LIFE CYCLE OF MISTLETOE INFECTION

1. **SEED DISPERSAL:**
    - Mistletoe seeds are primarily dispersed by birds. The seeds are sticky and attach to the beaks or feathers of birds, which then transport them to other trees.
    - Seeds can also be spread through bird droppings.

2. **SEED ATTACHMENT:**
    - Once the seeds land on a suitable host tree, they adhere to the bark using their sticky coating.

3. **GERMINATION:**
    - The seeds germinate, and the mistletoe produces a structure called a "haustorium."
    - The haustorium penetrates the bark of the host tree to access water and nutrients.

4. **ESTABLISHMENT:**
    - The mistletoe begins to establish itself by growing deeper into the host tree's tissues.
    - It forms a connection with the host tree's vascular system, drawing water and nutrients.

5. **GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT:**
    - The mistletoe grows and develops its own leaves and stems.
    - It becomes more visible as it matures, often forming clumps in the host tree's canopy.

6. **REPRODUCTION:**
    - Mistletoe produces flowers, which are pollinated by insects or wind.
    - After pollination, the flowers develop into berries containing seeds.

7. **REPEAT CYCLE:**
    - Birds eat the berries, and the seeds are spread to new host trees, starting the cycle again.