

Mammal life cycles

Outstanding Science Year 5 - Living things and their habitats - OS5A001



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 mammals.

Me:   

Teacher:   

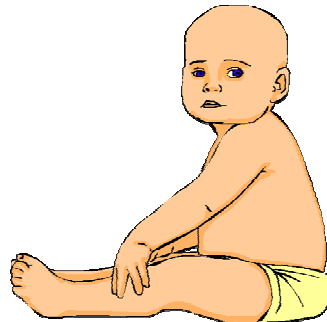
Humans are placental mammals.

This means that the foetus (unborn baby) is nourished by a special organ called a **placenta** when it is inside the womb. The placenta supplies the foetus with nutrients and oxygen from the mother's blood.

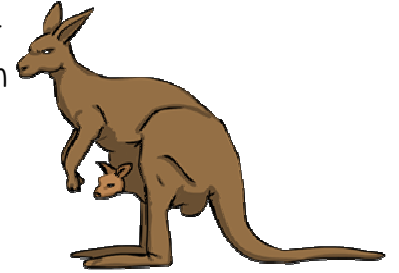


A human foetus inside the womb being supplied with nutrients from its mother through the placenta and umbilical cord

After **gestating** (growing inside the womb) for about 9 months, the baby is born. Human babies can be nourished by their mother's milk. Human babies are extremely vulnerable and cannot walk or feed themselves for years after their birth. During this time, young humans need to be cared for by adults. Humans reach reproductive age after around 16 years. The human male fertilises the female, creating an **embryo** which becomes a foetus.



Unlike humans, the **kangaroo** does not have a **placenta**. The female gives birth after a gestation period of only a few weeks, when the foetus is still extremely small (about the size of a bean) and underdeveloped. It crawls along its mother's body to a pocket called a **pouch**, where it continues to develop. The **joey** (baby kangaroo) is nourished by its mother's milk, which it gets from a nipple within the pouch. As the joey grows, it leaves the pouch for increasing periods of time until it is too large to be carried by its mother. It then develops into an adult.

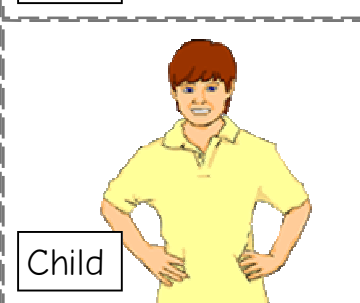
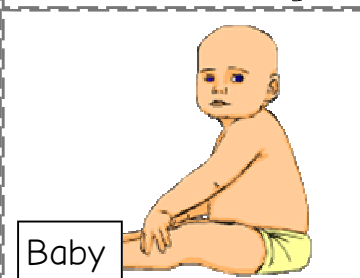
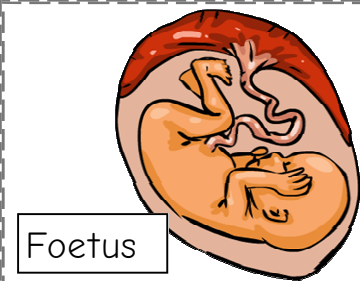


Unusually for a mammal, the **platypus** is **oviparous** (lays eggs). The eggs gestate inside the mother for 28 days. She then lays them in her burrow and covers them for a further 10 days. Once the baby platypus hatches, it is nourished by its mother's milk. Unlike other mammals, female platypuses do not have nipples - the milk flows out of their skin like sweat. When the young platypus is 4 months old, it is ready to leave the burrow.

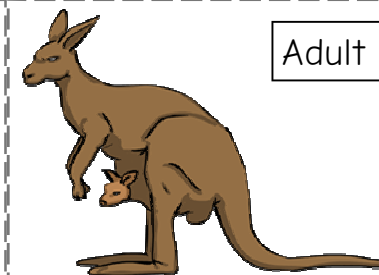
Activity

Cut out the pictures and place them in the correct place on each life cycle. Add arrows and write a description of each stage. What do these mammals' life cycles have in common? What differences do they have?

The life cycle of a human



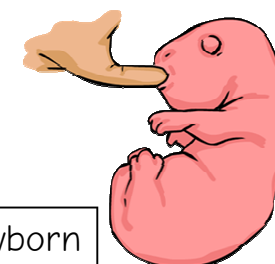
The life cycle of a kangaroo



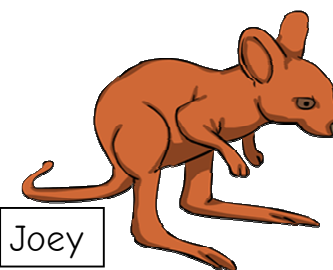
Adult



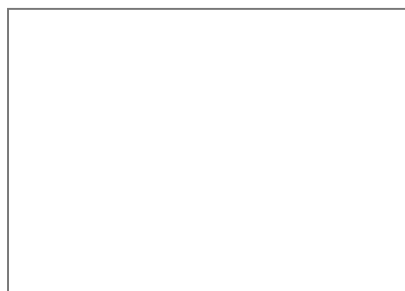
Embryo



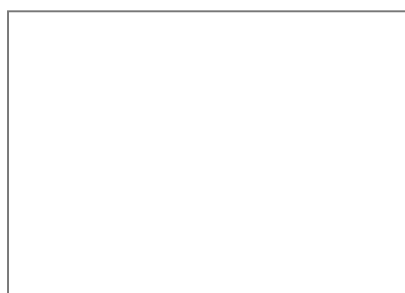
Newborn

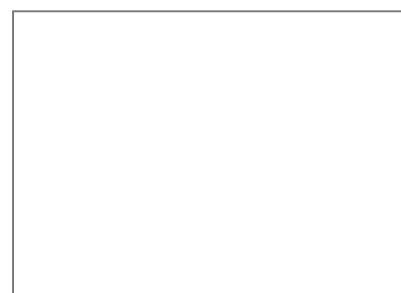


Joey





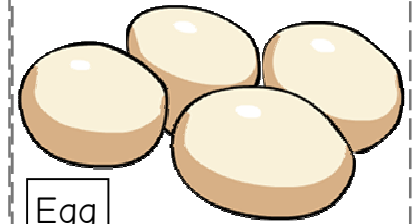




The life cycle of a platypus



Adult



Egg



Baby