

Here Comes Spring

Find out what changes spring can bring!



Here Comes Spring

SCIENCE

Teach children about some of the changes that occur during spring.

National Standard

Science (NSES)
Changes in Earth and sky

Goal

Students will learn about the changes that happen during spring.

Objective

Students will be able to identify objects whose names rhyme with *spring*.

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Get more ideas for teaching about spring.

Literature Connection

- *Duckling's First Spring*, by Salina Yoon
- *Guess How Much I Love You in the Spring*, by Sam McBratney
- *Kitten's Spring*, by Eugenie Fernandes
- *Ready for Spring*, by Marthe Jocelyn

A Poem to Share**What Is Spring?**

Spring tastes like raindrops
Fresh and clean and sweet.
Spring sounds like puddles
Splashing round my feet.
Spring looks like flowers
Opening in the sun.
Spring smells like freshness
Now that winter's done.

That's what spring is everywhere—
A touch of gladness in the air.

—Pauline C. Peck

Before Reading

Set the Stage: Explain that the four seasons are winter, spring, summer, and fall. Ask: Which season follows winter? How is spring like winter? How is it different from winter?

Background Information**About Spring**

- Spring is the season that occurs after winter and before summer.
- Spring lasts from about March 21 until about June 21 each year.
- The temperature begins to get warmer in spring. Some people spend more time outside than they did during winter.
- Many plants begin to grow new flowers and leaves during spring.
- Some animals awaken from hibernation or return from migration at this time of year.
- Many animals are active in spring. Some have babies; others lay eggs.
- Springtime is often windy or rainy.

About Rhyming Words

- Seeing rhyming words helps children recognize letter patterns.
- As children repeat rhymes, they begin to associate sounds with letters. As they sing, chant, or say rhymes over and over, they begin to more clearly comprehend story meanings while developing fluency and rhythm.

During Reading

Draw Conclusions: Explain that many plants begin to bloom again in spring after resting all winter. Ask: Why might spring be a good time for flowers to begin blooming again?

After Reading

Discuss: Ask: What other things happen in nature during spring? Do you do anything differently now that it is spring?

Language Arts Extension: Make or buy flash cards illustrating the following words: *cat, hat, bat, mat, can, man, fan, and van*. Place the flash cards in a learning center. Encourage children to identify the rhyming words and clip them together. Build on the center by adding more cards to increase the challenge.

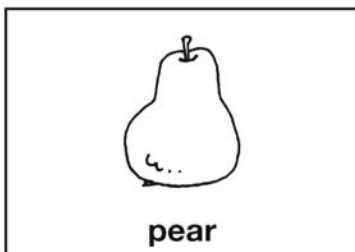
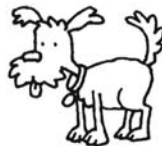
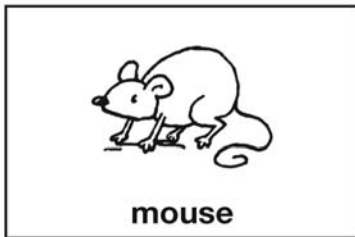
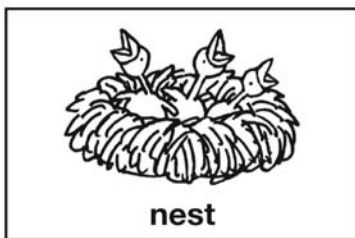
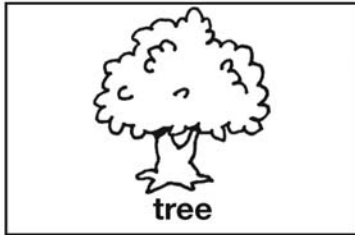
Science Extension: Take children on a nature walk. Encourage them to observe items that are signs of spring, such as earthworms; butterflies, ladybugs, and other insects; grass; buds on trees; and wildflowers. Back in the classroom, invite students to say what things they saw that made them think of spring. List those items on an easel pad. Encourage discussion about each item. Ask: Why might we see earthworms? What might the butterfly have been looking for?

Adaptation: Invite students to work together to draw a simple tree and all its parts on a large piece of drawing paper. Then ask them to color each main part a different color. Guide them in folding the picture and cutting it into pieces that can be put back together. Add label cards that can be clipped to each part to increase the challenge.

Name _____

Which Words Rhyme?

Look at the first picture in each row, and say its name. Then circle the picture in each row whose name rhymes with the first picture.



