

A BOY, A DOG AND A FROG

A BOY, A FROG, AND A DOG

by MERCER MAYER

Themes: Animals, Friendship, Humor

Grade Level: K–3 (ages 4-9)

Running Time: 9 minutes

SUMMARY

Usually it's a dog that follows a child home, but in this story it's a frog. The program begins in the river, where the frog swims and plays. Meanwhile, a boy gets up, gets dressed and takes his dog out to play. In the garage, the boy finds a pail and net. Then dog and boy go down to the water to try and capture the frog. Their efforts are useless—the frog always splashes away. But when the boy and dog give up for the day, the frog follows them home. At the end of the story, the frog hops upstairs and joins the boy and dog for an evening bath.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to a fictional story about pet animals.
- Children will follow a narrative made up of a sequence of events.
- Children will compare the behavior of dogs, frogs and people.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Introduce the title of the program and ask children what they think will happen in the story. Have

them share what they know about the behavior of dogs and frogs. Which animal is likely to chase the other? Which animal is more fun to play with? Encourage children to keep their ideas in mind as they watch the program—and to be prepared for a few surprises. Explain that the story is told without words, so children should pay close attention to everything they see.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Divide viewers into three groups. Ask one group to recall and write down everything that the boy did. Ask the other two groups to recall the actions of the dog and the frog. Then have the groups share information with each other and reconstruct the story. Review the story by fast-forwarding through the video and stopping at each change of scene.

To help children develop storytelling and writing skills, ask the three groups to meet and prepare plays, stories or poems, written from the points of view of the dog, the frog and the boy. The children's compositions should include the thoughts and feelings of their characters. Have the children present their stories to the class.

Encourage reading and library use by showing children how to find library books about frogs. Discuss and explain the differences between fiction and nonfiction books and show children the library sections where each type of book can be found. Have them practice looking up frogs in the

card catalog or on library computers. Locate magazines, videos and other materials on frogs.

To connect the story to science, bring a live frog to class and have children observe its characteristics and behavior. Encourage them to draw pictures of the frog and label its body parts. Children can also observe what, when and how much the frog eats, when and how it sleeps and how it moves. Replay the parts of the program that show the frog hopping and swimming and have children observe the same behavior in a live frog.

Play a "frog prints" game to teach map skills. Start by making small cardboard patterns of frog feet. Using these patterns and a piece of chalk, trace a path of frog prints around your classroom, school or neighborhood. Use your imagination to create an amusing path and a funny end point for the prints. For example, have the prints go in one end of a drainpipe and out the other end. End your path in the science room in front of a frog tank, or in an empty room under a portrait of a frog. Have children follow the frog prints and then draw maps of the path they took to follow the frog.

Other related videos and films available from Weston Woods include:
FROG GOES TO DINNER, by Mercer Mayer
FROG ON HIS OWN, by Mercer Mayer
FROG, WHERE ARE YOU? by Mercer Mayer

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FROG ON HIS OWN

FROG ON HIS OWN

by MERCER MAYER

Themes: Animals, Families, Fantasy, Humor

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

Running Time: 14 1/2 minutes

SUMMARY

A boy takes his two pets—a dog and a frog—to the park. While the boy is busy chasing his dog, the frog takes the opportunity to hop out of its basket and explore. Its first adventure is a ride in a toy truck that's being pulled by a little girl. For the rest of the program, the boy and dog hunt for the frog. Meanwhile, the frog joins the act of a street magician, hides in a picnic basket, takes a ride in a toy motorboat and jumps into a baby's carriage. The baby's mother summons the park police, but the boy and dog rescue their reptile friend just in time.

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. If children have seen any of the other frog stories by Mercer Mayer, ask them what they remember about those stories. If this is their first encounter, explain that the three main characters are a boy, a dog and a frog. Ask children to predict how the three characters will

behave toward each other. For example, will the frog be afraid of the dog? Ask children to remember their predictions as they watch the story and see if their predictions come true. Explain that the story is told with pictures, action and music, not words, so they should pay especially close attention to everything they see.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Review the story by having children help you list the key scenes. Then go back over the program, fast-forwarding from scene to scene, to check that your memories of the events are correct. Then ask children to tell which were their favorite scenes, and why. In discussing each scene, discuss the differences between fact (the actual behavior of real frogs in nature) and fiction (the behavior of the frog in the story). Children should recognize that scenes in the story have been staged in order to make the story funnier.

To help children develop storytelling skills, ask them to pretend that they are the people who encounter the frog in the park. Have different children tell parts of the story from the viewpoints of the little girl with the toy truck, the magician, the couple with the picnic basket, the boy with the boat, the mother, the baby, the policeman and the boy who keeps the frog as a pet. Encourage children to imagine and empathize with the feelings of the various characters. For example, ask children how they would feel if they found a live frog inside their picnic basket.

