



Toothpick Prey

Getting Ready

If animals can't hide, they'll be "picked on" and can end up being *Toothpick Prey*!

Stuff to Make it Happen (Materials)

colored toothpicks grassy area* pencil* group container*
Toothpick Prey handout timer* keen eye for *Toothpick Prey**

Making it Happen (*Be careful of sharp toothpicks and running into others!*)

Some Safety Rules before you start "hunting!" **ABSOLUTELY NO** running, or the teacher will decide you won't "survive"!!!! Be on the watch for other "hunters!" Each of you will have your head down looking for *Toothpick Prey*!! Watch out for others! **NO RUNNING!!** Lastly, *be careful of the toothpicks, they're sharp!!*

1. Notice the area the teacher fixed up for you to "hunt" for *Toothpick Prey*! This is the only place where you'll find them hiding! Split the class into evenly sized groups.

2. The first group will surround and turn your back to the area. On a signal, turn around, start hunting! You will get only 15 seconds to find 3 toothpicks, stop when you get 3! When time is up, leave the hunting area. Record your "catch" on the *Toothpick Prey* handout sheet. All toothpicks found are "dead" and put in a group container before hunting again!

3. *To survive as a hunter, you must find at least three toothpicks.* Let the next group hunt for 15 seconds. Rotate the groups until nobody survives or your teacher stops you. Record each time what happened when you went "out for lunch"! Keep a count of how many and what color toothpicks you found!! Clean up the area when you're finished!!

Understanding the Science

This was a fun game of the "hunted" and the "hunter", but **Survival** of a **Species** of living things isn't a game to them! The "hunters" are the **Predators**, the "hunted" are the **Prey**. What most people don't realize is that both of these two need each other! If the prey animals reproduce without any predators, they **Overpopulate** and destroy their **Habitat** or home by eating all the plants. (Many prey animals are **Herbivores**, or plant eaters. Predators are **Carnivores**, or meat eaters. Some predators are **Omnivores**; they can eat plants or animals!) The predators can't be too successful in hunting prey! If they catch all the prey, like your groups did, they run out of food and die as well!

Let's Check the View! (Questions and Assessments)

1. Which *Toothpick Prey* color was found first and most often? Why do you think so?
2. Which *Toothpick Prey* color was found least often? Why do you think so?

