

Eggs-periments and Classroom Activities for Where Do Chicks Come From? by Amy E. Sklansky

- Materials: uncooked egg and a bowl. Ask students to make a hypothesis about what will happen when you squeeze the egg as hard as you can with one hand. Then, hold an egg in the palm of one hand over the bowl and squeeze. The egg should not break. (The bowl is there in case there is a tiny crack in the egg – the only reason it should break in your hand.) Allow students to try it themselves. Ask them why they think the egg does not break? Like the pressure from the palm of your hand, a hen's weight spreads out evenly over the rounded shape of the eggshell when she sits on an egg. This ensures that her egg won't break while she's keeping it warm.
- Materials: uncooked egg and a bowl. Show p. 10, the close-up of the inside parts of an egg. Then break open the egg and pour the contents into the bowl. Ask students to identify the albumen and yolk. Can they spot the stringy, white chalazae (pronounced kuh-lay-zee)? The chalazae help keep the yolk in place and protected within the egg, like shock absorbers. Look inside the shell for the air sac attached to the wider end of the egg.
- Materials: uncooked egg, a small rubber ball, and a table. Ask students to make observations about the ball and the egg. How are they different and similar? Ask them to make a hypothesis about what will happen when you gently roll them across a table or desk. Take turns rolling the ball a couple times and then the egg. Which rolls fast and straight, like a soccer ball? Which wobbles and rolls in a circular motion? Why do you think this is? Ask students if they think the egg's shape makes it harder or easier for the hen to take care of her eggs.
- Create a class book about another life cycle you are studying (e.g. butterflies). Assign each student a different stage to write a couple of sentences about and illustrate. Alternately, each student could write and illustrate their own short life cycle book about chickens or another animal.
- If you have access to a kitchen, you could prepare eggs in several different ways (e.g. sunny side up, hard-boiled, and scrambled). Ask students to observe the differences in the appearance of the cooked egg vs. the uncooked egg. Allow students to sample the cooked eggs. Ask students if they remember why it is that the eggs they are eating could never grow into chickens. (Answer: They were never fertilized.)

