

Bird life cycles

Outstanding Science Year 5 - Living things and their habitats - OS5A004



National Curriculum Statutory Requirements

5A1 - describe the differences in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird

Learning Objective



I can compare the life cycles of different birds.

Me:   

Teacher:   

Common cuckoo

The common cuckoo is a **brood parasite**. The female lays her eggs in the nests of other birds, which are called **hosts**.

The female approaches the host's nest (which already has a clutch of its own eggs inside), pushes out an egg and lays one of her own in its place. This process takes only around 10 seconds.

The host returns to her nest. She sits on the clutch of eggs, including the cuckoo's egg, and incubates them.

The cuckoo egg often hatches before the host's eggs. The cuckoo hatchling pushes the hosts' eggs and any hatched chicks out of the nest, killing them.

The host gathers food and feeds the cuckoo hatchling, treating it as her own offspring. The cuckoo can grow very large - much larger than the host that is feeding it.

Once the cuckoo is fully grown, it flies from the nest and mates. The female cuckoo searches for a suitable host nest to **parasitise**.

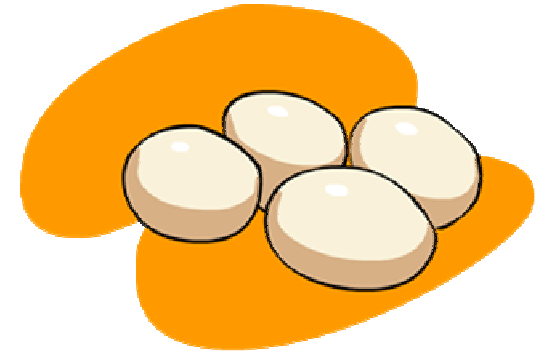


Chicken

The female chicken lays her eggs, one at a time, in a cluster called a **clutch**. The eggs do not continue to develop until the hen is ready. She waits until she has laid a clutch of around 12 eggs before doing this. She then

incubates them at a temperature of 37.5°C, sitting on them to keep them warm, and turning them occasionally to stop the embryo from sticking to one side of the shell. After 21 days, the chicks begin to hatch. Chicks peck an air hole in the shell with a special structure on their beak called an **egg tooth**.

The hen looks after the newborn chicks for a few weeks. The chicks continue to grow into adults. **Roosters** (males) and **hens** (females) are able to reproduce when they are a few months old.



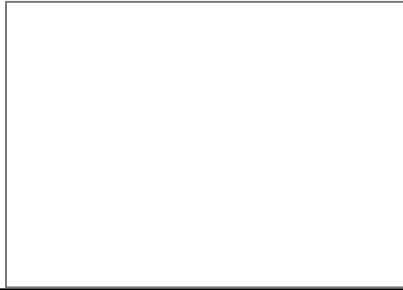
Activity

Cut out the pictures and place them in the correct place on each life cycle. Add arrows and write a description of each stage.

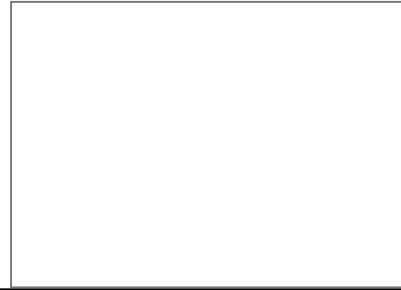
Discussion

What do these birds' life cycles have in common? What differences do they have?

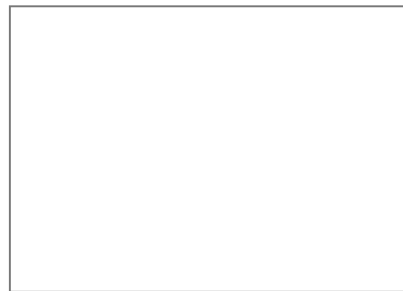
The life cycle of a common cuckoo



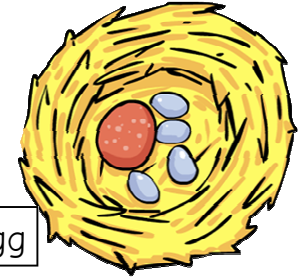
Four horizontal lines for writing notes about the Egg stage.



Four horizontal lines for writing notes about the Adult stage of a common cuckoo.



Four horizontal lines for writing notes about the Chick stage of a common cuckoo.



Egg



Adult



Chick



The life cycle of a chicken









Egg



Adult



Chick