Use the park setting to teach mapmaking and geography. Have children draw maps of the park in the story. Encourage them to replay the video in order to identify the park's features. Then have the children add the routes taken by the frog in his adventures. Children can also draw maps of an actual park in your neighborhood and then use the maps to tell stories about a frog's adventures.

Turn the map activity above into a math activity by having children design board games in a park setting. Have them draw paths that are marked off into even squares and small frog markers. Write math story situations on index cards and have children take turns drawing the cards and moving along the board. For example, a card might read, "The frog leaps ahead five squares and then back three squares."

The frog's ride in a toy truck and a toy boat are some of the funniest parts of this story. For an art project, have children bring toy vehicles of their own to class and draw pictures of their vehicles with frogs inside. Arrange a gallery display of the results. Encourage children to write poems and stories about their traveling frogs, and add them to the display.

Other related videos and films available from Weston Woods include:

A BOY, A DOG, AND A FROG, by Mercer Mayer
FROG GOES TO DINNER, by Mercer Mayer
FROG, WHERE ARE YOU? by Mercer Mayer
THE MOUSE & THE MOTORCYCLE, by Beverly Cleary

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FROG, WHERE ARE YOU?

FROG, WHERE ARE YOU?

by MERCER MAYER

Themes: Animals, Families, Fantasy, Humor, Seasons and Nature

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

Running Time: 20 minutes

SUMMARY

A boy and his dog have a pet frog, and the frog lives in frog luxury, with its own toy boat and a little frog-sized platform for diving into the wading pool. Still, it persists in behaving like a frog. When the frog hides inside a pie, the boy's mother condemns the frog to life in a jar. The next morning, the boy and dog are alarmed to find their pet is gone. They set out to find the frog, braving lawnmowers and other frog hazards and following the dog's nose to the park. Meanwhile, at the park, the frog lands on a seesaw, gets catapulted into a pond and hides inside a toy airplane. Sure enough, the airplane is battery powered. The boy and dog arrive on the scene just in time to see the frog take off. The boy struggles with the girl who is operating the plane, which makes the plane crash. As the children and dog search anxiously, the frog floats downstream on one of the airplane's wings. In the final scenes of the story, the frog meets other frogs. The boy and dog find the frog among its frog friends and learn to accept that the frog is happiest in its own environment.

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 describe the natural environment of frogs.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Introduce the title of the program. Explain that this story is about an imaginary frog, but that the video was shot using live frogs as "actors." The other main characters are a boy and a dog. If children have seen or read other Mercer Mayer stories about the frog, ask them to share what they remember about the stories. In this story, ask children to pay especially close attention to the frog. Because there are no words, only pictures and music, focusing on the frog will make it easier to follow the story.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Repeat the title question. Then ask children to recall the different places in the story where the frog was. List the places as a way to help recall the order of events in the story. Ask children to imagine how the frog felt when he lived in each place. Help them recall the toy boat, the diving board and other clues that the frog is a spoiled pet at the opening of the story. Discuss the frog's feelings about being trapped in a jar. Ask children to imagine the frog's feelings of fear or bravery during his adventures in the park. Encourage children to recognize that the frog is happiest at the end of the story, back in a pond with other frogs. Have children share how they think the boy and dog feel at the end of the story.

Discuss the process of making a live-action film like this story. Ask children how they think the frog's tricks were achieved. Show the program again, stopping at scenes that show the frog. Help students discover how the sound and music help make the frog seem to be acting. Ask children to share what they know about animation and special effects. Ask those who seem especially knowledgeable or interested to go to the library and learn more about making moving

pictures with animals and to report on what they have learned to the class.

This story contains extensive footage of a frog's natural pond environment. This presents a good opportunity to show children how to do library research in science. In the library, show children the location of non-fiction books in general, of books about science, then books about life science. In a small library, encourage children browse among these books for more information about frogs and ponds. In a larger library, explain how to use computer search engines or card catalogs to find frog books. Encourage children to read the books and report on them to the class.

This is also a good opportunity to study the life cycle of frogs in science class. Live tadpoles would be ideal, of course. If these aren't available in your school, you might arrange with a local pet store to prepare a terrarium for temporary viewing of tadpoles and adult frogs. Explore other local resources, such as nature walks, science museums and petting zoos, where children can view live frogs.

Children who have looked at picture books about frogs and ponds might want to draw a poster or paint a mural showing frogs in the pond environment. Older children might prefer to make cross-section drawings or paintings of pond life.

Other related videos and films available from Weston Woods include:
A BOY, A DOG, AND A FROG, by Mercer Mayer
FROG GOES TO DINNER, by Mercer Mayer
FROG ON HIS OWN, by Mercer Mayer
IN THE SMALL, SMALL POND, by Denise Fleming
THE MYSTERIOUS TADPOLE, by Steven Kellogg

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