

Getting to Know

Vernal Pools

1) Scientist Name _____ Grade 6

Introduction

Vernal pools are contained depressions lacking a permanent above ground outlet. In the Northeast, they fill with water with the rising water table or with the meltwater and runoff of winter and spring snow and rain. Many vernal pools in the Northeast are covered with ice in the winter months. They contain water for a few months in the spring and early summer. By late summer, a vernal pool is generally (but not always) dry.

A vernal pool, because of its periodic drying, does not support breeding populations of fish. Many organisms have evolved to use vernal pools, which will dry, but where they will not be eaten by fish. These organisms are the "obligate" vernal pool species, so called because they **must** use a vernal pool for various parts of their life cycle. If the obligate species are using a body of water, then that water **is** a vernal pool.

Activities

1. Data Collection: Use the personal palm computer to read the temperature of the pond water and record it below.

Temperature 13 °C. 47 °C

2. Computer: Use www.NYLEARNS.org to choose a favorite vernal pool organism and write down 5 things that you learned about your organism.

- a. Pickerel frog only come out during the spring
- b. Pickerel frogs hibernate during the winter.
- c. Pickerel frog are's confused with the Hellbender frog.
- d. They burrow into mud mounds at the bottom of ponds or streams.
- e. They also inhabit cool water they like wooded streams.

3. Questionnaire: Please complete as many of the questions on the next page as possible.

Please complete the following by circling the number that best describes how you feel about each question. This is not for a grade.

1= Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Doesn't Matter 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

- 1) Technology is used in my school. (1) 2 3 4 5
- 2) Technology can help me learn. 1 (2) 3 4 5
- 3) Using computers in school is fun. (1) 2 3 4 5
- 4) I use a computer at home. (1) 2 3 4 5
- 5) I like to use only books to learn at school. 1 2 3 (4) 5
- 6) I like to use only computers at school to learn. 1 2 (3) 4 5
- 7) I like to use books and computers at school to learn. (1) 2 3 4 5
- 8) I learn best while at my school desk 1 2 (3) 4 5
- 9) I learn best working alone. 1 2 (3) 4 5
- 10) I learn best working in a group. (1) 2 3 4 5
- 11) Learning about science is fun. (1) 2 3 4 5
- 12) I can learn science best by "doing" science. 1 2 (3) 4 5
- 13) The environment is important to me. 1 2 (3) 4 5
- 14) What I learn about the environment is important to me. 1 2 (3) 4 5
- 15) What I learn about the environment does not matter. 1 2 3 (4) 5
- 16) The internet helps me find information about what I am studying in school. 1 (2) 3 4 5
- 17) I could learn more by talking to a "real" scientist. (1) 2 3 4 5
- 18) Inquiry means to ask questions. 1 2 (3) 4 5
- 19) I use computers and technology for projects and homework. 1 (2) 3 4 5
- 20) This questionnaire will not make a difference in how I learn about science. (1) 2 3 4 5

Please write down any additional ideas or thoughts that you had about today's activity.
