited to a specific environment.

**Can you spot
the moth?**



BUILD A BUG: CAMOUFLAGE & MIMICRY SCIENCE ACTIVITY

Materials Needed:

1. Scissors
2. Glue or tape
3. Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
4. Craft or recycled materials

What kind of materials? **ANYTHING! Get creative!**

Some examples include:

- Construction paper or cardboard
- Cupcake liners
- Fabric scraps or old clothes
- Toilet paper or paper towel rolls
- Newspaper or magazines (great for patterns)
- Coffee filters
- Yarn, string, pipe cleaners
- Leaves, sticks, flower petals (optional)
- Bottle caps, mesh produce bags
- Foil or wrappers



Fun Fact

"Camouflage" is from a French word meaning *disguise*!



BUILD A BUG: CAMOUFLAGE & MIMICRY SCIENCE ACTIVITY

Step-by-Step Instructions Continued

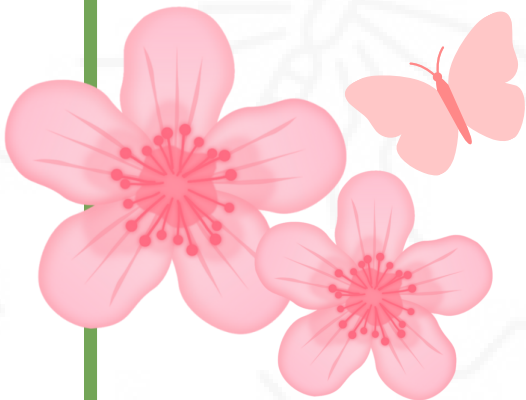
Step 4: Build Your Bug!

Use the craft materials to bring your insect to life. Match its features to your chosen environment:

- Camouflage: Match color, shape, and texture
- Mimicry: Try making it look like something else (a leaf, a twig, another animal!)

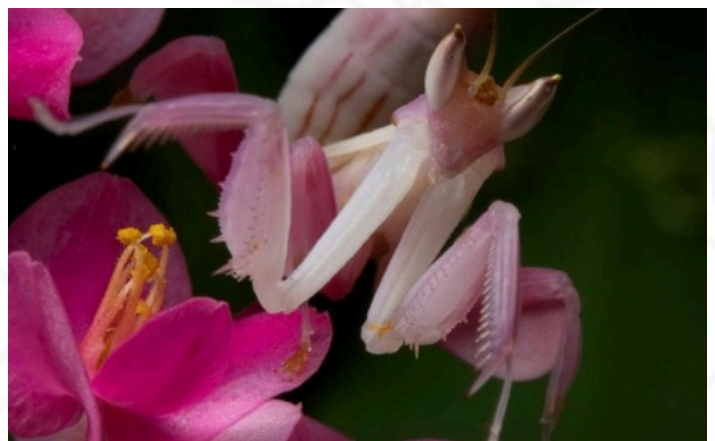
Step 5: Hide + Seek

Place your insect in its environment (or draw the background). Can someone else find it? Was it well-hidden?



BUILD A BUG: CAMOUFLAGE & MIMICRY SCIENCE ACTIVITY

REAL LIFE EXAMPLES!



BUILD A BUG: CAMOUFLAGE & MIMICRY SCIENCE ACTIVITY

Science Connection

Here are some questions that can help spark conversation around camouflage and biomimicry with your kids!

- What did your insect mimic or camouflage?
- Would it survive in its environment?
- Did it use camouflage, mimicry, or both?
- Can you think of animals or insects you've seen that use these tricks?
- What season would your insect blend in best?
- What other animals use camouflage?



SPECIAL THANKS

This activity was created as part of the Kids' Tech University (KTU) program At Virginia Tech, which connects children with real-life researchers to explore those big “why” questions that spark curiosity. By offering exciting, hands-on science experiences in a university setting, KTU helps kids imagine themselves as the scientists, inventors, and explorers of the future. With support from students and researchers, this program brings science to life, turning wonder into discovery and learning into doing.

TO LEARN MORE

Visit: <https://ktu.fralinlifesci.vt.edu>

SPONSORS

