

offspring can feed on the caterpillar. Soon after, the caterpillar dies and the corn plant is relieved from its attacker.

Plants have a big problem. In order to reproduce, they need to exchange pollen with one another. But unlike animals, plants can't move around to find mates. So most flowering plants rely on insects to carry their pollen. How do plants get insects to come help them? They use trickery, deception, and flower power!

**Orchids**, perhaps the largest family of flowering plants, are the most outrageous tricksters in nature. Some produce fake nectar that tricks bees into trying to collect it. At least 30 orchids in a group called *Ophrys* look like female wasps and bees.

When is a stick not a stick? When it's an **inchworm** caterpillar. This little larva looks just like a twig. If a predator comes to call, the inchworm stands up on one end or hangs from a branch by a thread. Even the most sharp-eyed bird would have a hard time telling it from a real twig.

The Poison-Arrow **frog** is brightly colored and is one of the most handsome amphibians. While nearly all frogs and toads have at least a trace of poison in their skin glands, toxins are most highly developed in some of the Poison-Arrow frogs. While most are not potent, a few species deploy some of the most poisonous biological toxins known. These toxins have long been used by Indians in the poisoning of their arrows to produce quick death in animals.

Striking colors warn potential predators not to eat the small poisonous frogs of Central and South America. Some edible species also gain protection by mimicking the bright colors of their "poisonous cousins."

Carnivorous plants (or **plant traps**) are plants that get some or most of their nutrients from trapping and consuming insects. The plant traps often mimic the look of a flower to attract the insects and entice them to land on the plant as the insects look for nectar.

The **Viceroy Butterflies** tastes good to predators, but because they mimic the look of bad tasting butterflies such as the Monarch Butterfly, predators often stay away from them.

ALL:                    We know a sweet **corn plant**  
                              And oh, how she smells!  
                              She smells of a smell  
                              A wasp loves so well.

ALL BOYS:            She attracts the wasp  
                              That kills caterpillars,  
                              Who chew on her leaves  
                              And surely don't thrill her.

ALL GIRLS:            By befriending the foe  
                              Of her enemy,  
                              She gets the job done,

READER 1:            And it seems to me,  
                              Like a magician with  
                              Tricks up his sleeve,

ALL:                    She mimics, adapts, and deceives!

ALL GIRLS:            Oh My!

ALL:                    She mimics, adapts, and deceives!

ALL BOYS:            We know of an **orchid**  
                              Who looks like a bee,  
                              And smells like a bee  
                              To a certain degree.

ALL GIRLS:        She's gone to the trouble  
                          With this adaptation  
                          To attract male bees  
                          And achieve pollination.

READER 2:        Winning the male bees' great admiration!

*(The following is a Readers Theater repetitive prose line. This is not a rhyming line, but you might want to keep the rhythm in tact. If not, slow everything down purposely and read the line as you would any prose line. These prose lines are repeated throughout the piece and read by the same readers each time):*

READER 3:        And the corn leads the wasp to her caterpillar!

ALL BOYS:        That's all quite amazing,  
                          I'm sure you'll agree.  
                          They get the job done,

READER 1:        And it seems to me,  
                          Like a magician with  
                          Tricks up his sleeve,

ALL:                They mimic, adapt, and deceive!

ALL GIRLS:        Oh My!

ALL: They mimic, adapt, and deceive!

ALL BOYS: We know of an **inchworm**  
Who looks like a twig.  
It's just a small twig  
Since she's not very big.

ALL GIRLS: She hangs from the oak  
And no bird will eat her.  
Hangs by a thread,  
Oh what could be sweeter?

READER 4: She's fooling the birds, that wise little cheater!

*(Readers Theater repetitive prose lines):*

READER 2: And the orchid adapts to great admiration!

READER 3: The corn leads the wasp to her caterpillar!

ALL BOYS: That's all quite amazing,  
I'm sure you'll agree.  
They get the job done,

READER 1: And it seems to me,  
Like a magician with  
Tricks up his sleeve,

ALL: They mimic, adapt, and deceive!

ALL GIRLS: Oh My!

ALL: They mimic, adapt, and deceive!

ALL GIRLS: We know of a **frog**,  
A colorful sight!  
She dresses in hues  
Quite brilliant and bright.

ALL BOYS: But if you want to eat her,  
It wouldn't be slick.  
Her wild colors tell you,  
She'll make you quite sick!

READER 5: Her look is a warning, and that's quite a trick,

*(Readers Theater repetitive prose lines):*

READER 4: And the worm fools the birds, a wise little cheater,

READER 2: The orchid adapts to great admiration,

READER 3: The corn leads the wasp to her caterpillar,

ALL GIRLS: That's all quite amazing,  
I'm sure you'll agree.  
They get the job done,