

living-things

How animals grow and change

Lesson at a glance

Open with one baby-animal photo (chick, lamb or tadpole) and a show of hands about pets and farm young. Model young and adult with the hen card strip, then every group orders the four frog cards from spawn to adult. Consolidate the order on the IWB flow-builder interactive as a life cycle, act the frog stages once, and draw two or three stages in the Investigation Journal. Close with partner talk on how a familiar baby pet or farm animal changes as it grows.

Learning objectives

- Order the life stages of a familiar animal from youngest to adult
- Talk about one way a baby animal changes as it grows older

Before the bell – prep

Print one frog set per group (spawn, tadpole, froglet, adult) and check stages look clearly different before copying. Keep hen cards for your spoken model only; hen/sheep sets are extension. Mark a start→finish strip or table space per group. Have the flow-builder ready on the IWB.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
life-cycle picture cards (frog: spawn, tadpole, froglet, adult; hen: egg, chick, young hen, adult; sheep: newborn lamb, growing lamb, young sheep, adult)	1	group	classroom	simple drawings on sticky notes or scrap card labelled with the stage names, with size clearly different at each stage
sorting strip or table space marker (start to finish)	1	group	classroom	a strip of masking tape on the desk with an arrow drawn at one end
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	classroom	a blank A4 page for a simple drawing sequence from young to adult

Safety watch-point

Clear a small floor space for the brief act-out; keep hops gentle and stop after one run-through so nobody crashes into tables.

**Teaching moves**

- **Getting Started:** Show only a baby photo with no adult in frame. One question and a quick hands-up — keep it light. Link gently to puppies and kittens children already know; no death or predation talk.
- **Animals grow and change:** Hold the hen strip and say aloud: egg, fluffy chick is the young, grown-up hen is the adult. Introduce young and adult against these pictures only; hold the phrase life cycle until cards are ordered. Set the hen strip aside before frog groups begin.
- **Order the life-stage cards:** Give every group the mixed frog set first — do not show the correct order beforehand. Circulate: Which card comes first? How can you tell? Read froglet as a little frog with legs, often still a small tail. When a line is clear, name it lightly as a life cycle.
- **Build the frog cycle together:** Drive the flow-builder in explore mode; pupils call the order while you drag. Leave the loop-back as a real class question, then revoice: a new frog can lay eggs — it is not the same frog turning back into an egg. No interactive? Circle the four cards on the board with arrows.
- **Act it out and draw:** Lead one quick whole-class act-out (curl, wriggle, little hop, big hop) then switch the board to the draw brief before journals open. Default: two or three frog stages from the board, one stage bigger or different. Protect the five minutes of drawing time.
- **Pets and farm animals we know:** Think-pair-share on a real Irish-familiar baby — lamb, calf, puppy, kitten, chick, foal — and one concrete change. Revoice into grows bigger, coat or feathers change, moves better. Take several pairs so the describe-one-change objective gets airtime.

What it should show

Most groups order spawn → tadpole → froglet → adult left to right and can point to youngest and adult. Typical change talk: grows legs, loses tail, gets bigger, hops. A reversed or shuffled line usually means cards looked too similar — re-ask which is tiniest. Affirm farm and pet examples; gently redirect if a tadpole is called a fish.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **The fluffy chick is a different animal from the hen.** — Hold the hen strip side by side and trace egg → chick → young hen → adult hen with a finger: same animal, different stage as it grows.
- **The adult frog turns back into an egg when the cycle loops.** — At the flow-builder loop, revoice: a new frog can lay new eggs so the story starts again — not the same frog becoming an egg.
- **A tadpole is a fish.** — Point to the tadpole and froglet cards: it is a young frog that lives in water at first, then grows legs and changes.





Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Stay on the frog set with cards still visible; allow copying the board order and a word bank (egg, baby, bigger, adult) for labels. • If hen or sheep intermediates look too alike, offer only egg → chick → hen or newborn lamb → adult sheep.	• Ask them to name one clear change between two neighbouring cards (e.g. tadpole grows legs). • Invite a second trial: check a neighbour group's order and agree or fix one card.	• Offer the hen or sheep set only if stage differences are unambiguous, without a teacher model first. • Fast finishers add a fourth frog stage on the Journal page or explain why the cycle arrow loops to a new egg.

Cross-curricular hook

Link to oral language: pairs rehearse one full sentence naming a baby farm animal and how it changes.