

## THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY

is committed to creating theatre experiences that educate, challenge, and inspire young people. It is our hope that by presenting significant themes that affect the lives of young people in our community we can help to foster dialogue and active participation in the arenas that affect their lives. It is with this in mind that we offer:

A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD is sponsored by  
GUIDES FOR THE JOURNEY® | PiperJaffray.



CTC'S 2007-2008 SEASON IS PROUDLY SPONSORED BY TARGET.

AN EXPERIENCE IN THEATRE CAN BE A GATEWAY into a greater understanding of who we are; it can enhance our understanding of life. You may come to A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD for a fun break in your school routine as you go on a field trip. However, you may walk away having glimpsed a significant truth about the world and how we live in it. It is important to take the time to process your experience by talking and exploring the excitement of the theatrical event itself. Even more important could be using the topics introduced by the play to springboard into other areas of your curriculum.



## The Big Ideas:

- A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD is about friendship that lasts through all the seasons of life.
- People who are extremely different than one another can be friends. Contrast can make a relationship strong.
- Friends protect and defend one another.

Frog and Toad have the kind of friendship we want every student to have - one that surpasses any surface similarities or differences and is based on a deep connection and loyalty between two people - the kind of friendship that can change the world.





Arnold Lobel, *Illustrator*

The chummiest of chums, Frog and Toad, are back! Throughout all the seasons of the year – and all the seasons of their friendship – their best times are together. Still there are many moods, in the weather, in their relationship, and in the MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC of this beloved musical: the tunes are light and jazzy, sweet and soothing, and absolutely spunky, by turns. The characters sing the whole year through - to one another, about one another, and together. They need to sing; their feelings are often too large for spoken words to suffice, and your heart will sing along!

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### Minnesota Academic Standards Addressed:

**Arts:** The student will understand and use artistic processes to create, perform, and interpret art works in theater. Read, understand, respond to, analyze, interpret, evaluate and appreciate a wide variety of fiction, poetic, and nonfiction texts.

**Reading and Literature: Writing:** The student will write in narrative, expository, descriptive, persuasive and critical modes.

**Language Arts: Writing, Speaking, Listening and Viewing:** The student will compose various pieces of writing (informative, expressive and persuasive) and the student will communicate effectively through listening and speaking in a variety of forms.

**Theater:** The student will understand components of theater including vocabulary; and create a character based on fiction of life experience using movement, voice, costume and props.

**Mathematics:** The student will recognize ratios and comparative proportions as applied in particular situations.



FOR PROCEDURE OR EXACT RUNNING TIME CALL THE  
 CTC BOX OFFICE: 612-874-0400.

Contents 1 •

# A Year With Frog and Toad

A Synopsis of the play based on the books by Arnold Lobel  
 Nominated for three Tony awards:  
**Best Original Score, Best Book of a Musical; Best Musical**

Arnold Lobel, Illustrator



**Frog and Toad are friends.** They think of each other first thing when waking up from a long winter nap, and even though Toad is none too anxious to leave his warm bed hibernation is over. It's spring! Frog plants a garden, and Toad wants one too. He sings to his seeds, dances for them, plays his tuba, and when they sprout Toad is a happy toad. Except his mailbox is empty – as always. Frog writes Toad a surprise letter and gives it to Snail to deliver A.S.A.P.!

In summer Frog and Toad go for a swim. Toad looks funny in a bathing suit, the other animals tease him unmercifully. Finally, thank goodness, the razzing resolves and the friends have a jolly day - even though Toad really does have a very silly suit. Later, Toad goes to invite Frog on a picnic, but Frog isn't at home, and Toad worries. By the time he finds Frog on an island in the lake Toad is so worried he drops the picnic in the water. The thing is, Frog is fine. He just likes to be alone sometimes to think about how happy he is.

