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 avant-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