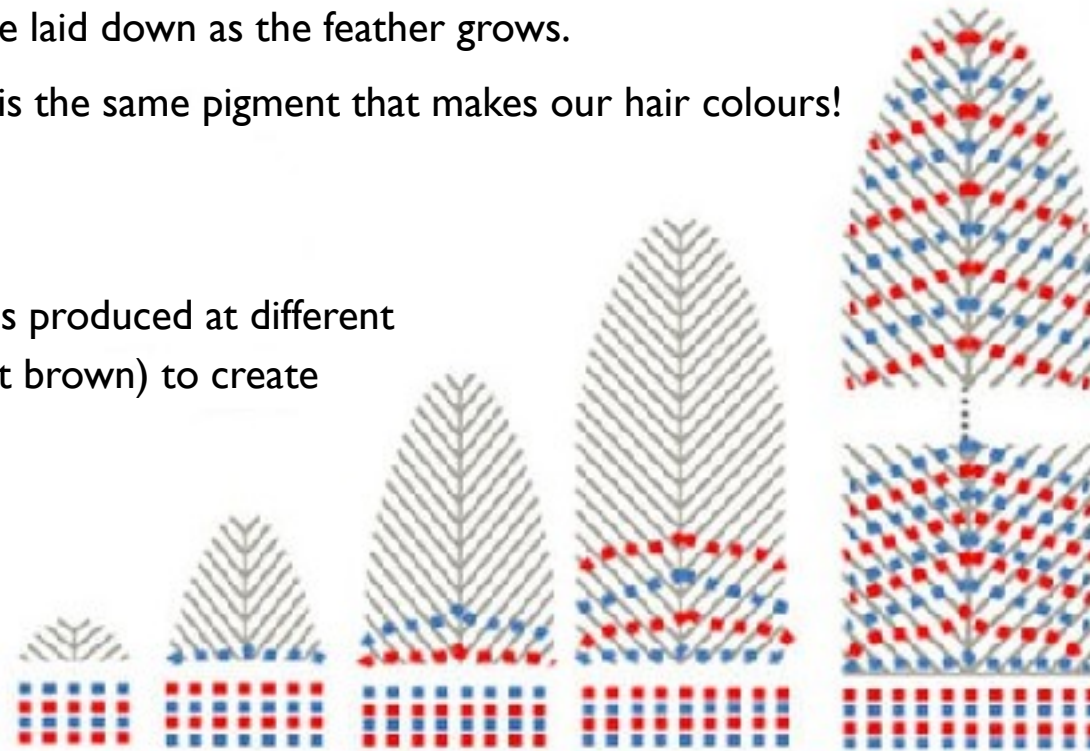


The Patterns of Feathers

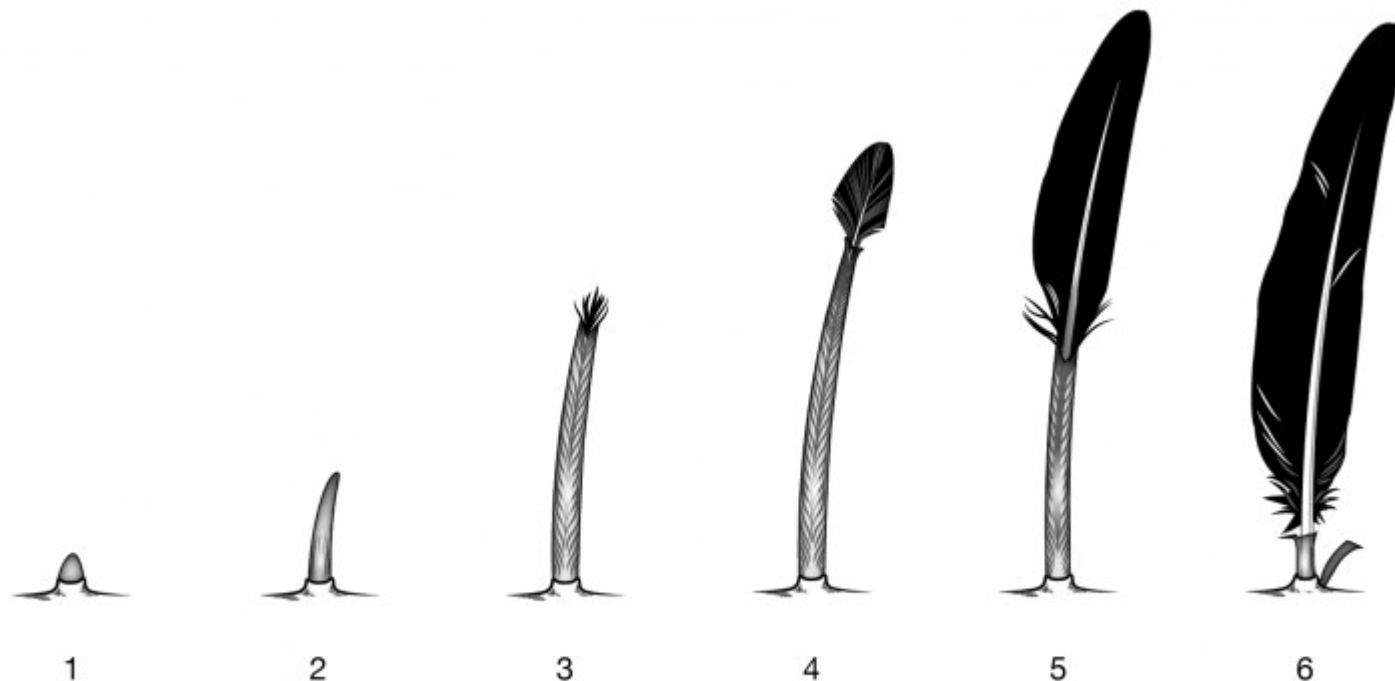
The colours and patterns in feathers are laid down as the feather grows.

These are created with melanin, which is the same pigment that makes our hair colours!

With a white background, the melanin is produced at different levels (more for dark black, less for light brown) to create patterns.



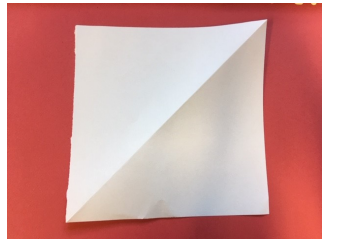
This is why patterns are less likely to occur in bright colours that are created using other pigments or structures!



Feathers grow from a point and reveal their barbs from the top down!

Grow your own feather!

1. Fold your square of paper in half on the diagonal.



2. Now open it up and lay down your pattern using the pencils. Start from the top and work in lines all the way down to the bottom. Do this on both sides of the paper.



3. Fold your paper over once, then twice.



4. Cut away the extra fold.



5. Now carefully 'reveal' your feather barbs by cutting towards the centre.



Open out your feather to see the pattern!