

Animal Life Cycles
 3rd Grade
 Science/Drama
 by Linda Gold

Science Standard 3.2.1 Develop and use models to describe changes that organisms go through during their life cycles. Emphasize that organisms have unique and diverse life cycles but follow a pattern of birth, growth, reproduction, and death.

Reading: Informational Text Standard 7
 Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

Drama

3.T.CR4: Define roles and responsibilities and participate in group decision-making.

3.T.P5: Use voice to communicate meaning through volume, pitch, tone, rate, and clarity.

3.T.R1: Demonstrate audience skills of observing attentively and responding appropriately.

Objective: The students will learn that all animals have a life cycle by practicing and performing puppet shows for each other. The warm-up activity will put the students into groups. Each group will be given a script of an animal life cycle. The students will practice reading through their script together and then perform them for each other.

Materials:

- Make simple stick puppets of animal life cycles out of fun foam or cardstock. There are patterns provided. You may make a set or you may have the students each make a puppet. Another option would be to provide pictures of the life cycle phases and have the students create their own puppets without the use of patterns.
- For the warm up game, make a copy of the animal pictures found at the end of the lesson.
- Make a copy of the scripts provided at the end of the lesson. Have enough copies of each script for each child to have their own copy.

Warm-up: Partner Search

Pass out the pictures of the animals. Tell the students to keep theirs a secret. Explain to the students that they are going to try to find the other people in the class with pictures that match theirs. The way they will do this is by acting like their animal and looking for other people who are acting the same way. When you say go, they will all search for their partners.

Puppet Activity

Give each group of animals the copies of the script that goes with their animal. Have them sit in a circle and practice reading through their script. You may choose to have everyone in the group read every part in the script. If you would prefer to give them individual parts, you will need to spend more time practicing the script before they perform.

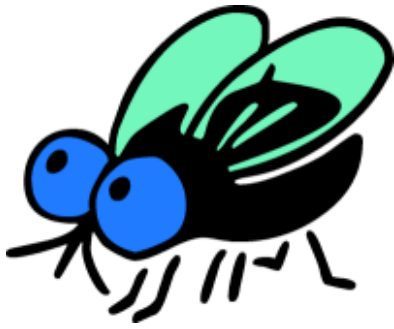
When the students are ready, hand them a puppet and let them perform their script. After each performance, hold up the puppets and have the class repeat the name of that stage in the animal's life.

Evaluation:

Do all living things have life cycles? What about people? Do we go through a life cycle? What is the life cycle for people?

Animal pictures for warm-up activity. Print off 4 copies, cut apart and pass out to the class.

Housefly



Butterfly



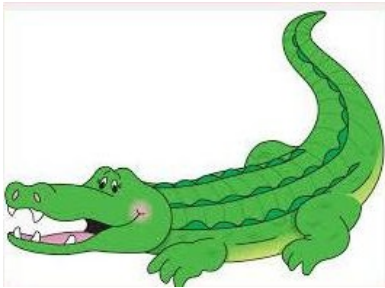
Frog



Dog



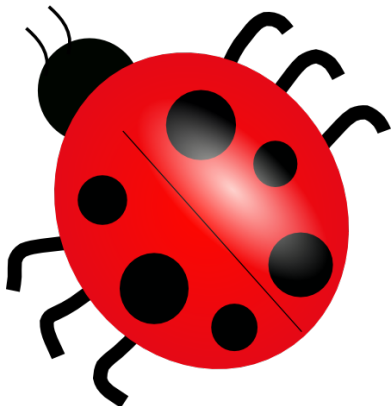
Alligator



Robin



Ladybug



Frog



Life Cycle Scripts:

House Fly

Egg: I am an egg. My mom laid about 900 of us on this rotten food. It smells terrible. I can't wait to hatch so I can eat it.

Larva: I just hatched out of my egg. I am a larva. Some people call me a maggot. As I eat this rotten food, I'll grow bigger and bigger and will shed my skin, or molt, three times. Excuse me while I burrow down into this delicious garbage.

Pupa: I am a pupa. My body turned dark and formed a hard shell to protect me while I make some more changes. Looks like I'm growing 6 new legs!

Housefly: Look at me! I'm a housefly! It took me about 8 days to get this way. I only have about 3 months to live so I don't want to waste any time. I'm off to land on someone's food. Maybe yours!

Butterfly

Egg: I am an egg. My mom laid me here on this leaf. In about 5 days I will hatch and this leaf will make a great meal for me!

Caterpillar: I am a caterpillar. I just hatched out of an egg and I'm starving! I love to eat. The more I eat, the more I grow. Since my skin doesn't grow with me, I will shed it up to 5 times. Shedding my skin is also called molting.

