



Lesson Plan: The Blue Spotted Salamander	
Lesson Objectives	Students will learn about the life needs of a blue-spotted salamander and the importance of its habitat for reproduction by creating a diorama using materials of students choice.
Project Objectives	
Grade Level	5
Background Information	<p>The Blue Spotted Salamander, an endangered species in the state of New Jersey, is slender and is three to five inches in length. It is gray and has blue spots all over its body. It has four toes on its front feet and five toes on his feet in the back. They can be found in deciduous and coniferous forests near moist soil or small ponds, eating a wide variety of insects along with slugs, earthworms, spiders, snails, and centipedes.</p> <p>Blue-spotted salamanders require moist, moderately shaded environments, vernal pools, or temporary ponds, are necessary for reproduction and need to be full of dead and decaying leaves for cover and overhanging bushes or grass for egg deposition.</p> <p>The salamanders exhibit a strong affinity to vernal ponds and have therefore suffered a great deal due to the loss, alteration, and degradation of the water quality of these ponds.</p>
Materials/Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -shoebox -colored construction paper -clay -glue -props -scissors -paint -paint brushes -clay oven

	-dried leaves -paint -wallpaper
Vocabulary	Deciduous Coniferous Vernal Endangered
Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss the life history, the needs, and the importance of vernal ponds for their reproduction using drawings or photos from books or the internet. 2. Students should bring in a shoebox and cover the outside with construction paper. 3. Decide on the scale. 4. Collect the materials of your choice. 5. Decide on the background. Students can use paint or wallpaper. 6. Build the diorama working from the back to the front. Add all the details. 7. Label all parts of the diorama.
Student Reflection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are some current threats facing the blue-spotted salamanders in NJ? 2. What is the difference between endangered and threatened species? 3. Did you do your work like others did theirs? How is your diorama different from the others? How is your work similar to the others?

Resources

<http://www.nhptv.org/natureworks/bluespottedsalamander.htm>

http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10370_12145_12201-32988--,00.html

http://www.biokids.umich.edu/critters/Ambystoma_laterale/

<https://www.nps.gov/natr/learn/education/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&PageID=1133596>

http://www.haverhillma.gov/departments/forest_stewardship/docs/131125_NHESP_FS_ambystoma_laterale.pdf

<http://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Diorama>

<http://www.conservewildlifenj.org/species/fieldguide/view/Ambystoma%20laterale/>