Animal Life Cycles

Grade 3

Name _____ Date _____

Remember: A **life cycle** shows how an animal grows and changes. **Frog:** egg → tadpole → froglet → adult. **Butterfly:** egg → caterpillar → chrysalis → adult.

It's a cycle: the last stage (adult) lays eggs, so the cycle starts again.

Changing as They Grow



Every animal has a **life cycle**: the stages it goes through as it is born, grows, has young and dies. Some animals change shape completely as they grow. This is called **metamorphosis**.

A **frog** starts as an **egg** in the water. The egg hatches into a **tadpole**, which swims with a tail and breathes with gills. The tadpole grows legs and lungs and becomes a **froglet**. Finally, its tail disappears, and it becomes an **adult frog** that can live on land.

A **butterfly** starts as an **egg** on a leaf. A **caterpillar**, also called a larva, hatches and eats and eats. Then it forms a hard case called a **chrysalis**, or pupa. Inside, its body changes. At last, an **adult butterfly** comes out.

Adult frogs and butterflies lay eggs, and the cycle starts all over again.

1. Check your understanding

Circle the best answer.

1. What is metamorphosis?

(a) A big change in body shape as an animal grows (b) A kind of egg
(c) A frog's song

2. What hatches from a frog egg?

(a) A froglet (b) A tadpole (c) A caterpillar

3. What is a chrysalis?

(a) A butterfly's egg (b) A leaf (c) The hard case a caterpillar forms

4. What happens at the end of each life cycle?

(a) Adults lay eggs and it starts again. (b) The animal turns into a plant.
(c) Nothing.

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2. Frog, butterfly or both?

Circle which life cycle each stage belongs to.

1	tadpole	frog	butterfly	both
2	caterpillar	frog	butterfly	both
3	egg	frog	butterfly	both
4	chrysalis	frog	butterfly	both
5	froglet	frog	butterfly	both
6	adult that lays eggs	frog	butterfly	both

3. Think like a scientist

Answer in a complete sentence.

1. **How is a tadpole different from an adult frog?**

Answer Key

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1. Check your understanding

1. **What is metamorphosis?**
   - (a) **A big change in body shape as an animal grows**
   - (b) A kind of egg
   - (c) A frog's song

2. **What hatches from a frog egg?**
   - (a) A froglet
   - (b) **A tadpole**
   - (c) A caterpillar

3. **What is a chrysalis?**
   - (a) A butterfly's egg
   - (b) A leaf
   - (c) **The hard case a caterpillar forms**

4. **What happens at the end of each life cycle?**
   - (a) **Adults lay eggs and it starts again.**
   - (b) The animal turns into a plant.
   - (c) Nothing.

2. Frog, butterfly or both?

1	tadpole	**frog**	butterfly	both
2	caterpillar	frog	**butterfly**	both
3	egg	frog	butterfly	**both**
4	chrysalis	frog	**butterfly**	both
5	froglet	**frog**	butterfly	both
6	adult that lays eggs	frog	butterfly	**both**

3. Think like a scientist

Sample answer.

1. **How is a tadpole different from an adult frog?**
   A tadpole lives in water, has a tail and breathes with gills. An adult frog has legs, no tail and breathes with lungs.