

# Shapeshifter



When playing Shapeshifter, you'll sharpen your awareness skills by making observations. An observation is something you notice with your senses. Animals have keen observation skills that help them to survive. They need to find food and water, notice weather patterns and seek shelter, and avoid danger. Baby animals practice and improve their awareness skills by playing, and humans can too! In Shapeshifter, you'll practice noticing details with your sense of sight.

## Materials:

- Accessories like hats, scarves, hairpieces, etc.  can be helpful for younger players.

- Nothing is needed for older or more experienced players.

## How to Play:

- Number of Players: 2+

- Choose one person to be the Shapeshifter. They stand in front of the other player(s) and slowly turn, so everyone can observe the details of their appearance.

- The Shapeshifter leaves the room and changes 3-5 things about their appearance. For example, they might take off a necklace, unroll shirt sleeves, tuck in their shirt, etc.

- The shapeshifter re-enters the room and everyone else must take turns guessing what they changed.

- Once all changes have been guessed, a new Shapeshifter takes a turn.

## Variation • Room-shifter:

- Observe the room you are in; really look at what's in the room and where things are.

- One person leaves the room while the rest of the players decide what to shift in the room.

*For example, players might switch the purple pillow with the yellow one, move the tv remote to the other side of the table, turn a picture frame on it's side, etc.*

- Call the person back into the room and have them guess what was changed.

## Game Discussion:

*HINT: Let the children think out loud about the questions. Follow the threads of their interest in the discussion, and let the rest go.*

- Which of our five senses did we use during this game? *Answer: sight*

- How can we use this sense when we are walking out in nature?

*Potential answers: Notice what plants are growing, look for poison ivy, ticks, other hazards, spot animal tracks and birds, and so much more!*

- How can practicing awareness of our surroundings help us when we are walking to school?

*Potential answers: Look both ways when crossing the street, map the neighborhood to see pathways, observe birds and animals in our neighborhoods*

## Visual Observations of Nature:



*Before you play next time, consider telling a story about a person or animal using their awareness skills, or ask someone else to. Ask your child if there's anything in nature they'd like to practice noticing. Here are some possibilities:*

- Go outside and observe new buds on the plant. Can you catch them on the day they open up?

- Look up at the sky; what do the clouds look like? How are they different from last time you looked at them?

- Watch for the 'pathways' of the birds around your house. Where do they usually fly to and from?