In the fall Frog and Toad have wonderful adventures. They bake cookies, fly kites, and rake leaves. One stormy night Frog decides to tell a spooky ghost story that leaves Toad rattling his teacup. Still, in the end it all turns out cozily. Occasionally throughout the year Frog asks whether or not Toad has gotten any mail. He hasn't, but we know that Snail is on the job.

In winter Frog and Toad go sledding. It's Frog's idea, and Toad gets the worst of it. He ends up in a snow bank and comes out furious with Frog. Snail arrives in the nick of time. The mail has come! Toad reads the letter and remembers the most important thing: Frog and Toad are friends. Finally, on Christmas Eve Toad waits for Frog. Toad begins to worry and is about to venture forth to rescue his friend from the jaws of wolves, when Frog arrives. He was late because he was wrapping a present - for Toad.

The year has rolled all the way round. It's time to hibernate, and Frog and Toad settle down to their winter nap. They promise to meet in the spring as they fall asleep dreaming of each other because...Frog and Toad are friends.

**A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD** is made up of a combination of adventures gleaned from four of Arnold Lobel's Newbery and Caldecott Honor winning Frog and Toad books: *Frog and Toad Are Friends*, *Frog and Toad Together*, *Days With Frog and Toad*, and *Frog and Toad All Year*. Have your class read some or all of the books ahead of time so they can recognize where the events come from. It is also great fun for a class to think about what scenes they would choose if they were the ones writing the play. Which scenes have the most action? That makes a good scene. Which scenes have strong feelings that would be good for songs?



# My Friend and I

## A worksheet for before and after

**BEFORE** you see the play:

Frog and Toad are friends even though they're as different as day and night, salt and pepper; a frog and a toad! The "friendly" qualities below are two columns of contrasting pairs.

- First, go down the list and circle the word from each pair that best describes you.
- Then, look at the words left over, and use some of them to write a description of a person that either is - or could - be your friend.

serious	silly	_____
tidy	sloppy	_____
slow	quick	_____
studious	sporty	_____
listener	talker	_____
follower	leader	_____
shy	confident	_____
graceful	clumsy	_____
big	small	_____
patient	impatient	_____
solitary	popular	_____
reluctant	eager	_____
frightened	brave	_____

**AFTER** you see the play:

Now that you have seen Frog and Toad, make two lists of qualities that describe the two friends. Use the list above as a model. In fact, you may use some of those words if you think they fit.

- Then, write a paragraph about why you think Frog and Toad are friends. Use some of the words from your list.



