



BUT WHY

A Lesson Plan Grade 3-5

But Why is led by you, kids! Kids all over the world send us questions, and we find the answers. We've created these learning units to be used in a classroom setting or at home. Watch the video first and then use this guide to deepen your understanding of what you've learned. Find more episodes at butwhykids.org.



But Why: Adventures! Northeast Nature | APRIL: SALAMANDERS

DRIVING QUESTION:

How do the seasons affect what living creatures need to survive?

Objectives: Students will

- Be able to demonstrate their understanding of various salamander habitats and their importance during various stages of the year.
- Be able to identify their needs and how they change throughout the year.

Activities:

1. Divide the class into small groups to design a salamander habitat.
2. Distribute craft materials or go outside to gather natural materials, including small boxes, sticks, rocks and moss.
3. Instruct students to design and create a diorama of a salamander habitat within their boxes, using the materials and their creativity. They can use craft materials to represent trees, rocks, water and hiding spots for the salamanders.
4. Encourage students to work collaboratively, discuss their ideas and assign roles within the group to foster teamwork and communication skills.

VELS (K-3): SC2:1, SS 1:1, C 3:1, VA 1:1 | Learning Targets Grades 3-5

NGSS

3-LS4-2



3-LS1-1





Watch & Connect

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WATCH & DOODLE: Draw or write in the boxes.

K (Know). What do you know about salamanders?

W (Want to know). What do you want to know about salamanders?

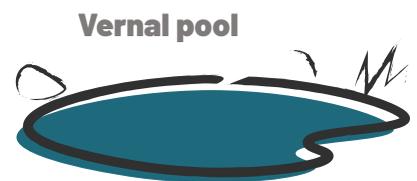
L (Learn). What did you learn about salamanders?

What potential benefits do the habitats below have for a salamander in different seasons?

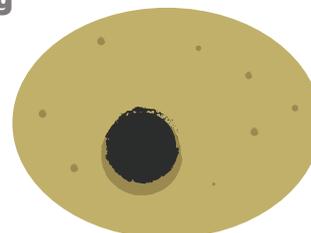
Add some notes on a separate page.



Log



Vernal pool



Burrow



BUT WHY

Watch & Doodle

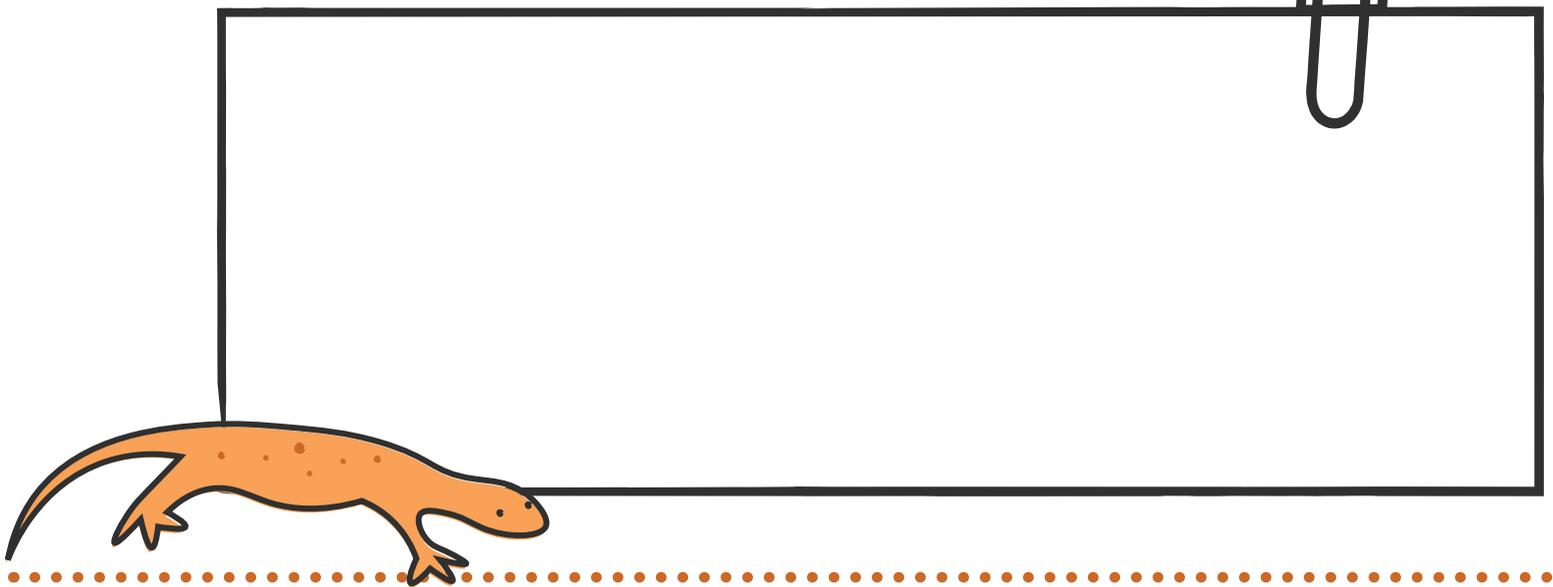
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WATCH & DOODLE:

