

FROG GOES TO DINNER

FROG GOES TO DINNER

by MERCER MAYER

Themes: Animals, Families, Fantasy, Humor

Grade Level: K-3 (ages 4-9)

Running Time: 12 minutes

SUMMARY

In this hilarious tale, a boy and his parents dress up and go to a fancy restaurant. Just before leaving home, the boy slips his pet frog into his pocket. At the restaurant the frog escapes and leaps from one funny situation to another. Each scene ends in a surprise. The frog crawls into a saxophone and, when the band plays, gets blown into a tank of live lobsters. Just when a lobster's claws are about to snap, the frog leaps out and into a salad. From the salad, the frog leaps onto a customer's head, into the soup, into a water glass (just in time to ruin a romantic moment). As customers leave in disgust, the frog makes for the kitchen, creating more chaos with every leap. The story ends with the boy and frog getting sent upstairs to bed by his parents, who can't stop themselves from laughing.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to a fictional story about a pet frog.
- Children will follow a narrative made up of a sequence of causes and effects.
- Children will appreciate visual humor.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Introduce the title of the program and ask children what they think will happen in the story. Ask them to imagine how or why a frog might go to dinner, and what might happen if a frog appeared in a restaurant. Ask them to remember their ideas as they watch the program, to see which events happen as they predicted. Explain that the story is told without words, so they will have to pay special attention to the pictures.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Review the story by fast-forwarding through the program. Stop the program at the end of each key scene and ask children to remember what happened next. Then show the next scene to see if the children's memories were correct. Make a chalkboard list of the scenes and ask children to vote on which events they thought were the funniest.

To help children develop storytelling skills, ask them to pretend that they are the people who were eating in the restaurant. Have different children tell parts of the story from the viewpoints of the doorman, the musicians, the waiters, the salad eaters, the romantic couple, the cook, the boy's parents and the boy himself.

Connect the story to music and poetry by challenging children to write songs about the story. Encourage them to write new words to familiar

songs. For example, have them write a song called "Frog Went to Dinner" to the tune of "Frog Went a-Courtin'." "Mary Had a Little Lamb" could become "Bobby Had a Little Frog."

Use the restaurant theme to motivate children to use the library and help them practice their library skills. Explain how to use the library's computer search engines or card catalogs as well as cooking magazines. Challenge them to find recipes for lobster, for a salad dressing that includes an egg and, of course, for cooking frogs.

Connect the story to both science and math by having children find basic facts about common varieties of frogs. Have them use nature guides to find average body lengths, weights, life spans and jumping distances. Then challenge them to use these statistics to write math story problems.

Other related videos and films available from Weston Woods include:
A BOY, A DOG, AND A FROG, by Mercer Mayer
THE FOOLISH FROG, by Pete and Charles Seeger, illustrated by Miloslav Jager
FROG ON HIS OWN, by Mercer Mayer
FROG, WHERE ARE YOU? by Mercer Mayer

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THE REMARKABLE RIDERLESS RUNAWAY TRICYCLE

THE REMARKABLE RIDERLESS RUNAWAY TRICYCLE

by Bruce McMillan

Themes: Fantasy, Neighborhoods, Humor

Grade Level: K-3 (ages 4-9)

Running Time: 11 minutes

SUMMARY

In this story, a tricycle gets kidnapped by a garbage truck but finds its way home. As the story opens, a boy is riding the tricycle down the sidewalk. Distracted by a kite he finds in the trash, the boy leaves his tricycle next to the trash pile. The poor tricycle gets collected in the garbage and taken to the dump, where it narrowly escapes the jaws of a huge crane. Just in time, the tricycle makes its break and heads out the gate. The garbage men jump in their truck and give chase. The truck chases the trike through and around a series of amusing obstacles. More people join the chase of the runaway vehicle: a jogger, the police and a man driving a street sweeper. The smart little trike evades all its pursuers, makes a flying leap over a roadblock and finds its way back to its owner.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to a fictional story about an object that comes alive.
- Children will follow a narrative made up of a sequence of causes and effects.
- Children will identify characters, settings, and actions in a story.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Introduce the title of the program and ask children to guess what will happen in the story. Ask children if a

tricycle can really move without a rider. Since it cannot, children should reason that this story tells about have imaginary events. What things might an imaginary tricycle be able to do? Encourage children to share their ideas and to watch carefully to see if their ideas appear in the story. Explain that the story is told with pictures and music, not with words, so they should pay close attention to everything they see.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Ask children to think back over the story and to remember events that showed the tricycle was thinking for itself. List these events in a column down the center of the chalkboard. Ask why each event happened (what was the cause?) and what happened because of each event (what was the effect?) Add the answers in columns to the left and right of the original list. Challenge students to use this information as well as their memories to recall the order of events in the story. Check their answers by replaying the program, fast-forwarding from scene to scene.