Arnold Lobel, *Illustrator*

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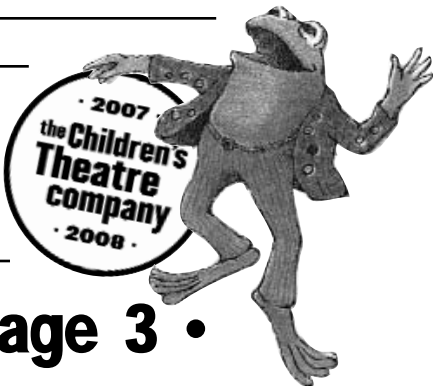
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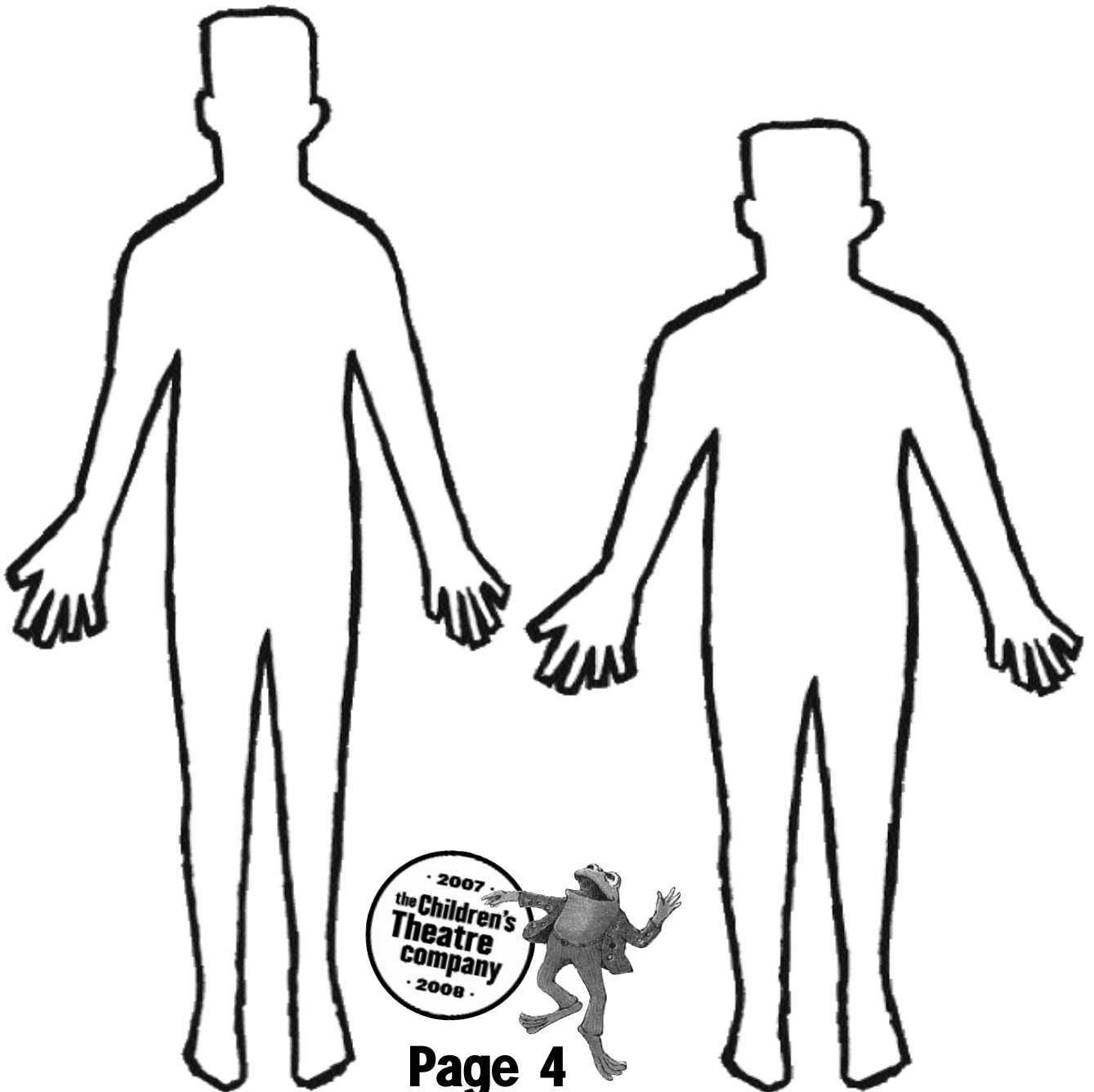


