

WEEK 1

Outdoor Learning: Raising Tadpoles

Children raise and observe tadpoles.

Big Ideas	Like humans, animals are part of interdependent communities that are affected by, and adapt to, the environment that surrounds them. All animals grow and change over time.
Guiding Questions	How do animals form communities, work together, and use and adapt to their environments, and how is this similar to and different from what people do? How do animals grow and change over time?
Materials and Preparation	Identify where the children will find tadpoles/frogspawn. Sometimes the best places to look are vernal ponds or puddles after a good rain. If there is no accessible pond or the weather/season is not optimal to find frog eggs or tadpoles, purchase them instead. • tadpoles and/or frogspawn (frog eggs) • aquarium or small fish tank • water from the pond/stream where you find frog eggs and bottled water (or tap water that has sat out for a least 24 hours to add as needed) • bag of aquarium gravel or rocks from the pond and a few larger stones • artificial plants for the tadpoles to hide behind • food for tadpoles (tropical fish food flakes for young tadpoles, freeze dried bloodworm for tadpoles when they begin to form legs) • ladle or small containers for collecting tadpoles/frogspawn • journals or paper to document observations

	● writing tools Set up the aquarium/ fish tank in the classroom. Fill it with local pond water. Add the aquarium gravel and large rocks to the tank on an incline. Make sure there is a space for the froglets to come out of the water once they are starting to breathe air. It is important to note that only one or two frogs may develop from a great many tadpoles. This might be an activity that several teachers can collaborate on and share among their classes.
Intro to Centers	If collecting frogspawn or tadpoles with children, take children to the pond. Provide a ladle or small containers for the children to use. Collect frogspawn if possible so the children can watch the eggs hatch into tadpoles, but tadpoles work, as well. If purchasing frogspawn/tadpoles, show these during the intro. Add the frogspawn/tadpoles to the fish tank.
During Centers	Care for the tadpoles. Feed the tadpoles fish flakes until they start to grow legs, then switch to freeze dried bloodworm. Once the tadpoles have become froglets they will not eat for a few days, but will absorb their tail as food. Children observe and document the different stages of development. When the froglet is big enough to hold, take it back to the pond.
Facilitation	● What do you notice? What changes have happened? ● What is frogspawn? ● What are the stages of development of a frog? ● What is metamorphosis? ● How can we help a tadpole become a frog?