



# Comparing Life Cycles

## Outdoor Classroom Field Journal Activity Lesson Plans & Resources

**Online Lesson Plans & Resources:** <https://www.alabamawildlife.org/oc-activity-comparing-life-cycles/>

Students will compare their life cycle (the life cycle of a human) with the life cycle of an animal that they find in the outdoor classroom.

The background information and questions below can be used to help introduce the topic, engage the students, and build a foundation to discuss the topic:

### **Background Information & Vocabulary** (online as a PDF)

All **organisms**, or living things, on earth have one thing in common – a **life cycle** that starts with some type of “birth” and then continues with growth and/or **metamorphosis** (change) into an adult until the cycle starts over with **reproduction** (make offspring) unless the organism dies.

During the stages of **development** (growth or change), these organisms display different inherited **traits** (or characteristics) and use different **strategies** (or plans) for survival all with the goal of allowing some of the population to reach adulthood so that they can reproduce and start a new generation.

Some organisms at birth closely resemble the adult of that species except for size, while other organisms go through very unusual changes, or metamorphosis, during their life cycle stages.

The changes that different species go through during their life cycles can take different amounts of time.

For instance, we grow from a baby to an adult over a span of 15-19 years while some butterflies go through complete metamorphosis from an egg to a caterpillar to a butterfly in a few weeks.

Each species of animal has a different **life span** (its typical age at death) as well.