# From the Page to the Stage

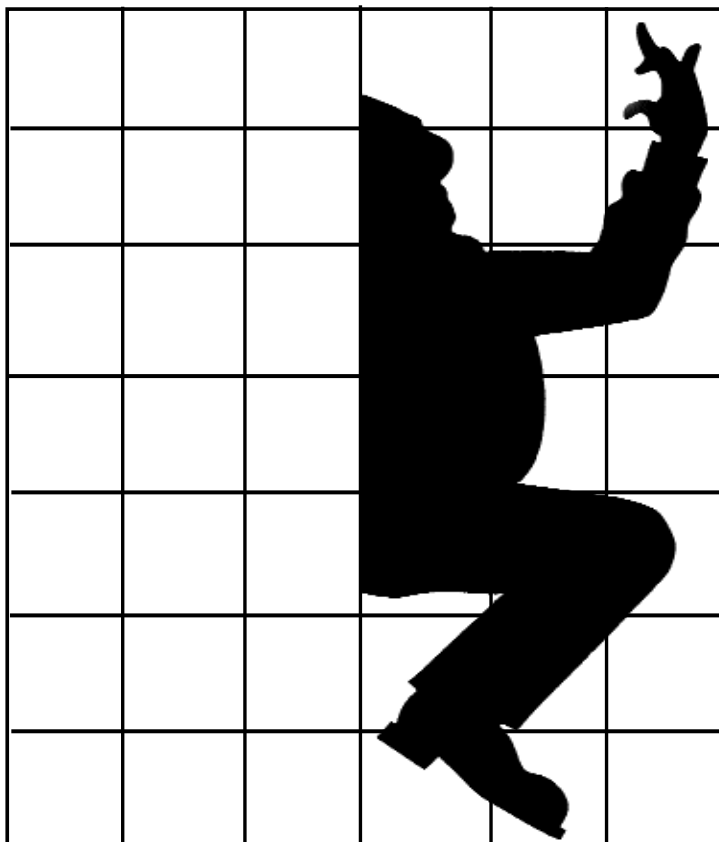
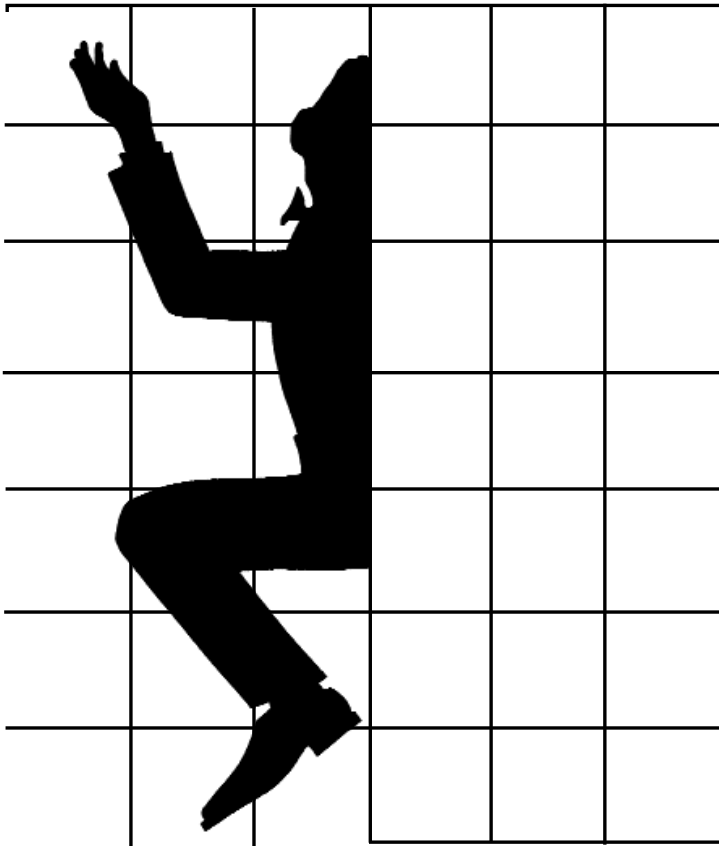
## *An art activity*

The play A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD is based on the books about these two characters written by Arnold Lobel. It is an *adaptation*. When a writer is adapting a book into a play it is a very creative process. Many decisions must be made. In fact, many different plays, and types of plays could be made from the very same book.

Once the script is written, other artists – such as costume designers – begin to make decisions, too. In our production of A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD the costumes are designed to suggest the animal portrayed rather than imitating that animal. In other words, the actors don't wear masks, large webbed feet, or paint themselves green. Instead they wear clothes that reflect their personalities in the colors of the animals they play. Use the drawings below to design a costume for Frog and Toad - or one of the other animals in the play (bird, mole, mouse, turtle, lizard, or snail).



