



Words in **bold** are explained in the glossary on page 22.

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# The big change

When they are about seven weeks old, tadpoles begin to change into frogs.

First, they grow back legs. A few weeks later, their gills disappear. Then they swim to the surface of the water to breathe air.



⇐ The tadpole's back legs grow first.



⇑ As its legs grow longer, the tail grows shorter.

⇐ Then its front legs begin to grow.





Their tails begin to shrink and their front legs begin to grow. The tadpoles now look like tiny frogs.

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⇓ By the time it is 12 weeks old, the tiny frog is about one inch (3 centimeters) long.





# Froglets

The little frogs keep growing, and their tails disappear. They are now called froglets.

The froglets stay in, or near, water. They feed on small **insects**, which they catch with their long, sticky tongues.

⇒ Froglets can swim, crawl, hop, and climb onto the floating leaves of lilies.





When they are bigger, the froglets move away from their pond.

They find a safe place under some plants, where they can hide.

⇒ This froglet is hiding in a pitcher plant in a wood.





# The life of a frog

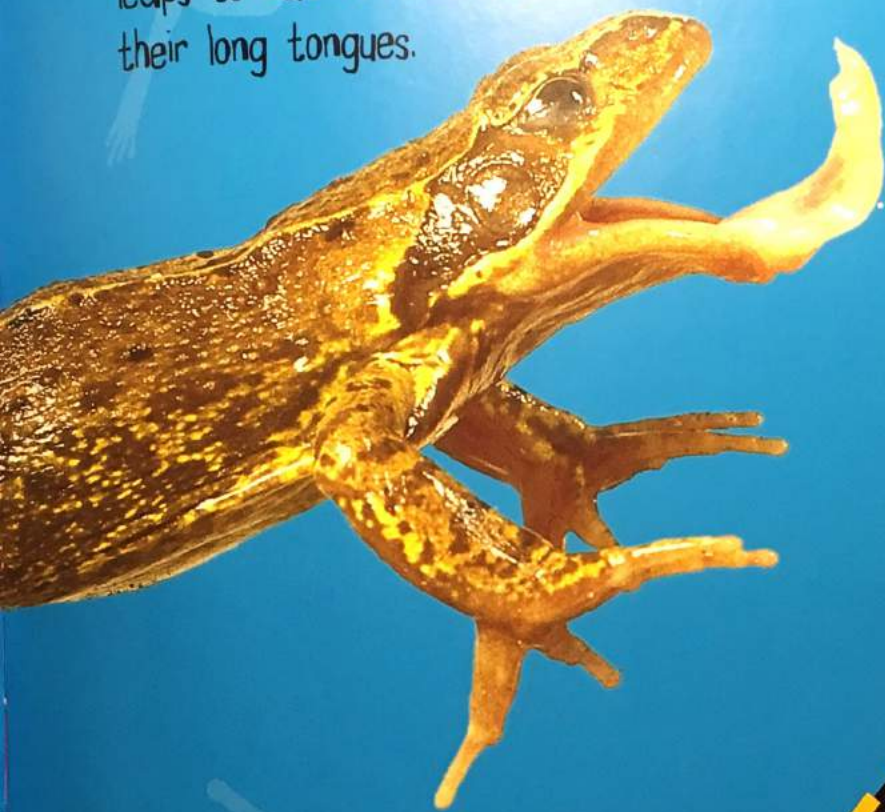
Adult frogs spend most of their time on land. They hide from animals that hunt them for food.

Frogs rest during the day. In the evening they hunt for insects, slugs, and worms.





⇓ Frogs can make huge leaps to catch food with their long tongues.



Tongue



⇓ Camouflage helps a frog to hide from animals that want to eat it.

Many frogs have green, gray, or brown skin. They blend in with their surroundings and so are hard to see. This is called **camouflage**.





# Back to the pond

Frogs **hibernate** in winter. This is because there is little food to eat, and the weather is cold.

When animals hibernate, they fall into a deep sleep to save energy.



↑ Frogs hibernate under rocks, in burrows, or in ponds.





In spring, frogs return to the pond where they were born. This is where the adult frogs mate. Soon the story of the life cycle will begin again.



↗ Male tree frogs croak loudly to call the female to mate.

↘ Frogs are ready to mate when they are two to three years old.





# Glossary

## **Amphibian**

An animal that spends the first part of its life cycle in water, and the second part mostly on land.

## **Camouflage**

Patterns and colors that help an animal to hide.

## **Fertilize**

When liquid from a male changes female eggs so that they can grow into new living things.

## **Frogspawn**

A clump of frog's eggs.

## **Gills**

The parts of a tadpole's body that allow it to breathe underwater.

## **Hibernate**

To spend the cold winter months in a kind of deep sleep.

## **Insect**

A small animal with six legs. A water flea is a type of insect.

## **Life cycle**

The story of how a living thing changes from birth to death and how it has young.

## **Mate**

When a male and female animal come together to produce new life.

## **Rain forest**

A forest that has a lot of rain all year round.

## **Tadpole**

When a young frog hatches from its egg and lives all the time in water.

## **Yolk**

The part of an egg that feeds the growing tadpole.



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# Notes for parents and teachers



Look through the book and talk about the pictures.



Safety outdoors. Teach children how to stay safe while investigating animals and their life cycles, especially when they are around water.



Respect for wildlife. Teach children how to observe and, if appropriate, handle animals with care. They should observe animals in their natural environment, without disturbing wildlife and their habitats. Frogspawn should not be moved from one pond to another, as this allows viruses and other diseases to spread.



Frog activities. Draw the life cycle of a frog and label the different stages together. Use the Internet to research poison arrow frogs, and find out how they defend themselves.



Visit a wildlife park together and learn about pond habitats. Talk about the ways that a habitat provides an animal with the food and shelter it needs to survive. Find out which other animals live in a pond habitat.



Be prepared for questions about human life cycles. Talking about a child's family helps them to link life processes, such as reproduction, to their own experience. Drawing simple family trees and looking at photo albums are fun ways to engage young children.

