

In this unit: Pupils will investigate the life cycles of different species of animals and plants native to China, describing differences and comparing them. They will investigate the issues around reproduction in Pandas and the impact this on the sustainability of the species.

Children should already know:

- that living things could be grouped in a variety of ways – amphibian, reptile, bird, insect, mammal, fish.
- that classification keys can be used to help group, identify and name living things.

At the end of this unit, children will know:

- the differences in life cycles of mammals, insects, amphibians and birds.
- about the life process of reproduction in some animals and .

Pupils could investigate:

- the average life span of different Chinese species – Panda, Salamander, Crane and Grasshopper.
- the life cycle of a rice plant.
- reproduction in Giant Pandas.



Vertebrate or Invertebrate?

Vertebrate	Invertebrate

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Key Vocabulary

asexual reproduction	reproduction involving one parent only
cell	the smallest part of an animal or plant that is able to function independently
embryo	an unborn animal or human being in the very early stages of development
insect	a small animal that has six legs and generally one or two pairs of wings
mature	an animal or plant that is fully developed
metamorphosis	when a person or thing develops and changes into something completely different
ovary	a female organ that produces eggs
ovulate	discharging an ovule from the ovary
ovule	a small egg
reproduction	when an animal or plant produces one or more individuals similar to itself
sexual reproduction	reproduction combining genetic information from a male and female

Key Questions:

- how do they life cycles of different species differ?
- how do different species reproduce?
- why are Giant Pandas becoming endangered?



The Life Cycle of the Giant Panda

<p>Newborn (0-4 months)</p> <p>Born tiny, blind, and pink; baby pandas develop black and white pattern in a month, and begin to crawl at three months.</p>	<p>Cubhood (4-24 months)</p> <p>At four months cubs can run a few steps. Pandas are fully weaned to bamboo at 8 months.</p>	<p>Independence (1.5 / 2 years)</p> <p>When cubs leave their mother depends on if she conceives.</p>	<p>Maturity (4 / 6 years)</p> <p>Female pandas reach sexual maturity at about 4 years old, males at 6 years old (wild pandas may be slower). Wild pandas live up to 20 years; pandas in captivity can live more than 30 years.</p>
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