## MIRROR IMAGES

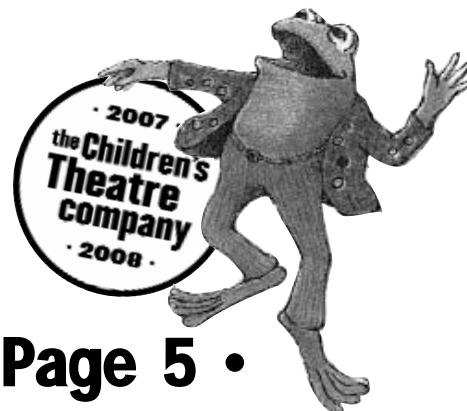


### FRIENDS AND MATH:

- Using the grid as guide, draw the reverse side of each of these figures.
- Which one is Frog and which is Toad? How can you tell?
- If each square equals 1 inch, how tall are each of the figures? Estimate.
- How tall are they (approximately) if each square is equal to 8 inches?

### FRIENDSHIP AS ART:

- Draw an oval on a page.
- Draw another that matches it exactly.
- Now, draw your face in one of them.
- Draw a friend's face in the other.
- Stack the two on top of each other, making sure the ovals are lined up. Cut both sheets containing your two pictures exactly down the middle. You will have 2 halves of each face.
- Finally, use two sheets of paper and glue a face onto each using one half of each face - what you will have is a composite drawing of you and your friend.
- You can each have one!



## Telling Time - *A worksheet*

Frog and Toad tell time by the seasons. What a clock would look like if it measured time by months and seasons instead of by hours and minutes? Draw the face of this seasonal clock below, and then determine what time it is according to your clock.



