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Contributors

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Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

THE EGG STORY

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WHAT MAKES UP AN EGG?

The Shell: Each egg comes in its own natural package – the shell – which has three main jobs to do:

- 1) to prevent damage to the egg from knocks
- 2) to act as a shield which protects the egg contents from bacteria. Bacteria are living things which are too tiny to be seen without a powerful microscope. If bacteria get into our food they can make us ill.
- 3) to slow down the escape of water from the egg and into the air, so keeping the contents in good condition.

The Membranes: There are two membranes or skins. The outer or shell membrane is the one upon which the hard shell is built. Close up against this is the inner membrane which encloses the white and yolk. The job of the membranes is to act rather like fine filters to help the shell in keeping the egg in good condition.

The Air Pocket: At the rounded end of the egg is the air pocket. The membranes are separated here by a bubble of air. A very fresh egg has a small air pocket. The egg very slowly loses water, and as it does so air is drawn in through tiny holes or pores to replace it so the air pocket gets bigger. There are more of these pores at

the rounded end. When you shell a hard boiled egg you can see from the shape of the egg how big the air pocket was and how old the egg is.

The Yolk: The yolk is full of goodness. It contains a higher concentration of protein than the white.

The White: The white of the egg is really only white when it is cooked. Uncooked it is quite clear. Its correct name is the Albumen. There are two types of white in an egg: thin and thick white. You can see the two types if you crack an egg onto a plate; the thick white 'stands' up, the thin white runs towards the edge.

The Egg Cell or Germinal Disc: You may notice a tiny speck on the surface of the yolk when you crack open an egg. This is the germinal disc. This is the part which would have developed into the chicken if the egg had been fertilised.

The Yolk Membrane: Its proper name is the vitelline membrane: it holds the yolk together.

The Chalazae: These are twisted bundles of strands which look rather like tiny ropes. They 'anchor' the yolk in the middle of the egg, well away from the shell and the outside world.

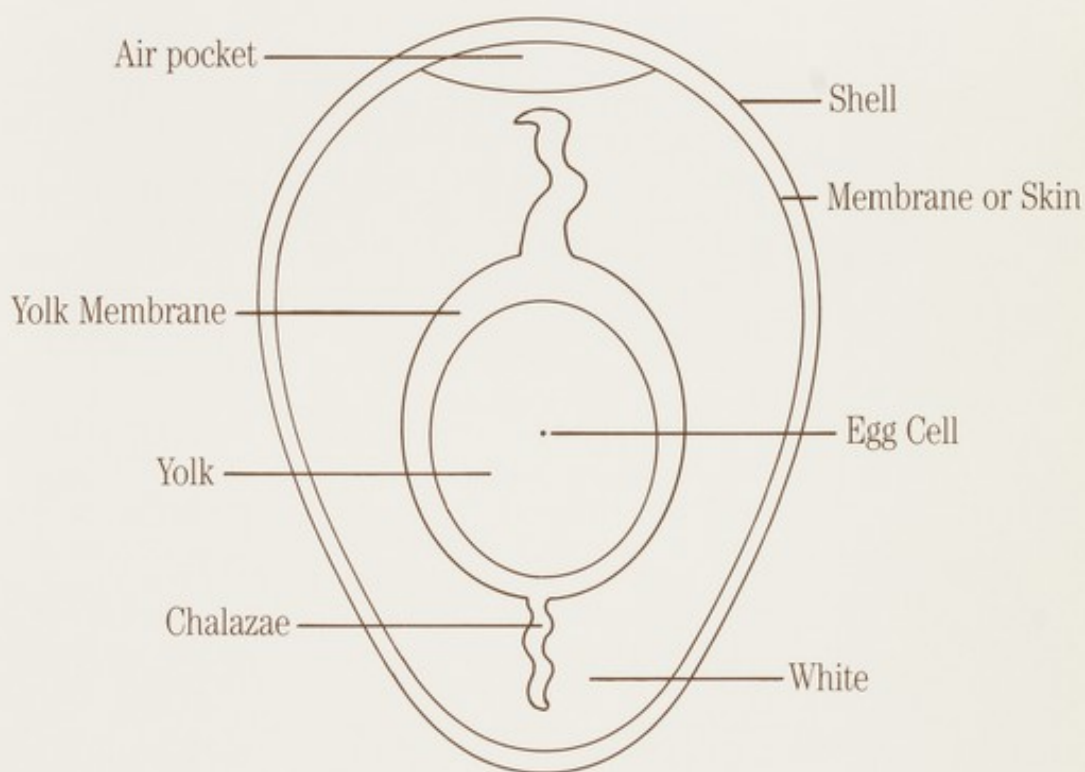
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Copy this diagram of an egg and label it. Under the diagram write a sentence about each part of the egg.



Examples.

The Shell

The Membrane

The Air Pocket

