



Life Cycle Stages of a Dairy Cow

Suggested Grade Level 5

Objective	Using the Internet as a research tool, the students will draw a series of pictures that illustrate the stages in the life cycle of a dairy cow from new born calf to mature adult.
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AVMA poster • Library • Internet access • Construction/art paper • Markers/colored pencils • Music from <i>The Lion King</i>

<p>Procedure</p> <p>National Standards:</p> <p>Language Arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research; data collection; • Writing skills <p>Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure and function of living systems • Reproduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher begins the lesson playing the song “Circle of Life” from the movie <i>The Lion King</i>. The teacher asks students to define the “circle of life” and tells the class they will be making a poster of the circle of life of a cow. The teacher says the poster should include stages such as baby, child, teen, adult, parent, and grandparent. The teacher talks about the progression from one stage of life to the next and asks students to explain how each stage is different from the previous one. • The teacher tells the class they will do some research and create a picture illustrating the stages of life of a dairy cow. Ask students “Why are dairy cows important to us?” (milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, etc.) • Students (individually or in teams of two) visit the following Web site www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4h/virtualfarm/main.html and are told to use the information there to collect facts about the life stages of a dairy cow. • <i>The teacher or students could also research how a bovine veterinarian treats cows at the various stages of the cow’s life.</i> • Next, the teacher tells students to draw a picture of each stage of a cow’s life on paper and list some important facts about each stage directly below it. • Afterwards, students compare the information in a class discussion to see what facts were included by the individuals or teams. As a group, discuss why the individuals or teams chose the facts they did. Post the drawings and facts on a class bulletin board.
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Ideas to extend this lesson	Choose another animal and research the life stages for that animal. Compare what you learn about the second animal with what you learned about dairy cows. <i>What was similar? What was different? How are both of these animals similar to or different from the life stages for humans?</i>
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