Draw a type of habitat where you might find a salamander at this time of year (e.g. in a burrow, under a log, in a vernal pool).



First, draw the body of the salamander.



Then, give your salamander legs and eyes.





Feelings: Connections

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SOCIAL EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS: We are all connected.

We as humans have various needs to survive. Just like salamanders, we adapt to changing conditions. For example, in the winter we put on coats or turn on heat to stay warm. Salamanders burrow into the ground to hibernate. Different kinds of salamanders are different colors or have different patterns of markings. Can you see some ways that they are different? How are all salamanders the same?

Find out more about colors and markings on salamanders. Look up a real salamander and add its info below. Then make up your own!

Safe Search Tips:

1. Don't click on items that look like advertisements.
2. Make sure website names are spelled correctly.
3. Check to see if the website you access is secure by looking for the lock image in the search bar.

Real salamander:

Name of salamander:

Region or habitat:

Your own design:

Your name for this salamander:

Where might this salamander live in the world?



Community: Connections

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BIG IDEA: Our needs change depending on the season and what part of the world we live in—just like salamanders! Discuss as a group how the needs of people who live in different regions of the world change based on the season. **Draw with detail or write in the boxes.**

People in winter:

People in spring:

People in summer:

People in fall:



Community: Connections

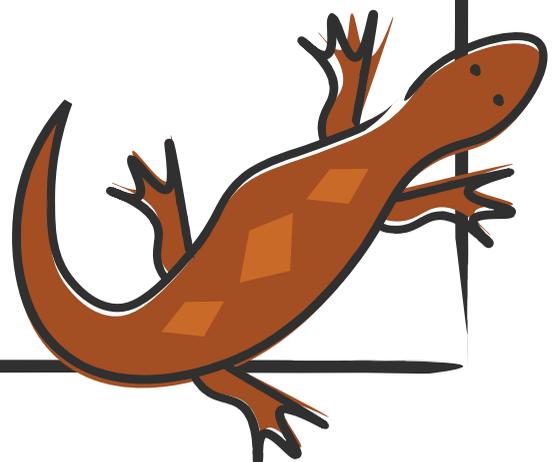
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BIG IDEA: During the spring migration to a vernal pool, salamanders benefit from humans helping them to safely cross roads. Like salamanders, we all need help at different points in our lives.

Brainstorm and discuss some ways that we all need our community to help us grow. Draw with detail or write about your ideas in the box below.





Amphibian

[am-FIB-ee-unn] • *noun*

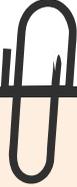
A type of cold-blooded animal with no scales that usually lives part of its life in water and part on land, including frogs and toads, salamanders and a wormlike group of animals called caecilians.



Herpetology

[HER-puh-TALL-uh-jee] • *noun*

The study of reptiles and amphibians



Vernal

[VER-null] • *adjective*

Appearing or occurring in spring.



Mole salamanders

[MOLE SAL-uh-man-durz] • *noun*

Several species of North American salamanders that usually spend much of their lives underground, either in burrows they've made for themselves or ones that were abandoned by other animals. (One notable exception is the axolotl, which spends its whole life in the water but is still considered a mole salamander.)

... **What new words did you learn?** Make your own vocabulary cards. ...

