

The Wonders of Life Cycles

Learning objective: To understand the life cycles of mammals and amphibians, and the process of reproduction.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below in full sentences.

Nova the barn owl loves watching the natural world change through the seasons. Reproduction is the amazing process by which living things create offspring, ensuring their species continues to thrive. Different animals have unique ways of bringing new life into the world. Mammals, such as lions, carry their young inside their bodies. The time taken for the young to develop before birth is called the gestation period. Once born, these young are often cared for by their parents until they can fend for themselves.

In contrast, many amphibians, like frogs, lay their eggs in water. These eggs hatch into larvae, such as tadpoles, which look very different from their adult parents. Over time, they undergo a remarkable transformation called metamorphosis to become adults. Whether it is a tiny egg in a pond or a cub learning to pounce in the savannah, every creature has a special journey. By understanding these life cycles, we can better appreciate how diverse and precious life on Earth is. Nova reminds us that every living thing starts its story in its own clever, natural way.

Word bank: reproduction · offspring · amphibian · mammal · gestation · metamorphosis

1. According to the text, what is the definition of reproduction? (2 marks)

2. What is the specific name for the process where a tadpole changes into an adult frog? (1 mark)

3. Why might it be an advantage for mammals to care for their young after birth? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, how does the development of a mammal differ from the development of an amphibian? (2 marks)

5. Nova says that every creature has a 'special journey'. Why do you think it is important for humans to protect these different life cycles? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a split-page diagram. On one side, draw a lion cub with its mother, and on the other side, draw the life cycle of a frog from egg to adult.



Extension challenge: Research one other animal group (such as birds, insects, or reptiles) and write a short paragraph explaining how their reproduction process differs from the mammals and amphibians mentioned in the text.