Encourage storytelling and communications skills by asking children to imagine their own tricycles, bicycles, skates, toy trucks or other wheeled vehicles coming to life on their own. Children can tell their stories in the form of poems, plays, comic strips or even home videos.

Play a map game by enlarging a map of your school and neighborhood. Ask children to pretend they are tricycles running around loose. Trace each tricycle's route around the map and have children describe where they are going, using street names and names of directions.

Children can learn about and experiment with stop-camera animation as part of a science or art project. This is a good team project. Each team needs a real or toy tricycle and a camera. A digital camera with movie capability is especially fun to use and saves the cost of film processing. Instant cameras are another low-cost alternative. Demonstrate how to take a still picture, move the tricycle forward, take another still picture, move the tricycle again, take another picture and so forth. Draw attention to how the pedals move in each picture. Then develop or display the pictures in order. Children can make flip books from a stack of developed pictures and flip the pages to show movement. With a digital camera, show children the movie version of their stills.

In science class, use a toy tricycle or other toy vehicle to demonstrate gravity, friction, resistance, speed and other basic physical science concepts. Cover a sloping, flat surface with various textures (sandpaper, waxed paper, paper towel, washcloth, and a piece of corduroy, for example) and ask children to predict the speeds at which the toys will roll down the ramps. Have them time the vehicle's descent to see if their predictions were correct.

Other related videos and films available from Weston Woods include:

FREIGHT TRAIN, by Donald Crews

THE LITTLE ENGINE THAT COULD, by Watty Piper

MOUSE AROUND, by Pat Schories

TRASHY TOWN, by Andrea Zimmerman and David Clemesha, illustrated by Dan Yaccarino

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MOUSE AROUND

MOUSE AROUND

by Steven Lindblom and True Kelly

Themes: Animals, Feelings, Humor

Grade Level: K-3 (ages 4-9)

Running Time: 13 minutes

SUMMARY

A mouse begins its usual day, playing around under a kitchen sink. But when a plumber arrives to fix a drip in the sink, the mouse's life becomes an unexpected adventure. The mouse takes a ride in the plumber's bag, hides inside a row of donuts, gets rolled up in a newspaper and tossed on a roof, rolls down the roof and onto a hard sidewalk, gets picked up by a man and takes a ride on a bus. On the bus, the mouse finds its way to someone's lettuce and gets carried into a bakery, where it hides inside a box of cupcakes, which gets carried to a picnic. After a narrow escape from becoming picnic food, the mouse scurries inside a toy rocket, gets launched into the air and parachutes down, landing in a little girl's doll carriage. An escape from a cat and a ride on a hat bring the mouse back to its home kitchen and down its familiar sink.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to a fictional story about a mouse.
- Children will follow a narrative made up of a sequence of events.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Introduce the title of the program and ask children to define both words. Ask children to describe the size of a mouse and to list some places a mouse might

live or hide. Draw attention to the word "around" and ask children what kind of story might go in a circle. Encourage children to keep their ideas in mind as they watch the program, to see if their predictions were correct. Explain that the story is told without words and suggest that they follow the mouse very carefully in order to figure out what is going on in the story.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Ask children to recall the parts of the story they liked the best. Make a chalkboard list of the parts in the order that children mention them. Then have children number the events in the order in which they happened in the story. Check to see if the order is correct by fast-forwarding the video and stopping at each change of scene. Call attention to details at the beginning and end of the story (the blue kitchen wall, the pattern on the teacups) that show how the mouse has gone around in a circle.

To encourage storytelling and writing, turn off the program's sound. Have children take turns being the mouse and narrating what the mouse is thinking. Write down the best answers and construct a funny play. Practice the play with only words and pictures. Then add the music, experimenting with taking the volume up and down with the spoken story. Plan a performance of the play.

As an art project, challenge children to invent and draw board games that take a mouse from one place to another. The board might be a map that includes several unusual places a mouse might go. Have children make mouse markers by cutting small ovals out

of index cards and folding the ovals in half (vertically). Draw a tiny face and ears at one end of the oval. Draw a long curly tale at the other end. Have children write directions on index cards to control the action of the game. Encourage them to use their imaginations in these directions, inventing ways a mouse could get from one place to another. For example, a direction card might read, "Your mouse finds some cheese crackers at the bottom of a backpack and takes a ride to the school."

Ask children if any of them keep or have kept mice as pets. Have them share what they know about mice with the class. You might also arrange with a pet store to have a demonstration on the care and feeding of white mice.

This story presents a good opportunity to discuss the difference between fiction and nonfiction and to find both kinds of books in the library. Before going to the library, ask children to list the names of mouse characters they know from stories. Then explain that in the library there are made-up books with imaginary mice as characters as well as science books that give facts about real mice. In the library, locate the fiction and nonfiction sections and challenge children to find both kinds of mouse books.

Other related videos and films available from Weston Woods include:

ABEL'S ISLAND, by William Steig

ANGUS LOST, by Marjorie Flack

RUNAWAY RALPH, by Beverly Cleary

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