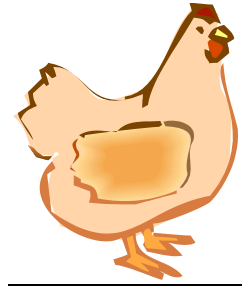


Which came first: the chicken or the egg?

3rd to 5th Grades
Pre-Trip

Life Cycle of a Chicken-- Formation of an Egg



Summary of Field Trip

Students will have the chance to learn from one of our knowledgeable Poultry Volunteer Teachers about the life cycle of a chicken and formation of a chicken egg. Once students enter the Poultry Barn at the Topsfield Fair, they will have the chance to watch chicks hatch and hold/pet a baby chick that was born here during the fair. Our Fair Volunteer Teachers will explain to students the life cycle of a chick, from growth in the egg (while they watch chicks hatching) through adulthood. They will also show students the rest of the chickens in the barn and explain the care of older chickens on farms. Be sure to come with lots of questions!

Vocabulary

Beak
Feather
Wing
Hen
Rooster
Chicks
Flock
Dawn
Life Cycle

Mate
Comb
Wattle
Adapted
Breeds
Diseases
Parasites
Perches
Varieties

Clutch
Coop
Scratch
Shell
Yolk Sac
Air Cell
Albumen

Objectives

- *Students will be able to explain the life cycle of a chicken from egg through adulthood.
- *Students will understand the formation of a chicken egg and how chickens hatch.
- *Students will understand how chickens are cared for by farmers.

Massachusetts Frameworks

Life Science (Biology) 3-5

Structures and Functions

3. Recognize that plants and animals go through predictable life cycles that include birth, growth, development, reproduction, and death.

Background Information

Chickens were one of the world's first domesticated animals. Today, chickens are raised by farmers for two products: eggs and meat. Chickens that are raised for these two products are called poultry. Other people do keep chickens as pets and/or to enter in contests/fairs.

A chicken is a bird that has a comb on the top of its head and two wattles underneath its chin. To help them scratch at the dirt, they have four-toed feet with very sharp claws on each toe. Even though chickens are birds, most cannot fly. The reason for this is because farm chickens have large heavy bodies and short wings. A female chicken is a hen, a male is a rooster, and a baby is a chick. They live in flocks, which are large groups of chickens. Within this group there is a pecking order.

Student Connections

Introduce all farm animals, highlighting chickens by using a read-aloud book. Start a discussion with students about who has ever seen a real chicken and if they know where eggs really come from (not the grocery store). Start getting them thinking about how we are different from chickens (for example chickens laying and hatching from eggs).

Pre-Trip Lessons/Activities

1. Students will complete a K-W-L chart. Students can map out what they already know about the life cycle of a chicken and what they would like to know. They can also formulate a list of questions that they can ask during the field trip.
2. Have students work in groups and use books (provided by teacher) to research what a chicken needs in its habitat to live. Then have each group research another animal that lives in the area and compare what the two animals need to live.
3. As a class, map out the development of a chicken from when an egg is laid to the end of a chicken's life. Have students draw pictures to go along with each stage in the chicken's life.

4. Have students label the different parts of the inside of a chicken egg.

Resources

Children's Books:

Dalgleish, Sharon. Farm Animals: Chickens. Philadelphia: Chelsea Clubhouse, 2005.

Ray, Hannah. Down on the Farm: Chickens. Laguna Hills: QEB Publishing, Inc, 2006.

Nelson, Robin. Chickens. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company, 2009.

Green, Emily K. Farm Animals: Chickens. Minneapolis: Bellwether Media, 2007.

Hudak, Heather C. Farm Animals Chickens. New York: Weigl Publishers Inc, 2007.

Gibbons, Gail. Chicks & Chickens. New York: Holiday House, 2003.

Teacher Resources:

Damerow, Gail. Storey's Guide to Raising Chickens. North Adams: Storey Publishing, 2010.

