



Dress up a Chicken

WHAT'S THE Big Idea?

Cycles Interdependence

Materials

- **Chicks and Chickens** by Gail Gibbons
- pictures of chickens

Gather the following into a large bag:

- **feathers:** use feathers!
- **beak:** paper cone with string
- **comb:** hair comb glued on headband
- **wattles:** deflated balloons on a string
- **wings:** cardboard wings with string/ rubber band/tape for handle
- **feet:** 2 hand rakes (a claw-like hand tool for gardening). The handle is the chicken's fourth toe.

Enduring Understandings

- Food comes from nature: from plants and animals.
- All animals have certain characteristics such as how they look, what they eat and how they behave.
- Observing and learning about animal characteristics can help us better understand them, and how we all depend on one another.
- Chickens have unique body parts.

Objectives

- Children demonstrate an understanding of the food cycle.
- Children show interest and curiosity in the parts of a chicken.
- Children role play being chickens.

Directions

1. Read *Chicks and Chickens* by Gail Gibbons. Explain to the students that they are going to dress up one of their classmates as a chicken. Ask them to try to imagine what a chicken looks like and what special parts it has. Look at pictures of chickens. What makes a chicken unique?
2. Pick a volunteer from the class to be dressed up. Have him or her stand so everyone can see.
3. Ask students to suggest how to make the volunteer look more like a chicken. As they come up with ideas, pull the appropriate prop from your bag, and dress up the volunteer with the prop.
4. After you have dressed up the volunteer with all the chicken props you have, ask the students what they could add to make the student look even more like a chicken (longer



Parts of a Chicken

Feathers and Wings: Chickens have feathers for protection from weather conditions such as rain, cold, and sun. Feathers also protect the body from injuries. The color of feathers depends on the breed. There are three types of feathers: *flight* feathers, *down* feathers, and *contour* feathers.

Beak: Chickens have beaks to help them eat. A baby chick has an egg tooth on its beak to help it peck out of the egg. This “tooth” falls off when it is no longer needed, as soon as the chick cracks open its egg.

Wattles: Wattles help cool the chicken down. This happens when the blood circulates from the comb to the wattles.

Comb: The comb is a fleshy growth on the top of the chicken head. It helps the chicken to cool down. Both male and female chickens have combs, but the ones on the males are larger. Combs of different breeds may look different in shape and even in color. While most combs are red, some breeds have purple combs.

Feet: A chicken’s feet has 16 bones. If her feet are bright yellow and her comb bright red, the chicken may not be laying. If these parts are more faded in color, it may indicate the hen *is* laying: she’s using carotene (yellow coloring) in her body to color the egg yolks instead of her feet and comb!



tail for a rooster, different types of chickens, etc.)

5. Invite the children to role play being chickens.
6. Process and reflect on the experience with the children by engaging in a conversation guided by the discussion questions.

Discussion Questions

- What body parts do we have that are similar to chickens?
- How are we different?
- How do people depend on chickens?
- How do chickens depend on people?

Extensions

- **Dora’s Eggs** by Julie Sykes
- Students make multiple pairs of wings from cardboard and beaks from cardboard so they can all dress up as chickens.