

Lesson Plan

Early
reading stage
Levels 9–10



Using Colour explains how being a specific colour helps a range of animals to stay safe or to find a mate. Some animals in the book are brightly coloured, others can change their colour.

Running words: 213

Informative text type:
Explanation

Science Curriculum links

Australia

- **BS (ACSSU017)** Living things have a variety of external features
- **BS (ACSSU211)** Living things live in different places where their needs are met

New Zealand

- **LW:** All living things have certain requirements so they can stay alive
- **LW:** Living things are suited to their particular habitats

Key concepts

- Animals use colour to attract a mate.
- Animals use colour to stay safe.
- Some animals change colour to hide.

Content vocabulary

animals, blue, body, caterpillar, change, colour, eat, frog, green, hide, insect, leaves, mate, nest, places, safe, tail, yellow

Text features

- Introduction and conclusion
- Photographs
- Labels on photographs

Reading strategy

- Connecting events and ideas

Before reading

Introducing the book

Activate students' prior knowledge. Ask: *What colour can animals be?* List suggestions on a chart, grouping the animals by colour. Ask: *Why are animals different colours? How might being a particular colour help the animal?* Invite students to talk with a partner and then share their ideas with the group.

Provide each student with a copy of *Using Colour*. Say: *This book is called Using Colour. It is about some animals that have colours that help them to stay safe or to find a mate.* Note: You may need to explain the word *mate*. You could say: *All animals want to have babies. Finding a mate is how they get to have babies.* Have students browse through the book.

Building vocabulary

Ask: *What words or phrases might be in a book about the ways that animals use colour?* Have students talk to a partner, then share with the group. List the words on a chart and invite students to make suggestions about what each word means. Where appropriate, have the students add a drawing (for example, a picture or a symbol) to the words on the chart to make the meaning clear. Discuss each word as you list them on the chart. If necessary, introduce the content vocabulary and add these words to the list.

Introducing the reading strategy

Say: *Good readers think about how one part of the text connects to other parts. They link ideas together to understand the main idea.* Have students turn to the introduction. Read this page together. Ask: *What are the three ideas on this page? How do they link together to give us a big idea?* Draw out that the main idea is that an animal's colour is part of how it lives and survives. Say: *As you read the rest of the book, look for how what you read connects with this idea.*

During reading

As each student reads the text independently, monitor and support them where appropriate. If necessary, ask the students to stop reading and remind them to use the reading strategy you are focused on. Encourage students to reflect on what they have read and say what the connecting ideas were. Stop them as they read and ask: *What connections can you make with this information and the main idea?* If a student is unsure, you could say: *How does letting other animals know that they are not good to eat connect to the main idea?* Support students in identifying the connecting ideas in the book.

After reading

Talking about the book

Have students talk about the book. Encourage discussion by choosing questions that are appropriate for your students. Ask them to support their answers by referring to the photographs and text in the book.

Which animals used colour to attract a mate? Which animals change colour? (Literal)

Why is being able to change colour helpful to animals? What colours tell other animals that they should not eat animals that are that colour? (Inferential)

What other animals use colour in the same way as the animals in the book? How might being grey help a mouse? Why are bluebirds blue? (Applied)

Reviewing the reading strategy

Give positive feedback on the reading strategy the students used as they read the book. Say: *I noticed you were able to connect ideas in the text to understand the main idea of the book. That's what good readers do.*

Returning to the book

Provide multiple opportunities for the students to reread and interact with the book – with teacher support, with a partner and independently. Choose activities that are appropriate for your students.

Speaking and listening

Have students work with a partner, taking turns to point to a photo in the book and asking: *What can you tell me about how this animal uses colour?* Partners answer in a few sentences. Repeat a number of times. Encourage students to use the vocabulary chart compiled in the Building vocabulary section.

Vocabulary

Return to the vocabulary chart from the Building vocabulary section. Ask: *How can we group these words?* For example, colour words, animal names or reasons for colour.

Rework the list into these columns, according to category. Ask: *What other words could be in the colour column?*

Have students refer to this chart as they write simple sentences using one or more words from each column.

Phonological awareness

Say: *I am going to read pages 6 and 7. I want you to listen for any words that have the sound /a/ as in “cake”.* Read the pages several times. On the second reading, slightly draw out the long /a/ sound in the words *mate* and *change*.

Ask: *What other words do you know that have the long /a/ sound?* Make sure that students enunciate the sound clearly.

Phonics

Write the words *mate* and *change* on a chart. Ask: *What letters make the long /a/ sound in “mate” and “change”?* Underline the letters involved in each word. Ask: *What other words have the long /a/ sound?* List these on the chart, grouping in columns according to the letters used to represent the sound.

a	a-e	ai	ay	eigh
baby	cake	bait	hay	weigh

You might like to have students make up simple rhyming couplets using words from the chart.

Writing

Shared writing

Ask: *How do animals use colour? How does this help it to survive? What other animals use colour in the same way as an animal in the book?* As a class, select which of these animals you will write about together (such as the wrap-around spider).

Ask: *What do we know about this spider? It is mottled and brown. It is the same colour as bark. It can wrap its body around a branch, which makes it difficult to see. This helps it to stay safe from birds. It also helps it to catch food.*

Have students contribute ideas about both the content and writing conventions. For example, you could ask: *How will we begin our explanation?* You might write: “The wrap-around spider is an animal that uses colour to stay safe and to help it catch food.”

This writing could be the opening chapter in a class book about how animals use colour.

Independent writing

Ask: *What have you learnt about animals that use colour? Can you think of an animal you could write about?* Have students share their ideas with a partner. Encourage students to ask clarifying questions of their partner to support what will be included in the writing.

Ask students to write a simple introduction for their animal and then give two facts about the animal’s use of colour.

Sharing and presenting

Collate the students’ writing into a class book. Read this together.

Ask: *What have we learnt about how animals use colour? How do animals use their bodies to stay safe or to give information to other animals? What other information would you like to learn about this?* Have students turn and talk to a partner about what they found most interesting or unexpected about the things they have read about or learnt about from each other. Invite students to share what they have talked about with their partner with the class.

Blackline Master: How Do These Animals Use Colour?

Name: _____

Write what you have learnt about how the chameleon, the peacock and the poison dart frog use colour.

Animal	How they use colour
	
chameleon	
	
peacock	
	
poison dart frog	

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