



DALLAS ARBORETUM  
Education

*Garden STEAM at Home*  
*“Mama” Spider Sculptures:*  
*Connections*



WE GROW MINDS, TOO.

# “MAMA” SPIDER SCULPTURES



## OBJECTIVE:

STUDENTS WILL CREATE A SPIDER SCULPTURE BASED ON THE ART OF LOUISE BOURGEOIS.

## SOURCE

DickBlick.com

## BACKGROUND

Dick Blick’s “Mama” Spider Sculptures lesson introduces students to the sculpture of French-born artist Louise Bourgeois. Created when Louise was in her 80s, the 30-foot-tall bronze spider named ‘Maman’ is an avante-garde masterpiece that is both compelling and frightening at the same time.

The Dick Blick lesson plan provides excellent instruction for creating three-dimensional sculpture, and we recommend using this lesson as a creative opportunity for students to demonstrate a variety of science learnings. Check out our recommendations below!

## TAKE IT FURTHER

1. Create sculpture to demonstrate learning of any science topic, including life cycles, seasons, systems and change.
2. Students may struggle with creating 3-D art. Ask them to list the essential elements of a given object (i.e. What makes an insect an insect? 3 body parts, 6 legs, wings, antennae) and create art that uses all of those items.
3. Create a food web or food chain entirely of student-created sculpture.
4. Explore camouflage as your paint/color your sculptures. Place the sculptures in their actual habitat to ensure they’re adequately protected.
5. Create game cubes with different adaptations and habitats (Cube 1: fins, fur, feathers, scales; Cube 2: desert, rainforest, tundra, grassland; etc.). Allow each student to roll the dice and then research or create an animal that fits all of the selected criteria. Create the outcome in sculpture form.

## DIGITAL RESOURCES

Dick Blick “Mama” Spider Sculptures Lesson Plan:  
<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/mama-spider-sculptures/>

National Gallery of Art Louise Bourgeois Profile and Lesson Plans:  
<https://www.nga.gov/education/teachers/lessons-activities/pre-k/louise-bourgeois.html>

Tate Modern Maman Feature:  
<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/bourgeois-spider-al00354>