

living-things

How animals grow and change

Lesson at a glance

Open with one baby-animal photo (chick, lamb or tadpole) and a quick hands-up on who has seen one. 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 flow-builder interactive as a life-cycle loop. Pupils act the frog sequence once, draw two or three stages in the Investigation Journal, then pair-share one pet or farm animal change.

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 cards show clear stage differences. Keep hen and sheep sets aside as extension only. Mark a start→finish strip on each table. Have the flow-builder interactive ready on the IWB in cycle layout.

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	provided printable	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	provided printable	a blank A4 page for a simple drawing sequence from young to adult

Safety watch-point

Clear a small floor space for the two-minute act-out; keep hops gentle and stop before anyone collides or climbs furniture.

**Teaching moves**

- **Getting Started:** Show only the baby photo—no adult in frame. Ask one question and take a quick show of hands. Link lightly to pets and farm animals children already know; keep cards away until the sorting step.
- **Animals grow and change:** Hold the hen strip yourself and model aloud: egg, fluffy chick as young, grown hen as adult. Write only grow and change on the board. Save the words life cycle until cards are ordered. Set the hen strip aside before frog groups begin.
- **Order the life-stage cards:** Start every group on the frog set only. Circulate asking which card comes first and how they can tell. Read froglet as a little frog with legs, often still a small tail. Name life cycle lightly once a group has a clear left-to-right order—do not reveal the finished sequence first.
- **Build the frog cycle together:** Drive the flow-builder interactive and let pupils call the order while you drag. Leave the loop as a class question, then revoice warmly: a new frog can lay eggs; it is not the same frog turning back into an egg. Fall back to four cards in a circle with drawn arrows if the interactive is down.
- **Act it out and draw:** Lead one quick whole-class act-out—curl, wriggle, small hop, big hop—then switch the board to the short draw brief. Journals open for two or three frog stages from young to adult with one clear change. Offer hen or sheep drawing only if that set is still on their table.
- **Pets and farm animals we know:** Give pairs a full minute on lamb/sheep, calf/cow, puppy/dog, kitten/cat, chick/hen or foal/horse. Revoice into grows bigger, coat or feathers change, walks or hops better. Take five or six pairs so the class hears several real changes.

What it should show

Most groups order frog cards spawn → tadpole → froglet → adult and can point to youngest and adult. Drawings show two or three stages with one visible change (legs appear, tail shrinks, body grows). A muddled order usually means cards were flipped face-down or froglet was read as adult—re-sort with the size and tail clues.

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. Say aloud: same animal, different stage—it grew and changed.
- **A tadpole is a fish.** — Point back to the frog set: it is a young frog that lives in water first, then grows legs and becomes a froglet, then an adult frog.
- **The loop means the same frog turns back into an egg.** — Revoice once, warmly: a new frog can lay new eggs and the story starts again—keep moving so the idea lands from your voice, not a long board sentence.

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Stay on the frog set and let them copy the order from cards still on display; scribe labels from a word bank: egg, baby, bigger, adult. • Accept two clear stages (young and adult) on the journal page if three feels too many.	• Ask them to name one change out loud while pointing at two cards: What got bigger? What grew legs? • Prompt the journal drawing to show one stage clearly different in size or shape.	• Offer the hen or sheep set only if those cards show strong stage differences, and ask them to order without help. • Fast finishers add a fourth frog stage or tell a partner one pet or farm change they have actually seen.

Cross-curricular hook

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