A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD

MUSIC BY ROBERT REALE
BOOK AND LYRICS BY WILLIE REALE
BASED ON THE BOOKS BY ARNOLD LOBEL
ORIGINALLY PRESENTED ON BROADWAY BY BOB BOYETT, ADRIANNE LOBEL,
MICHAEL GARDNER, LAWRENCE HOROWITZ AND ROY FURMAN.
WORLD PREMIERE
AT THE CHILDREN’S THEATRE COMPANY MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

MAINSTAGE NOV. 15-DEC. 30, 2010

A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD - TYA is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. 421 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019 Phone: 212-541-4684 Fax: 212-397-4684 www.MTIShows.com

STUDY GUIDE

STUDY GUIDE WRITTEN BY KAREN GILODO, CHRISTINA SANGALLI
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PHOTO FEATURES RYAN FIELD, INDRIK KASAPI
LIVE THEATRE IS AN ACTIVE EXPERIENCE!

GROUND RULES:
As members of the audience, you play an important part in the success of a theatrical performance. Please review the following theatre rules with your students prior to your LKTYP visit.

• Food, drinks, candy and gum are not permitted in the theatre.
• LKTYP is a nut-free zone. Many children have severe life-threatening allergies; NO PEANUTS or NUT products may be brought to our theatre.
• No electronic devices are permitted in the theatre because they affect our sound system. Photography, audio and video recording during a performance is prohibited by the Canadian Theatre Agreement.
• Students are not permitted to leave the theatre unless they are accompanied by an adult.

THEATRE IS A TWO-WAY EXCHANGE:
Actors are thrilled when the audience is engaged and responsive. We want you to laugh, cheer, clap and really enjoy your time at the theatre. However, please be considerate audience members. Talking, whispering and excessive movement during a live performance is distracting for the actors, and disruptive for other audience members.

Enhance your visit by encouraging your students to look at different aspects of the production. Before the show, identify tasks for your class. Have one group of students looking at the set, another listening for the music and sound effects, a third watching the lighting and a fourth, the costumes. Compare notes after the show about what they observed. Your students will be more informed and they’ll be surprised by how much they noticed. Ask them to be prepared with one question for the actors after the show. Brainstorm with them about possible topics to get the most out of the experience!

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THE STUDY GUIDE
THEMATIC OVERVIEW

Educators are constantly trying to reinforce the tenets of friendship: respecting each other, listening to one another, looking out for those we care about, but can friendship be taught? Will children recall the lessons and morals of stories as they navigate their social world? It is difficult to know how what they see, hear and learn informs their actions but as adults it is important that we continue to provide children with models of positive and healthy relationships.

A Year With Frog and Toad based on the stories of Arnold Lobel is a warm and touching play about two friends who encourage and take care of each other. They play together, tell stories and find ways to make each other happy. They are kind and thoughtful characters. This is an ideal play for our youngest theatre-goer, the music is approachable, tuneful, and playful with very singable melodies. Entering the mainstage, young students will be charmed by Robin Fisher’s inviting set.

In this study guide you will find exercises that encourage students to think about what it means to be thoughtful and compassionate. They will examine themes of nurturing, experiment with movement and even learn a little about life sciences. Along the way students will see how positivity is contagious and that being a good friend to one can have positive effects on the broader community.

Theatre delights, challenges, and provokes audiences of all ages. A Year With Frog and Toad is a play that exemplifies our season’s theme of Friendship, Peer Pressure and the Need to Belong by focusing on the very basics of kindness and caring.