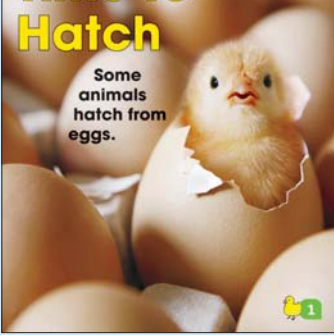
The pictures below show three parts of a tree.
Say the names of those three parts.

TRY THIS



Time to Hatch

Some animals hatch from eggs.



Introduce several animals that hatch from eggs.

National Standard

Science (NSES)
Life cycles of organisms

Goal

Students will learn about some animals that hatch from eggs.

Objective

Students will be able to put the pictures of a sequence in the correct order.

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Teach children the difference between animals that hatch from eggs and those that do not.

Literature Connection

- *Alligator Baby*, by Robert Munsch
- *The Cow That Laid an Egg*, by Andy Cutbill
- *An Egg Is Quiet*, by Dianna Aston
- *Little Dino's Egg*, by Alicia Zadrozny
- *The Pinkish, Purplish, Bluish Egg*, by Bill Peet

A Poem to Share

Baby Ducks

A mother duck laid her eggs in a nest.
She sat on them to keep them warm.
Inside of each egg, a new duckling grew.
It was just beginning to form.

The baby duck pecked at the fragile eggshell

Then popped out on wobbly feet.
He stood up and walked making peeping sounds

And looked for his mother to greet.

When just two days old, he began to swim.
With his webbed feet, he paddled along.
Then his yellow fluff fell out and white feathers grew

And his wings became big and strong.

—Deborah Garmon

Time to Hatch

SCIENCE

Before Reading

Think Critically: Explain that most birds lay eggs. Ask: What are some other animals that lay eggs?

Background Information

- **Duck** eggs take about 30 days to hatch. Ducklings can walk and swim soon after they hatch, but they cannot fly until they are 2 months old.
- **Chicken** eggs usually take about three weeks to hatch. The hen, or female chicken, sits on the eggs to keep them warm.
- **Alligators** build nests in the ground where they lay eggs. When the baby alligators are ready to hatch, they begin grunting. That is how the mother knows that it is time for them to hatch.
- Some **spiders** lay their eggs, encase them in protective sacs, and abandon them; other spiders stay with their eggs and care for the young once they hatch. The wolf spider carries its young on its back.
- **Sea turtles**, like alligators, lay eggs in nests in the ground. Unlike alligators, mother turtles leave their nests and do not care for their hatchlings.

During Reading

Compare and Contrast: Invite children to think about the different animals in the issue. Ask: How are they similar to one another? How are they different?

After Reading

Make Connections: Ask children to think of real eggs they have seen. Ask: Which animal's eggs have you seen most often?

Language Arts Extension: Talk about the different animals that lay eggs. On an easel pad, write the following sentence: "I found an egg one day, and out hatched a ____." Let children supply the names of animals that hatch from eggs. Encourage them to think of animals that are not featured in the issue.

Science/Art Extension: Review the different types of animals that hatch from eggs, and write their names on an easel pad or use your list from the activity above. Pass out sheets of egg-shaped construction paper that say: "A ____ hatches from an egg." Invite each child to draw on his or her egg a picture of one of the animals. Encourage children to copy the name of the animal on the line.

Adaptation: Write vocabulary words (with small pictures to help nonreaders) on small slips of paper. Place each slip inside a colored plastic egg. Place the eggs in an empty egg carton. Invite children to open the eggs, or to "help the eggs hatch." Encourage them to identify the word on each slip of paper.

Name _____

Fun With Poetry

Ask children to listen carefully as you read the poem. When you have finished, invite children to complete the activity below.

What's Inside?



An egg is a secret inside of a shell
 What will come out? Do you think you can tell?
 An egg can be found in a nest in a tree,
 In leaves on the ground, or in sand by the sea.
 Some eggs are like jelly and made to float.
 Do you think an egg would hatch a goat?
 Hard eggs, soft eggs, large eggs, small,
 What do you think will hatch from them all?

—Marie E. Cecchini

Patrick Girouard

1. Circle the words **egg** and **eggs** each time they appear in the poem. How many times do they appear? **6 7 8**

2. Draw a square around the word that rhymes with **shell**.

3. Draw an arrow pointing to the name of an animal.

4. Circle the question marks in the poem and the title of the poem. How many question marks appear altogether? Write the number. _____

▶ TRY THIS

Do you think goats hatch from eggs?

yes no



Time to Grow

SCIENCE

Engage children in a lesson about plants.