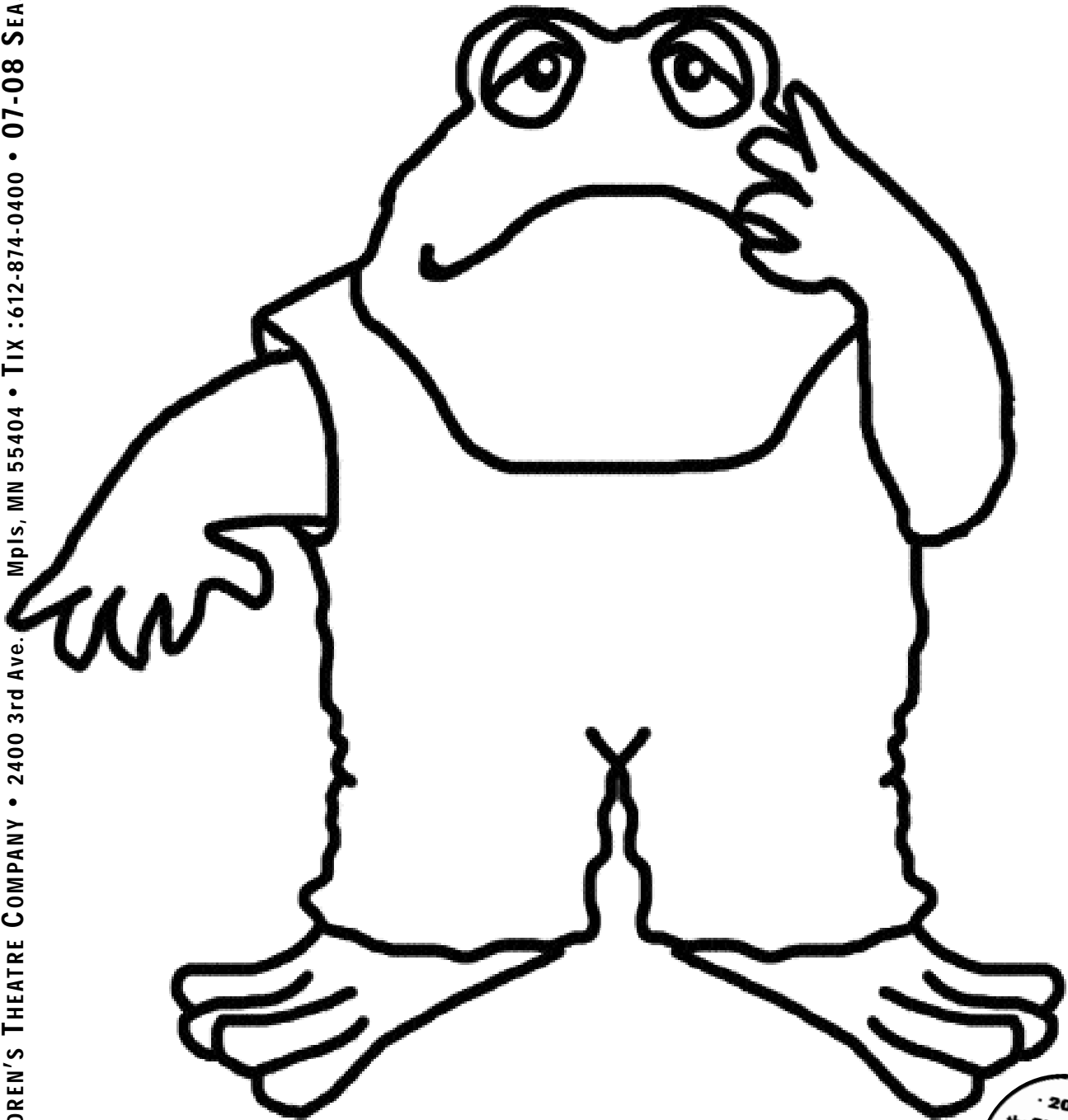




# Toad Looks Funny... *An art activity*

Toad looks funny in a bathing suit, and he knows it. He's self conscious even before all his friends come around, but when they start laughing it's not funny for Toad. Still, Frog is Toad's good friend, and he does his best to protect Toad.

Color a very funny bathing suit for Toad. Then stop to think: if your friend wore this suit would you stand up for her or him? Show your picture to the class and tell about what you could do to help a friend in an embarrassing situation.



## Classroom Fun

Each of the following activities builds off of the play and integrates the experience into your classroom.

When your class sees A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD it will be very easy for them to respond by asking questions about actors and costumes and funny scenes and so forth. Questions like, "How did they do that!?" are great and fun to explore. The especially wonderful thing about these questions in the classroom is that they can be used to bridge into asking other kinds of questions. Questions about "Why" they did that as well as "How." Questions like, "What if they would have done something else instead?" Devote some time to tossing around responses to questions that have no right and wrong answers.

**Write a letter.** In the play Frog writes Toad a letter in order to cheer him up. It takes a very long time for it to be delivered!! Have each of your students write a letter to a friend and decide how to have it delivered. You will probably think of a way that is much more efficient than the one in the play which is truly "Snail Mail."

### In the play the two friends bake cookies.

Bring in cookie recipes, and work together in small groups to adapt them to produce larger or smaller amounts. Make cookies for a classroom cookie party. You might also decide to create "Bugs on a Log" (aerosol cheese or soft cream cheese on celery sticks with raisins on top). The fun is in deciding what Frog and Toad might like to eat and in giving the foods Froggish or Toadish names.

**Story Writing :** It was a dark and stormy night...a perfect night for telling scary stories. There's something about being safe with a friend that makes scary stories delicious. Why is that!? Frog tells Toad a story one night just to make him laugh. Do you like telling spooky stories to your friends? Do you like it when they tell their own to you? Which is more fun? Think of a good subject for a Stormy Night Safe at Home Make Me Laugh story and write it.

**A Musical Idea :** In the play A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD Frog and Toad love to sing. When Adrienne Lobel, the set designer for the play, was a child, her father took her to lots of Broadway musicals. They sang at home - songs from the 30's and 40's, jazzy, witty tunes! She says, "Musicals, my father, and his work have always been mushed together in my mind," so it makes sense that Frog and Toad make music.

- In musicals characters usually sing when their feelings are intense. Think of the songs you remember from the play, and list them on the board. Then, beside them write the feelings they expressed. Can you think of any other way besides a song to express the feelings?



