
CHICKENS AREN'T THE ONLY ONES

Author: Ruth Heller

Publisher: Grosset & Dunlap

THEME:

A look at all the different kinds of animals that hatch from eggs convinces us that “chickens aren’t the only ones.”

PROGRAM SUMMARY:

Chickens are not the only animals that lay eggs. In this book and episode, we learn about many oviparous animals. LeVar visits a hatchery and finds out how chicks hatch. Then he joins a biologist in Florida to learn about logger-head turtles as they lay their eggs in the sand on the beach. After the turtles hatch, they make their way back to the ocean.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Before viewing the program, discuss with the class where eggs come from. Ask students to name other animals besides chickens that lay eggs. Write their ideas on the board. After they have watched the program, find out if they have additional animals to put on the list.

Chickens Aren't the Only Ones is a nonfiction book written in rhymed text. Discuss the difference between fiction and nonfiction. Use this opportunity to overview additional nonfiction books about chickens and other animals that lay eggs. Talk about the fact that we don't usually expect nonfiction books to be written in rhyme.

Ask the students to imagine breaking out of a shell the way a baby chick does it. Discuss the difficulty of the chick's task. What tasks are difficult for a child when he or she is very young?

CURRICULUM EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Have the class make a list of different ways to prepare eggs (scrambled, fried, hardboiled, poached, etc.). Then have them create a pictograph to represent the class' favorite ways to eat eggs. Use uniform elliptical shapes for the pictures on the graph or make it three-dimensional by using sections of egg cartons for the pictures.

Enlist some parent volunteers to assist the students in preparing breakfast in the classroom with eggs as the main dish. As the eggs are cooking, ask students to take note of the changes in matter that occur as the eggs turn from liquid to solid.

Have students research animals besides birds that lay eggs. Encourage them to find one interesting fact about an animal's eggs, such as: where they are laid, how many eggs there are, the size of the eggs, and what the shell is like. Have them write their information on egg-shaped pieces of paper. Also, have them draw a picture of each animal on the paper egg. Put all the eggs on a metal ring with a title egg on top. Use a new vocabulary word in the title: “Who's Oviparous?”

Students might also enjoy using the information from the above activity to make a matching game. Using construction paper eggs, have them draw a horizontal crack across the egg. On one side of the crack, they draw a picture of the oviparous animal. On the other side, they write an interesting fact about the animal's eggs. They then cut apart the egg along the crack, mix and match the two halves, and try to put them together again by matching the animal with its fact.

View the segment on eggs in the **Reading Rainbow** program, *The Day Jimmy's Boa Ate the Wash*, and sing along to the song, “Three Cheers for Eggs.”

Have students make up their own “cheer” for eggs. One possibility is, “Gimme an E...Gimme a G...Gimme a G...What's that spell?...What's that spell?...What's that spell?” Another possibility is a chant. Instead of standing in a circle, stand students in the shape of an egg. (Go to a place where there is room enough to draw the shape on the floor or ground.) Have them snap their fingers in rhythm while one person chants, “How does _____ (insert the name of a student) like her/his eggs?” That student responds, in the same rhythm, “I like my eggs _____.” That person then becomes the next person to chant the question. (This chant requires students to listen carefully to the speaker and to respond in a complete sentence.) As they chant, students move around the ellipse in the following manner: they step to the right with their right foot and then slide their left foot over to meet the right foot. They move around the ellipse—step-slide, step-slide—in this fashion. They move their feet in rhythm with the snapping of their fingers. Once they have moved right for awhile, they can step with their left foot and move around the ellipse in the opposite direction.

Plan a field trip to a hatchery, turkey farm, or other type of poultry farm. Arrange for students to see eggs in incubation, eggs hatching (if possible), the baby animal, and the adult.

Have students research the sizes of some bird eggs, such as ostrich, turkey, chicken, robin, and hummingbird. Once they know the sizes, have them measure and do a rough sketch of the bird's egg. Then, have them compare the size of the eggs to familiar objects and make statements about the comparisons, such as, “A bluejay's egg is about the size of a walnut.” Provide an array of different objects for them to use in their comparisons.

Using some of the resources on loggerhead turtles (see “Supplementary Booklist” for suggestions), have students find different places in the world where they lay their eggs and mark them on a map. As they mark the map, discuss the features (geographical, climatic, etc.) that these locations have in common.

RELATED THEMES:

animal babies
birds
turtles

RELATED READING RAINBOW PROGRAMS:

Program #84 — Rechenka’s Eggs
Program #40 — The Runaway Duck

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

A native of Winnipeg, Canada, Ruth Heller has a fine arts degree from the University of California at Berkeley and began her career designing wrapping paper, greeting cards, and coloring books. *Chickens Aren’t the Only Ones* is the first hardcover book she wrote and illustrated. The idea for the book came when she noticed “funny things” floating in the water at the city aquarium and learned they were egg sacs. Ruth is also the author/illustrator of *The Reason for a Flower*, a **Reading Rainbow** review book. She makes her home in San Francisco.

BOOKS REVIEWED BY CHILDREN:

MRS. HUGGINS AND HER HEN HANNAH
by Lydia Dabovich (Dutton)

TURTLE AND TORTOISE from the “ANIMALS IN THE WILD” series
by Vincent Serventy (Raintree)

EGG TO CHICK
by Millicent E. Selsam, illus. by Barbara Wolff (HarperCollins)

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:

SEA TURTLES
by Caroline Arnold, illus. by Marshall Peck III (Scholastic)

CHICKEN AND EGG
by Christine Back (Silver Burdett)

EGG: A PHOTOGRAPHIC STORY OF HATCHING
by Jane Burton & Kim Taylor (DK)

ZINNIA AND DOT
by Lisa Campbell Ernst (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard)

SEA TURTLES
by Gail Gibbons (Holiday House)

THE AMAZING EGG BOOK
by Margaret Griffin & Deborah Seed (Addison-Wesley)

INTO THE SEA
by Brenda Z. Guiberson, illus. by Alix Berenzy (Henry Holt)

SEA TURTLE JOURNEY: THE STORY OF A LOGGERHEAD TURTLE
by Lorraine A. Jay, illus. by Katie Lee (SoundPrints)

WHAT’S HATCHING OUT OF THAT EGG?
by Patricia Lauber (Crown)

TRACKS IN THE SAND
by Loreen Leedy (Doubleday)

CLUCK ONE
by Louise Mathews, illus. by Jeni Bassett (Dodd, Mead)

TURTLE BAY
by Saviour Pirotta, illus. by Nilesh Mistry (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)



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