

Keep Pet Tadpoles in Class!

Background Info and Fun Facts

- There are very few perks for being a primary school teacher but keeping tadpoles in class for educational purposes is one of them. Just get a pupil to bring some spawn in but be careful to return tadpoles or frogs back to the place they came from to avoid spreading diseases.
- A frog can lay up to 4,000 eggs at a time. They are surrounded by jelly, which takes in water, swells up, and floats to the top of the pond. Tadpoles develop from the black dots in the jelly and s feed on water plants but then on insects. They can be fed fish food at this stage in the tank if keeping them in school. The legs then develop and the tail finally disappears after three or four months.
- Frogs feed on many pests such as slugs. They are great to have in the garden as a result. Their predators include foxes, crows, badgers and hedgehogs. They are found throughout Ireland and can change colour depending on their surroundings.



Curriculum Links

Subject	Strand	Strand Unit
Science	Living things	Animal life

Lesson Content

1. Put 3 cm of gravel on the bottom and 2cm of sand above it in the plastic box.
2. Add in the stones, shells and pondweed and fill the tank with rainwater.
3. Add in the frogspawn. Each tadpole will need around a litre of water.
4. One of the stones should rise up above the level of the water for frogs to sit on and breathe.
5. Clean the tank as necessary and replace the water with rainwater kept at room temperature.
6. Monitor the developments. The tadpoles will feed on the pondweed until they develop their hind legs. Add in a pinch of goldfish food a day at this stage. They will also eat boiled or frozen lettuce.
7. Get the pupils to monitor and record the changes in the tadpoles in a diary or copy. It beats learning about it on an interactive whiteboard!



Resources

A small amount of frog spawn, clear plastic container, washed gravel or horticultural sand, stones and shells and fish food.

Web Links

- www.schoolearthead.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-feb-tank.html or www.blackrockec.ie/content/february-how-set-ecology-tank for a video of the lesson
- www.enchantedlearning.com + Frog Life Cycle for printable booklets on the frog
- www.npws.ie + Frogspawn for the teacher's licence to remove frogspawn
- More information can also be found in the book Looking At Nature by Elsie Proctor