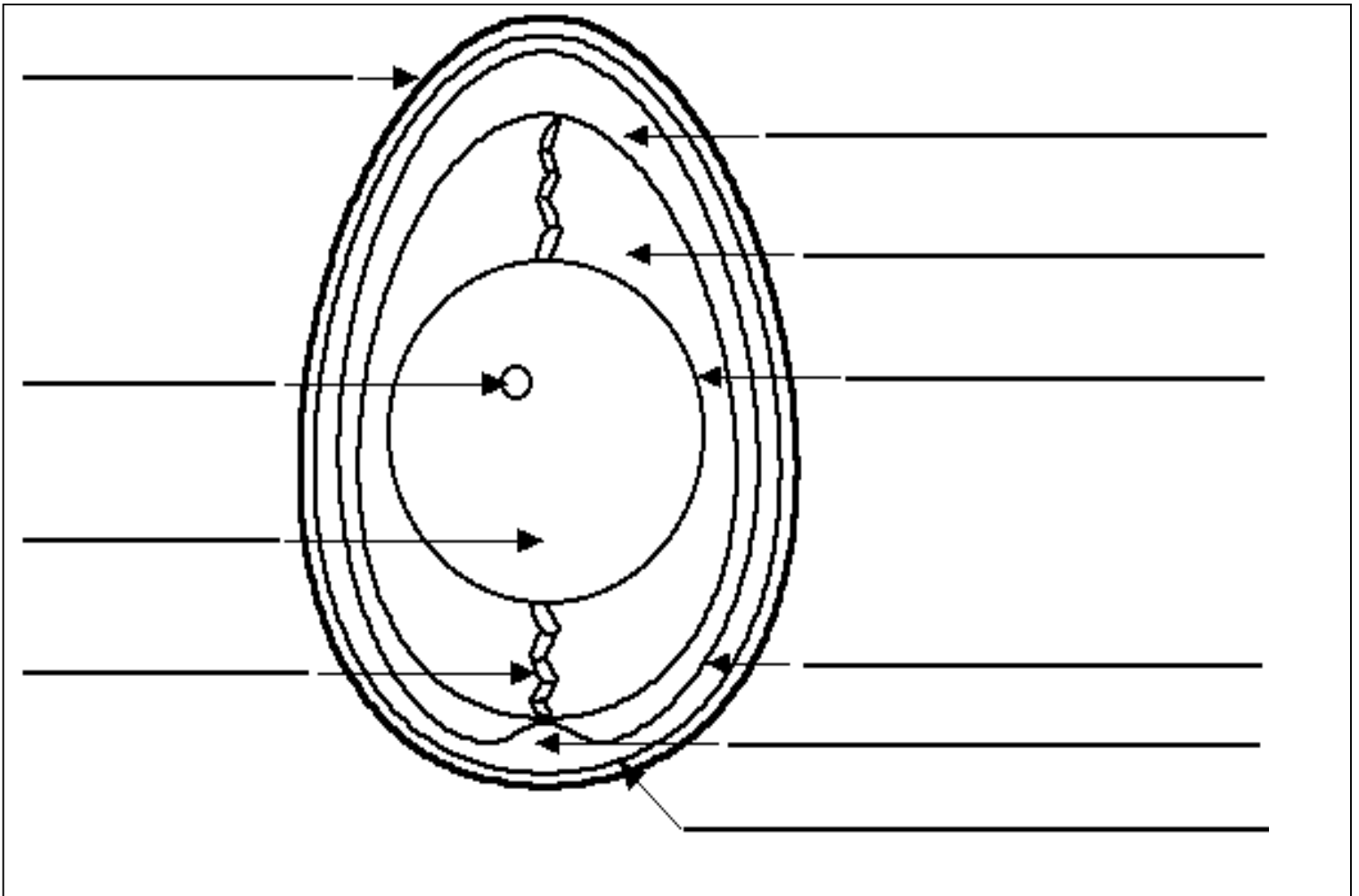
Kopp, Linda. Keeping Chickens with Ashley English. New York: Lark Books, 2.

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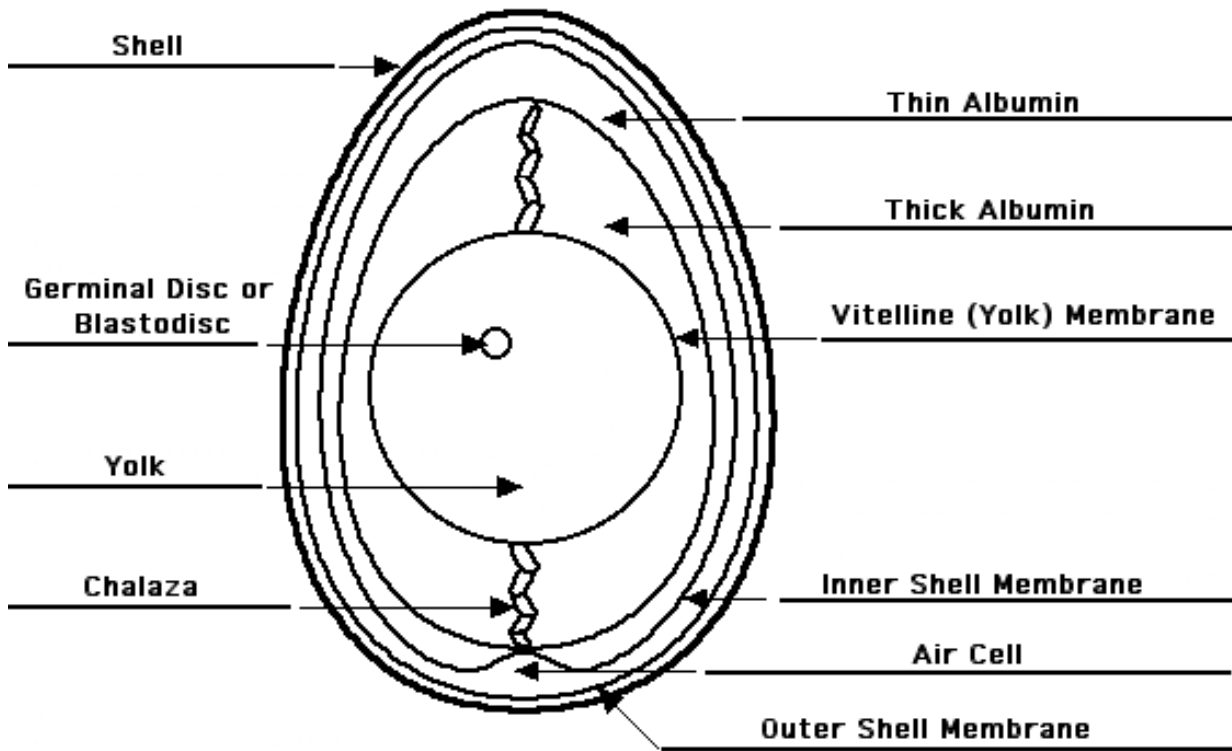
Date: _____

Label the following parts of the inside of a chicken egg:

- shell
- yolk
- chalaza
- thin albumen
- thick albumen
- yolk membrane
- inner shell membrane
- air cell
- outer shell membrane
- blastoderm



ANSWER KEY



K

What do you think you know?

W

What do you want to know?

L

What did you learn?