

Photo Description



This image shows two eggshell halves resting on soil, wood chips, and grass. One shell still has part of a green leaf or sprout visible inside it. The shells are white on the inside and have brown speckles on the outside. This picture shows what happens after a baby bird or reptile hatches and leaves its egg.

Scientific Phenomena

Anchoring Phenomenon: Hatching—when a baby animal breaks out of its egg and begins its life outside the shell.

Why This Happens: Living things grow inside eggs. When the baby animal gets big enough and strong enough, it uses a special hard bump on its nose (called an egg tooth) to crack the shell from the inside. The baby pushes and breaks through, leaving behind the empty eggshell. This is a natural part of the life cycle—the stages all living things go through from birth to growth to having babies of their own. The empty shells in the photo show that hatching has already happened; the babies have moved on to the next stage of their lives.

Core Science Concepts

- * Life cycles have stages: All animals go through different stages: being born (or hatching), growing bigger, and becoming adults who can have babies.
- * Animals grow and change: Babies start small inside eggs and grow until they are ready to hatch. After hatching, they continue to grow and change.
- * Eggs protect developing babies: Eggshells are hard and keep the baby animal safe while it grows inside.
- * Living things leave evidence of their activities: Empty eggshells tell us that hatching happened here—we can observe and learn about animal life even when we don't see the animals themselves.

Pedagogical Tip:

Use this image as a "mystery" hook: Show students the photo without explanation and ask, "What story does this picture tell?" Before providing answers, let students share their observations and predictions. This builds curiosity and activates prior knowledge before introducing the concept of life cycles and hatching.

UDL Suggestions:

Multiple Means of Representation: Provide real eggshells (cleaned, from grocery store eggs or with parent permission from backyard bird nests) for students to handle and observe. Combine the visual image with tactile exploration and a simple diagram showing the stages: egg !' hatching !' grown animal. This multi-sensory approach supports diverse learners, especially those who benefit from kinesthetic input.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think was inside this eggshell before it broke open? (Bloom's: Understand | DOK: 1)
2. How do you think the baby animal got out of the egg? What clues from the picture help you? (Bloom's: Analyze | DOK: 2)
3. If we found these empty shells in your yard or a park, what could we learn about what animals live there? (Bloom's: Apply | DOK: 2)
4. What might happen to this baby animal during the next stage of its life after hatching? (Bloom's: Evaluate | DOK: 3)

Extension Activities

1. Hatch It Yourself (Observation): With parent permission or using a classroom incubator, observe chicken or quail eggs over time. Create a simple picture chart where students draw the egg each week and notice changes. When hatching occurs, document the process with photos and have students dictate observations.
2. Life Cycle Stages Game: Create four station areas labeled "Egg," "Hatching," "Baby," and "Grown-Up." Give students pictures of various animals at different life stages and have them sort and place pictures at the correct station. Discuss why some animals lay eggs and others don't.
3. Eggshell Art & Exploration: Provide clean, broken eggshells for students to observe with magnifying glasses. Let them draw what they see, then use shells in a sensory tub with soil, leaves, and toy animals. Students can narrate stories about what hatched and where the babies went.

NGSS Connections

Performance Expectation:

1-LS1-2: Use models to describe that organisms have unique and diverse life cycles but all animals have in common birth, growth, reproduction, and death.

Disciplinary Core Ideas:

1-LS1.B - Growth and Development of Organisms

Crosscutting Concepts:

Patterns - Patterns in the natural world can be observed and used to make predictions (life cycles follow predictable stages)

Science Vocabulary

- * Hatch: When a baby animal breaks out of its egg and is born.
- * Life cycle: All the stages a living thing goes through—being born, growing big, and having babies.
- * Eggshell: The hard, protective covering that keeps a baby animal safe while it grows inside the egg.
- * Develop: To grow and change over time.
- * Stage: One part of a life cycle, like being a baby or being a grown-up.

External Resources

Children's Books:

Chicken and Egg* by Meg Ryder (National Geographic Little Kids First Big Book of Animals)

From Egg to Chicken* by Gail Gibbons

The Best Nest* by P.D. Eastman (beginner reader; shows nest/egg context)

YouTube Videos:

* "Life Cycle of a Chicken" (StoryBots) - Animated, 4-minute overview of eggs hatching to grown chickens. Simple visuals perfect for first graders.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2qWqh-ek3pl>

* "How a Chicken Hatches from an Egg" (National Geographic Kids) - 3-minute real footage showing the hatching process with clear narration.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z8sQnb-0mFg>

Teacher's Note: This image is an excellent entry point to the broader concept of life cycles. First graders are naturally curious about animals and growth, making hatching a highly relatable and engaging phenomenon to explore!