Arnold Lobel, Illustrator

**Are you an amphibian?** Do some research to find out what other kinds of amphibians there are beyond frogs and toads. Ask each student to choose an animal to research. Then have them use paper plates and colored markers to make masks with authentic details. They can wear their masks to a classroom party for which they make the refreshments in the activity detailed above.



# Going to the Theatre.



- Theater is an art form that depends on both the artists and the audience. Every performance is affected by the audience - how people respond and how they act. When you are the audience, it depends on YOU. Each time you come to the theater, it is like making a promise to come inside the world of the play we have made for you. We agree to create a theatrical world for you to visit, and you agree to step inside it for awhile. That agreement is the last step in the process of making a play happen.

- When you are in the audience, the people on stage can SEE you, HEAR you, and FEEL you; just as you see, hear, and feel them. Your laughter, your responses, your attention, your imagination, and most especially your energy, are important. They are a real part of the performance, and the wonderful truth is that the play can be better because of YOU.

## QUESTIONS:

1. Can the actors see you?
2. Can you rewind a play?
3. Is the play the same every time the actors do it?
4. How long do you think it takes for the actors to learn the play?

1. Sometimes, but mostly they HEAR you. Very clearly.
2. No. It's not just a recording. It's really happening.
3. It's always a little different. Actors make mistakes or have new ideas. Usually, you can't see them.
4. It takes about two months for them to learn lines and songs.

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## ANSWERS:

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## Related Resources

Stories of joyful friendships found between unlikely companions:

- Alien & Possum: Friends No Matter What**, by Tony Johnston  
*Possum and Alien have both similarities and differences.*
- Being Friends**, by Karen Beaumont  
*A rhyming story about two very different girls who are friends.*
- Big Thunder Magic**, by Craig Kee Strete  
*A Pueblo Indian story, a timid ghost has a friend sheep.*
- Bird Dogs Can't Fly**, by Mary Jane Auch  
*A dog and an injured goose migrate together - on foot.*
- Cat and Cat-face**, by Chyng Feng Sun  
*A cat and a flower become friends despite their differences.*
- Charlotte's Web**, by E.B. White  
*In which a pig and a spider become forever friends.*
- Digby and Kate**, by Barbara Baker  
*A dog and a cat are friends despite obvious differences of opinion.*
- Fish and Flamingo**, by Nancy White Carlstrom  
*Unlikely friends, Fish and Flamingo tell each other about their lives.*
- How To Be a Friend: A Guide to Making Friends and Keeping Them**, by Laurene K. Brown.  
*Dinosaur characters illustrate the value of friends, how to make friends and how to be and not to be a good friend.*
- Keeping Up With Cheetah**, by Lindsay Camp  
*Cheetah learns that a truly valuable friendship is not based on likeness.*
- Mangaboom**, by Charlotte Pomerantz.  
*Daniel goes to tea at Tia Pepita's with his friend, a giant who lives in a mango tree.*
- My Life With the Wave**, by Catherine Cowan, based on the story by Octavio Paz  
*A boy befriends a wave at the seashore and brings her home. Magical and surreal.*
- Peach & Blue**, by Sarah S. Kilborne  
*A frog and a peach see the world together.*
- The Rat and the Tiger**, by Keiko Kasza.  
*In his friendship with Rat, Tiger takes advantage and plays the bully because of his greater size, but one day Rat stands up for his rights.*
- Sitting Ducks**, by Michael Bedard  
*An alligator's alligator friend's can't understand his friendship with a duck.*
- Willy and Hugh**, by Anthony Browne  
*A chimpanzee and a Gorilla become companions.*
- Wind in the Willows**, by Kenneth Grahame  
*The adventures of a remarkable Toad and friends.*
- Yellow Bird and Me**, by Joyce Hansen.  
*When Doris discovers her new friend Yellow Bird is dyslexic, Yellow Bird's learning difference is addressed and his self-esteem and school performance improve.*

