

Life Cycle of a Frog

Purpose of Activity: The life cycle of a frog begins as an egg, then larvae (tadpoles), then to a frog. The eggs and larvae stay in the water, but as the tadpoles grow, they change into animals that can live on land. This project will allow students to see first hand how a frog changes throughout its life.

You will need:

An aquarium (size will depend on the species involved and the number, but a 10 gallon tank will work well for most classrooms)

Aquarium gravel

Rock or driftwood

Aquatic plants

Dechlorinated water

Fish food flakes (community fish diet works well)

Tadpoles

Ruler

Procedure:

1. Put a layer of aquarium gravel in the bottom of the aquarium. Then add 5-6 inches (12.5-15 cm) of water. You must use water that has had the chlorine and other chemicals removed. You can do this with special chemicals available from a pet store, or simply leave the water out overnight before adding the tadpoles. The aquarium should sit in an area that is well lit, but is not in direct sunlight.
2. Add the water plants in the aquarium- some in the gravel, some floating. Also put in the rock. The rock should be large enough for the frog to sit on when it turns (depends on species), and must rise above water level. You could also use a piece of driftwood.
3. Add some tadpoles. The number of tadpoles will depend on the size of your aquarium and the species involved, but for a typical classroom, about 4-5 will work.
4. Feed the tadpoles a small amount of the fish food every day. They will also nibble on the aquarium plants. Add some fresh water as needed.
5. The tadpoles will change as they grow, so observe them often. The rate at which they turn from tadpole to adult will depend on species, but for general purposes, have the students report any changes once a week. Some species, such as the bullfrog, change more slowly, and will only need to be reported on once a month.
6. Once fully turned, the frogs should be offered appropriately sized insects. Frogs can then become the classroom pets, and may live for several years if properly cared for.

Ideas:

Have the kids draw what the tadpoles or frogs look like at each reporting.