

Hatching In The Classroom—Basic Guidelines

Here are some guidelines for the hatching project that you can follow to ensure a successful hatch for your classroom.

1. Keep the incubator away from windows and away from air conditioning vents. The incubators are calibrated to stay around 99.5-100 degrees to ensure a successful hatch. (Make sure your facility keeps the power on continuously. Your chicks will not develop if the power is cut off for long periods of time.)
2. If you have a thermometer, you may check the temperature periodically. If it is more than 101 degrees or less than 98 degrees, please call the Extension Office.
3. Make sure the tray is full of water at all times. The chicks need the humidity or they will not properly develop or hatch. Leaving the incubators over the weekend is fine as long as the tray is full and the humidity is over 50% before you leave. Humidity should be between 45-55% for days 1-18.
4. Make a mental note of the position of the turner in the morning and again around lunch. The eggs should be turned in the opposite direction about every 4 hours.
5. Candling can be done at any point in the 21-day cycle. We like to schedule candling on days 7-10 and/or days 14-17. Days 7-8 are a great time to see the newly developed chick and days 14-17 are a good time to see a more fully developed chick.
6. On the Friday prior to hatching, Day 18, turners are to be removed *if applicable* and additional water should be added. Make sure the humidity is around 65% before you leave Friday so the level will stay within the hatching range through Monday. Continue to keep the tray full of water until the end of day 24, keeping the humidity around 55-65%. These should be filled at the end of each day after you remove the chicks that hatched that day and are completely dry.
7. Set up the brooder box before hatching begins.
8. Once chicks have hatched, leave them in the incubator until they are completely dry and then place them in the brooder. It is best to let the chicks hatch unassisted, leaving the incubator closed until the majority of the chicks have hatched.
9. We will pick up the chicks along with all supplies on the Thursday or Friday after hatching.
10. Before the incubators are picked up, please clean them as stated in the cleaning instructions.

