

Year 3: Science

Lesson Plan: Life cycle of Tasmanian Eels

Introductory activities (engage)

(5 minutes)

Display the eel image (provided in unit).

Ask your students:

- Have they seen an eel in the local waterway (creek, river, lake or wetland)?
- How does an eel start its life?
- Where does a Tasmanian eel start its life?

How does an eel start its life?	Where does an eel start its life?
Eels lay eggs in marine waters (saltwater, sea, ocean)	The eels found in Tasmania start their lives in the Coral Sea. The Coral Sea is located in the South Pacific, off the northeast coast of Australia.

Lesson 1 (explore)

(20 minutes)

Display the eel life cycle diagram (provided in unit) to your class. Explain each stage of the life cycle:

- **Adult eels** migrate downstream from Tasmanian lakes and rivers to lay their **eggs** in the Coral Sea. A female can lay millions of eggs. (More broadly they migrate from south east Australian waterways)
- The eggs hatch into **larva**. The larvae are swept southwards by ocean currents (East Australia current).
- When the larvae near the coast (prior to entering the fresh water) they transform into **glass eels**. **Glass eels** are transparent.
- When the **glass eels** reach the brackish water of estuaries their skin becomes pigmented into their adult colour and they grow into juvenile eels called **elvers**.
- The **elvers** swim upstream into our rivers, lakes, creeks and swamps where they mature into **adult eels**.

Materials

Smart board (or projector)

Activity -Short-finned eel poster (display/print)

Activity - Life cycle of Tasmanian eels (display/print)

Exploratory questions

Ask students following:

- **What questions do you have about eels and their life cycle?**
 - List the questions to research further (group or individual exercise).
- **When exploring the eels' life cycle, were there any words or key terms you didn't understand?**
 - Create a list of words or key terms to research (group or individual exercise).
- **Where is the Coral Sea?**
 - Explore this on a map (group or individual exercise).
- **Are the eggs very different to the adult eel?**
 - Discuss/list the ways they are different.
- **What are the differences and similarities between the larva and the glass eel?**
 - Discuss/list the ways they are different and similar.
- **What are the similarities between elvers and the adult eels?**

- Discuss/list the ways that they are similar.

Options for assessment and extension

	Activity
Science – Science Understanding Individual Activity	<p>Have students create their own representation of an eel life cycle (poster, written report or digital design)</p> <p>Invite students to research each of the five life cycle stages (adult eel, eggs, larva, glass eel, elver) and add descriptions or other details to their work</p> <p>Extension Activity</p> <p>Suggest students research and compare the life cycle of eels to another oviparous (egg laying) animal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of animal • Detail of each of the life cycle stages • Any differences • Any similarities
Science – Science Understanding / Literacy Individual Activity	<p>Ask students to create a glossary of terms from the Explore exercises and research the definitions of these words</p> <p>Suggested words:</p> <p>adult, eel, glass eel, juvenile, larva, migrate, migration, ocean current, pigment, waterway, wetland,</p> <p>Use Glossary template provided in the unit.</p>

Elaborate and review

As a class group review:

What have you learnt?

Have students:

- Reflect on questions from the engage section:
 - How does an eel start its life?
 - Where does a Tasmanian eel start its life?
- Share key words and vocabulary.
 - a word from their glossary list.
 - information about other animals they researched.