







This activity is from *Nature Unfolds*, the K-2 unit of Discover Nature Schools, the Missouri Department of Conservation's conservation education program now adopted in over 800 Missouri schools.

Use this activity about the life cycle of the wild turkey as a backdrop for your study of peregrine falcons. How are turkey chicks and peregrine chicks the same? How are they different? Do they eat the same things, act the same ways, and do they look like their parents?

SEE HOW THE TURKEY GROWS

CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN THIS LEARNING EXPERIENCE WILL

- Listen to a story about the life cycle of a turkey
- Explore how young turkeys are different than and the same as their parents
- Talk about the life cycle of the turkey
- Act out the life cycle of a turkey

GLEs ADDRESSED:

LO.1.B.2.a Identify and sequence life cycles (birth, growth, and development, reproduction and death) of animals (i.e., butterfly, frog, turkey ehicken, snake, dog)

LO.1.B.2.b Record observations on the life cycle of different animals (e.g., butterfly, dog, frog, turkey chicken, snake)

LO.3.D.K.a Identify that living things have offspring based on the organisms' physical similarities and differences

LO.3.D.2.a Identify and relate the similarities and differences among animal parents and their offspring or multiple offspring

MATERIALS:

- Multiple copies of See How The Turkey Grows
- Chart paper
- Marker

TEACHER PREPARATION:

- Become familiar with story
- Examine pictures in story for details
- Divide one piece of chart paper into 2 sections labeled *egg* and *poult* or *juvenile turkey*. Divide each of these sections in half and label one side *alike* and one side *different*.

PROCEDURE:

- 1. Before reading the story talk with the children about life cycles. A life cycle is a series of changes that every living thing goes through. For animals it begins the minute a baby begins growing in an egg and continues until death. Not every creature has the same life cycle but all follow a predictable pattern.
- 2. Explain that the story they are going to read together is about the turkey life cycle. Read through the story together pausing to examine the pictures and share ideas about what the children think is going to happen.
- 3. Once the story is finished, go through the story again with the children talking about each stage that they turkeys went through.
- 4. On the labeled piece of chart paper introduce children to the terms describing the stages they just identified egg, poult or juvenile. Some children may know that the female adult is called a hen and a 1 year old juvenile male is a jake and an adult male is a gobbler or tom. Using the book examine the turkeys at each stage noting how they are similar to the mother and different. Write down all of the children's ideas, making sure to point out things that they miss. For example the adult turkeys eat the same food as the poults.
- 5. Talk about what happened to all of the turkeys in the story. Discuss reasons why turkeys lay so many eggs and what would have happened to the remaining turkeys as well as the snake and fox if the young turkeys had not been eaten.
- 6. Discuss the similarities between the way turkeys are grown and develop and other birds.
- 7. After discussing the stages that turkeys go through review the life cycle one more time by acting it out. Remember the more enthusiastic the teacher is in acting out the life cycle of the turkey, they more real it will be to the children. They will learn about the life cycle in their actions!
 - Ask the children to first be the eggs. Tell them to curl up in the nest (rug or meeting area) into a tight ball as small as they can get. The nest is dry and they are snug and warm in their eggs. Their mother is sitting on them keeping them warm and safe and dry. But they are growing inside their eggs. It is late spring and getting very crowded inside that egg so they must get out! They start peeping even before they are out of the egg. They want mother hen to get to know them even before they are out of the shell. They use their sharp little egg tooth to peck their way out. It takes a long time to crack out of their shells.
 - When they get out they are wet and it is very noisy with all of the peeping going on around them. It's dark but dry under mother hen. Now they are poults. It takes a little while to dry but once they are dry they are HUNGRY! In fact they want to eat and eat and eat. Now they are brown, fuzzy balls. As soon as all of the eggs have hatched and the poults are dry, mother hen takes them out to find food. But the little poults stay close to mom. They peck the ground looking for tasty seeds, scrumptious berries, delectable snails and juicy bugs. Mother hen keeps all of the fuzzy brown poults near her while they are so vulnerable. Whenever a predator is flying over or nearby she calls low, guttural *Kelp! Kelp! Kelp!* The poults know to quickly duck under mother hen when they hear this sound. They are wary young poults, always listening for mother hen to call them back in case of danger. At night they roost on the ground all crowded together under mother hen who keeps them warm and dry with her body.

- It isn't long before they grow a little bigger and stray farther away from mother hen. They are foraging for food when they hear her give a loud warning call *PUTT! PUTT! PUTT!* Even though they have never heard this sound before, the young poults know this means freeze or hurry and hide! There is danger nearby! As soon as the poults hear this sound they freeze or hide. Then they look for mother hen and follow her away from the danger. Sometimes they become food for another animal like a fox or a snake but many of the poults eat and eat and grow and grow and grow.
- The poults are always growing and very soon they have wing feathers. It is hot summer time. Now they are roosting in the trees at night with all of the other turkeys in the flock. Every night they fly up into the trees and every morning they Yelp! Yelp! Yelp! As they fly down. Now they look like mother hen or a young jake (male). They stay close to mother hen but now hunt for those yummy tidbits farther away. They hang out with all of the other turkeys in their flock, foraging for food and listening for danger and always growing. They spend the fall and winter foraging for food. Sometimes when it is really cold and the ground is frozen they have trouble finding food. Some of the weaker members of the flock die and become part of the soil.
- Soon it is spring and one day the turkeys move away from the rest of the flock. One hen hears *Gobble! Gobble! Gobble!* off in the woods. She answers with an excited *Kelp! Kelp! Kelp!* She sees a fine turkey who sings a fine song so she stays with him all day long! Soon the hens and the gobblers go back to the flock and are again foraging for food.
- Then one spring day mother hen makes a nest with leaves and sticks and twigs. She lays eggs in the nest and sits on the eggs to keep them warm and safe and dry until they hatch.

OUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- How is Jane like her mother? How is she not like her mother?
- What would happen to the snake and fox if they didn't eat a young turkey?
- What would have happened to Jane if she had to share the food she found with 2 more turkeys?
- Why do you think turkeys lay so many eggs?

ASSESSMENT:

Discussion of Story	Actively contributed to discussion, pointing out changes in the turkeys as the story progressed.	Attentively listened to the discussion but did not contribute
Identifying Similarities and Differences	Suggested 3-4 similarities between young turkeys and the adults	Suggested 1-2 similarities between young turkeys and the adults
	Suggested 2-3 differences between young turkeys and the adults	Suggested 0-1 difference between young turkeys and the adults
Acting	Enthusiastically acted out all stages of the life cycle of the turkey	Acted out some of the stages but participated only minimally