National Standard

Science (NSES)
Characteristics of organisms

Goal

Students will learn about the parts of a plant and the life cycle of a plant.

Objective

Students will be able to draw lines from the parts of a plant to their names.

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Get activity ideas for a preschool plant theme.

Literature Connection

- *From Seed to Plant*, by Gail Gibbons
- *One Bean*, by Anne Rockwell
- *Planting a Rainbow*, by Lois Ehlert
- *Seeds*, by Ken Robbins
- *The Tiny Seed*, by Eric Carle

A Poem to Share

Springtime Seeds

It's spring and time to plant some seeds.
We wonder what they'll be.
Vegetables, fruits, or flowers,
We'll have to wait and see.

Some seeds will sprout into a vine
That scoots along the ground;
Then yellow blossoms swell and form
Bright pumpkins, orange and round.

But some seeds take a longer time
To show us what they'll be.
They grow into a trunk with limbs
Becoming a big tree.

—Deborah Garmon

Before Reading

Make Comparisons: Explain that plants are living things. They grow and change similarly to how animals and people do. Ask: What do you know about plants? How are plants “born”? Where do they come from?

Background Information

- Many plants begin to grow new flowers and leaves in spring.
- **Flowers** help a plant reproduce, or make new plants. When an insect lands on a flower to feed, pollen sticks to the insect. The insect takes the pollen to another plant. That plant uses the pollen to make seeds that grow into new plants.
- **Leaves** capture energy from the sun. The leaves use the energy, along with water and carbon dioxide, to create food for the plant. That process is called photosynthesis.
- The **stem** forms the basic structure of a plant. It carries water and nutrients from the roots to other parts of the plant.
- **Roots** absorb water and nutrients from the soil. They also help anchor the plant in the ground.

During Reading

Draw Conclusions: Show children pictures of gardening tools. Hold up one of the pictures. Ask: How is this tool used to help garden? How does it make a gardener's job easier?

After Reading

Think Critically: Explain that plants have many uses. Invite children to think of different plants and the different ways we use plants, such as for food, shelter, medicines, or decorations.

Language Arts Extension:

Photograph your students in the process of gardening. Place the photos in sequence in a photo album, and invite children to talk about their experiences in each stage of the process of planting a seed. Create captions to record their dialogue.

Science Extension: Collect small, empty, clean yogurt containers. Cut strips of paper to fit around the containers. Invite each child to place a strip horizontally on the table and draw a face on it. The face should be large enough for the forehead to touch the top and the chin to touch the bottom of the paper. Guide children in wrapping the strips around the containers. Help children fill the containers with potting soil and plant grass seed in them. Let children carefully water the soil. Watch the grass grow into little green-haired friends.

Adaptation: Divide the class into pairs. One partner will squat and curl up like a seed. The other partner will pretend to be the sun (hold up arms and “shine down”), the wind (blow on the seed), and the rain (make sprinkling gesture with fingers). As the child is doing those activities, the partner should slowly come out of the seed position, straighten up, and hold out his or her arms like a flower.

Name _____

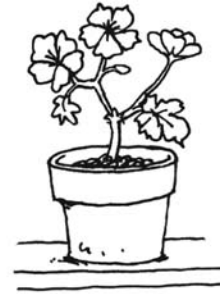
Listening Activity

This *Weekly Reader* listening activity is designed to help assess and improve children's listening, recall, vocabulary, and comprehension skills.

Directions: Ask children to listen carefully as you read the story. Then read each question. Ask children to circle the correct picture answer.

Mingo Cares for a Plant

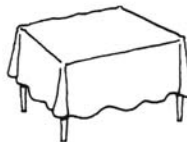
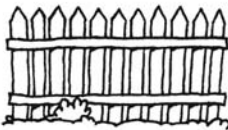
Mingo and his mother go to an Earth Day fair.
 Mingo's mother buys a plant.
 It has three red flowers.
 They take the plant home.
 Mingo says, "Let's put the plant near a window."
 Mingo puts water in a watering can.
 Then he waters his plant.



1. What color are the flowers on Mingo's plant?



2. Where does Mingo want to put his plant?



3. How many flowers are on the plant?

1

3

7

4. What does Mingo use to water the plant?



Say the word **table**. What sound do you hear at the beginning of **table**? Circle the two pictures below whose names have the same beginning sound as **table**.





Weekly Reader®

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Earth Needs Help

SCIENCE

Discuss ways that children can help care for Earth.