STRANDS AND CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

- CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS: Music, Science and Technology: Understanding Life Systems
- CHARACTER EDUCATION CONNECTIONS: Perseverance, Kindness & Caring, Cooperation
- THEMES: Friendship, Joy, Understanding

In addition to DRAMA and LANGUAGE ARTS. A Year With Frog and Toad directly relates to student development in the areas of:

- SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY: Understanding Life Systems
THE COMPANY

THE CAST

Male Bird/Snail/As Cast: Kevin Dennis
Lady Bird/Turtle/As Cast: Cara Hunter
Frog: Allen MacInnis
Toad: Louis Pitre
Lady Bird/Mole/As Cast: Jennifer Villaverde

CREATIVE TEAM

Director: Allen MacInnis
Written by: Robert Reale/Willie Reale
Set/Costume Designer: Robin Fisher
Lighting Designer: Lesley Wilkinson
Choreographer and Associate Director: Jen Shuber
Sound Designer: Michael Laird
Musical Director: Diane Leah
Assistant Director: Kate Fenton
2nd Musician: Thom Jedstat
Stage Manager: Kristin McCollum
Assistant Stage Manager: Emma Laird

SYNOPSIS

This Tony Award-nominated Broadway musical follows the cheerful Frog and the rather grumpy Toad through four fun-filled seasons. Awaking from hibernation in the spring, the two great friends enjoy planting gardens, swimming in the pond, raking leaves and sledding down the hill. Along the way they meet new friends and learn the importance of forgiveness. Staying true to the spirit of the popular Arnold Lobel books, this delightful musical celebrates friendship and the attributes that make each of us different and special.

GLOSSARY

The words in the Glossary appear in pink throughout the study guide.

Anticipate: to look forward to.
Appreciation: favourable or grateful recognition.
Community: a fellowship of interests; similarities.
Friendship: the feeling or relationship that friends have.
Happiness: the feeling or showing of pleasure or contentment.
Reflection: a thought, long and careful consideration.
Time: the indefinite and continuous duration of existence seen as a series of events progressing from the past through the present into the future.
DESIgnER’S NOTE: BY ROBIN FISHER

A Year With Frog and Toad is based on the beloved book series written and illustrated by Arnold Lobel. Because there was existing imagery for the storyline of these two friends both the director and I felt the books were the perfect starting point in creating the look of the production.

A big determining factor for the look of the set was the over-sized scale. In the illustrations, Frog and Toad are cleverly drawn against a background of tall grasses and rocks to give the reader a sense of their tiny size. The director and I wanted to create the same sense of scale on-stage so we also used tall grasses and large pebbles to assist in reducing the scale of the actors.

Another challenge that the play presents is the span of time. We quite literally spend an entire year with Frog and Toad. We go with them, and their riverbank friends, through all four seasons beginning in spring through summer, fall and winter to conclude again the following spring. Without having to constantly change the set we decided to, with much help from the lighting designer and scenic painter, to change the colour tones of the set. Using a lightweight, translucent fabric known as Gossamer we kept the leaves and the blades of grass as diaphanous as possible to allow the lights to affect the colour tone and value of the set pieces. Within the seemingly pure green colour palette of the set the scenic painter has spattered various layers of warmer tones to enhance the change in lighting for summer and cooler tones to enhance the change in lighting for winter. It is important to have a collaborative spirit on every production with all aspects of the team as it enhances the overall effect of the show.

For the costumes, we pulled a direct inspiration from the musical score and its ‘old-timey’ feeling. Because the music has such a classic vaudeville flavor to it we decided to incorporate that style into the shape and look of the costumes. By using jackets, high-cut pants and ascots we have in essence given the show a period look without actually committing to one particular era. It was important to us that we maintain a human quality to the animals not only making it easier for the audience to relate to the characters but also making it easier for the actors by avoiding cumbersome masks or headpieces. Each character was given a sense of their animal either through the shape of their costume or the fabric used. An example of this is seen in Toad’s pants which have structure and framing in the sides of them to give them an exaggerated wide shape much like an actual toad.

It is a wonderful show about the importance of friendship and it is my hope that we have managed to create a magical world for the audience, which encompasses the quality of Arnold Lobel’s original images.
UNITS OF STUDY

Curriculum Expectations: By participating in these activities, students will:
• identify and use social skills in play and other contexts.
• demonstrate independence, self-regulation and a willingness to take responsibility in learning and other activities.
• communicate by talking and by listening and speaking to others for a variety of purposes and in a variety of contexts.
• communicate in writing, using strategies that are appropriate for beginners.
• demonstrate an awareness of the natural and built environment through hands-on investigations, observations, questions, and representations of their findings.
• demonstrate an understanding of the natural world and the need to care for and respect the environment.
• investigate needs and characteristics of plants and animals, including humans.