Pupa: I am a pupa, hiding inside of a cocoon. Another name for the pupa and cocoon is chrysalis. I am changing in here and will look very different when I am done. This change is called metamorphosis.

Butterfly: I am a beautiful butterfly! I love to fly, but only during the day when it's warm. I need to go and find a mate so I can lay some eggs and begin the cycle all over again. The world needs more butterflies!

Frog:

Egg: I am an egg, sitting here in the water with my brothers and sisters. I will be an egg for about 21 days. There are thousands of us but we won't all make it out of this stage. Ducks and fish find us delicious!

Tadpole 1: I am called a tadpole. Some people call me a pollywog! I have left my jelly egg behind and have attached myself to a weed. I should be safe here while I eat algae and continue to grow, unless something comes along and eats this weed. Yikes!

Tadpole 2: I have been a tadpole for about 5 weeks. I am swimming on my own. I have managed to grow some back legs! I am growing lungs but I have to stay in the water because I can't breathe air yet.

Tadpole 3: I am still a tadpole because I still have a tail. I have my front legs now and my lungs are almost ready to breathe air.

Frog: It has been 11 weeks since I was first laid in the water. Now I am a frog! My lungs work great! I will spend most of my life on the land but I enjoy a nice swim now and then. Ribbit, ribbit!

Ladybug

Egg: We are eggs. Our mom laid us on the bottom of this leaf because there are aphids near by for us to munch on as soon as we hatch. It will take us 3-5 days to hatch.

Larva: I am a larva. I will be a larva for 20-30 days. I love to eat aphids.

Pupa: Pupa here! I am changing inside of this protective coating. When I come out, I will look very different. It takes me about 15 days to make this change.

Ladybug: I am now a ladybug! Some people call me a ladybird. But I am not a bird at all. I am a type of insect called a beetle. Even though the word lady is in my name, I could be a boy or a girl. I will live for about one year. The older I get, the lighter my spots will get. Watch me fly!

Robin

Egg: Hi there! I am a pretty blue egg. My mom likes to sit on me. I don't mind because it keeps me warm and helps me to grow. It will take me about 2 weeks to grow large enough. Then I will use my beak to break out of here.

Nestling: I am a nestling. I just broke out of my shell. I can't fly or chew food. My mother has to get the food for me. She chews it up and spits it in my mouth. My feathers have not grown in and my eyes look huge. I could not even open my eyes for the first five days.

Fledgling: I am a 15-day-old fledgling. It took me about 14 days to grow these beautiful feathers. I look almost like my parents now. Today is an exciting day. I get to try to fly!

Adult: I am an adult Robin. You can tell that I am a boy because of the red patch on my tummy. I have two layers of feathers to keep me warm. Most robins that make it to adulthood and through the winter live about 6 years. Well I'm off to start a new family!

Dog

Fetus: Hello! Is anyone out there? I am a fetus and I am inside of my mom. I have several brothers and sisters in here with me. We all started off as an egg in here but we are growing and changing everyday. We will be in here for about 2 months.

Newborn: I am a newborn. I was born live, and did not have to hatch out of an egg. It will be about 2 weeks before I can see or hear. I get milk from my mother. That is all I can eat for now. Not much to do around here but sleep and eat so I think I will take a nap.

Puppy: I am an 8 week old puppy. I look a lot like my dad. I no longer drink milk from my mom. I eat kibbles and drink water from a bowl. I love to play with my brothers and sisters. Oh look! There is a nice shoe to chew on.

Adult: Even though I am only 2 years old, I am considered to be an adult. I will probably live until I am 12 years old, maybe even longer. I can now have puppies of my own and start the life cycle all over again.

Alligator

Egg: This may look like a mound of grass to you, but there are eggs inside of here. I am not sure if I am a girl or a boy. It depends on the temperature outside. If it's hot out, I will become a boy. If it's cool, I will become a girl. When we are ready to hatch, we will squeal and our mother will remove the grass from on top of us.

Juvenile: I just hatched out of my egg. Pretty soon, my mother will come and carry me to the water. She will watch over all of us juveniles for at least a year, maybe even three. I can already eat small animals like frogs, insects and fish.

Young Adult: I have spent the last three years traveling around with my family in a group called a pod. It is now time for me to go off on my own. I have been growing fast and am 4 feet long now.

Adult: It's been 10 years since I was born and I have continued to grow, though the rate has really slowed down. I will continue to grow my entire life. I'm about 6 feet long now and ready to start my own family.