National Standard

Science (NSES)

Organisms and their environments

Goal

Students will learn about ways they can help the environment.

Objective

Students will be able to differentiate among activities that help and harm the environment.

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Let children play an online game about recycling.

Literature Connection

- *Abby's Adventures: Earth Day ... and the Recycling Fashionista!* by Suzanne Ridolfi
- *Biscuit's Earth Day Celebration,* by Alyssa Satin Capucilli
- *Earth Day: An Alphabet Book,* by Gary Kowalski
- *It's Earth Day!* by Mercer Mayer

A Poem to Share

Let's Recycle

Recycling is something
That all of us should do.
It's easy and it's lots of fun
And helps our big Earth too.
Just separate your bottles
And cans from all the rest.
Put papers all together—
Just do your very best.
So let's all do our part now
And recycle every day.
It's just a small thing we can do
That helps in a big way.

—Deborah Garmon

Before Reading

Set the Stage: Ask: Why is it important to take care of Earth? What kinds of things can we do to take care of it?

Background Information

- Earth Day is an international holiday celebrated yearly on April 22. It is meant to increase public awareness of environmental problems and to emphasize the need to conserve the world's resources.
- Earth Day is a special day to help people remember and celebrate the importance of Earth.
- Earth provides people, animals, and plants with food, water, and land. Its atmosphere provides the air that people, animals, and plants breathe.
- Environmentalists say that reducing, reusing, and recycling trash are the keys to cleaning up Earth. When the environment is clean, people, animals, and plants can all stay healthy.
- Recycling newspapers, cans, plastic, and glass is important because it allows people to make new things from those items and conserve resources.
- Turning off lights and electronics when not in use conserves electricity.
- Turning off faucets in sinks, showers, and baths when not in use conserves water.
- Throwing trash in a garbage can helps keep the environment clean and pleasant.

During Reading

Make Connections: What are some other ways you can take care of Earth?

After Reading

Draw Conclusions: What might happen if people do not take care of Earth?

Social Studies Extension: Fill a water table with toy fish. Explain to children that the water table represents a pond filled with beautiful fish. Then hand each child a small, empty disposable water bottle. Invite each student to place a water bottle in the "pond" while removing a fish. Once the table is full of bottles and there are no fish, ask children to explain what has happened. (The litter has polluted the pond, and the fish have nowhere to live.)

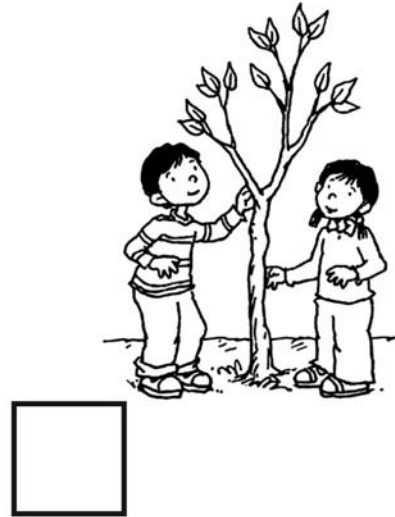
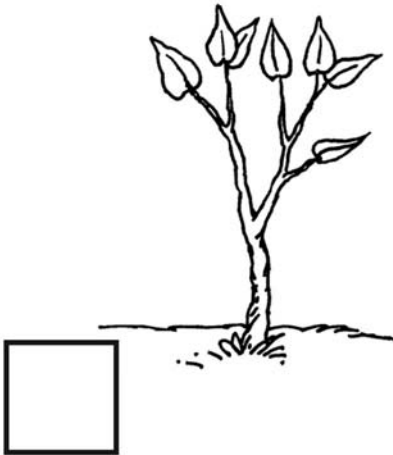
Science Extension: Mix moist soil and gravel in a plastic container. Place earthworms in the container. Add foods such as cereal or lettuce. Invite students to observe how the earthworms work.

Art Extension: Save scraps of colorful paper in advance. Invite parents to send in sturdy shopping bags with handles from department stores; old buttons; beads; and other recycled craft items. Use discarded white paper from the classroom to cover the store names on the bags. Children can glue on pieces of paper, buttons, and so on to create colorful gift bags. Save the bags for Mother's Day gifts or for any occasion when a child-made gift will be sent home.

Name _____

How Does a Tree Grow?

Look at the pictures below. Then in the small box under each picture, write the number **1, 2, 3,** or **4** to show how a tree grows.



Patrick Girouard

Use the letters to write a word to finish the sentence below.

TRY THIS

A tree can grow _____ !

a t l l