

Year 5: Do all animals and plants start life as an egg?



When asked to describe the differences between animals' **lifecycles** think:

- How does the animal **reproduce**?
- How does this animal begin its life? Is it a **live birth**? Is it an **egg**? What type of egg?
- What is the animal's **gestation** period?
- Does this animal's offspring look like the adult form?
- Does the animal go through **metamorphosis**?
- What is the animal's life span?
- How long is the animal's offspring dependent on the parent?
- How many offspring will one animal reproduce?

Describing the life process of reproduction

All animals and plants **reproduce**. **Reproduction** is the process of making a new living thing and allowing a species to continue on this Earth. Plants and animals have evolved over time to find many different ways to reproduce. The way an animal reproduces has developed in order to ensure the best chance of survival for their species.

Mammal - sexual reproduction

A mammal uses **internal fertilisation** to create its offspring. The male sex cell fertilises the female sex cell (egg) inside the womb (a part of the body where the offspring will grow). The offspring will grow inside the womb until the end of its **gestation** period.

Amphibians - sexual reproduction

Some amphibians use **internal fertilisation**, but most use **external fertilisation**. **External fertilisation** is where the female lays her soft sex cells (**eggs**) outside of her body. The male will then **fertilise** them. The eggs must remain in water until the offspring develop and hatch out.

Plants - sexual reproduction

The male sex cell is contained in the plant's pollen. The pollen of one plant transfers to another and fertilises the ovule (female sex cell). The result is that the plant develops a seed which, once ready, will disperse from the plant and grow a seedling elsewhere.

Birds - sexual reproduction

Birds use **internal fertilisation**, but then the female will lay the eggs to develop outside of her body. The chick will continue to develop inside the egg until it is fully developed and able to hatch out.

Insects - sexual / asexual reproduction

Most insects reproduce using **internal fertilisation**. The female will then lay the eggs outside of her body. The offspring will hatch when they are fully developed.
Some female insects can reproduce **asexually** but this isn't advantageous to the survival of the species.

Plants - asexual reproduction

Some plants are able to reproduce without another plant. Strawberry plants, for example, produce runner plants. These are exact copies of the mother plant.
Asexual reproduction is much quicker but the plant is vulnerable to surviving sudden changes to its environment.

Vocabulary

asexual reproduction	When a plant or animal can reproduce offspring alone.
bulbs	The underground bud or stem of a seed plant at resting stage.
cuttings	A part of the stem or leaves capable of growing a new plant.
egg	Female sex cell.
external fertilisation	The fusing of the male and female sex cells outside of the body.
fertilises	When the male sex cell and the female sex cell join.
gestation period	The time taken for the offspring to develop inside the womb.
internal fertilisation	The female sex cell is fertilised inside the body.
life cycle	The development of an animal or plant throughout its life.
live birth	When an animal is born.
metamorphosis	When an animal changes its form as it ages.
plantlets	A small, undeveloped plant.
runners	A shoot that grows from the main plant. It produces a mini plant on the end.
sexual reproduction	When two animals or plants of different sexes create offspring.
sperm	Male sex cell.

CRC Article 17: All children have the right to find out information providing it is safe.