PRE-SHOW UNIT

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS — ALL GRADES

• What does friendship mean?
• What are the characteristics of a good friend?
• How are you a good friend?
• Why is happiness and positivity contagious?
• What does it mean to be thoughtful and considerate?
• What is time? What are some of the ways to mark the passing of time?

PRE-SCHOOL — GRADE 1

ACTIVITY 1.1: FRIENDSHIP PLANTS

Directions:
• Begin by creating a Venn-diagram on the board, on chart paper or use the template on pg. 6. Label the left side “Plants” and the right side “Friends”.
• Ask students to brainstorm words by responding to the following questions:
  » What do plants need to live?
  » What do plants need to grow?
  » What does friendship need to survive?
  » What does friendship need grow?
• Discuss the shared words that fall into the centre of the diagram.

ACTIVITY 1.2: GROWING YOUR OWN PLANTS

Directions:

What you'll need:
• Empty aluminum can
• Screwdriver and hammer
• Liquid gesso (recommended: Liquitex Basics Gesso)
• Acrylic craft paints in colors of your choice
• Acrylic sealer spray, matte finish
• Craft stick
• Thin cardboard
• Pinking shears
• Black permanent marker
• 5-10 small rocks, stones or pebbles
• 1.5 cups potting soil
• 4-inch potted herb plant
• White craft glue
• Water
ACTIVITY 1.1: VENN-DIAGRAM

PLANTS

FRIENDS

Photocopy for use in your classroom!
How to make it:
1. Completely wash and dry aluminum can. If necessary, sand off any rough edges from opening of can.
2. Turn can upside down. Teacher/Parent should use screwdriver or other pointed object to poke holes in the bottom of the can. Use a hammer to tap the end of the screwdriver to make the holes.
3. Paint outside of can with one coat of gesso. Let dry completely.
4. Paint can in the desired color, repeat coats if needed.
5. Decorate however you like. Use a thin paint brush for long lines, dip the end of the paint brush into paint for polka dots.
6. In a well-ventilated area, spray the outside of the completed can with acrylic sealer spray. Let dry.
7. Place enough rocks or pebbles in the bottom of the can to form a single layer.
8. Add enough potting soil to fill the can two-thirds full.
9. Remove potted herb from its container and transplant into the can.
10. Fill edges with remaining potting soil, gently pat down so that plant is firmly in the can but not compacted so much that it’s too tight.
11. Place can on a plate (to catch any water drainage) and add some water to the newly planted herbs.
12. Place your new garden in a sunny window and remember to water them!

Tips:
• A 4-inch potted plant will be enough to make 2-3 vegetable sized cans (15 oz) or one larger tomato sauce type can (28 oz).
• This is a great project to teach kids about growing plants, especially edible ones. Take this opportunity to visit your local library and check out a book on simple container gardening or gardening with kids.
• Keep the kids involved, be sure they take care of “their” plant. Have them water their plant and show them how to check to see if the soil is too dry or just right by gently touching the soil surface with their finger.

Source: Crafts Kaboose

PRE-SCHOOL — GRADE 1

Curriculum Expectations: By participating in these activities, students will
• identify and use social skills in play and other contexts.
• communicate by talking and by listening and speaking to others for a variety of purposes and in a variety of contexts.
• investigate daily and seasonal changes.
• demonstrate an awareness of themselves as dramatic artists and dancers through engaging in activities in drama and dance.
• apply the creative process to the composition of simple dance phrases, using the elements of dance and drama to communicate feelings and ideas.

ACTIVITY 2.1: EXPLORING THE SEASONS

Directions:
• Using the template provided on pg.9, have the students draw pictures under each season’s heading.
  » The pictures should be answering the following questions:
    * How do you know it is summer, winter, fall, spring?
    * What activities or events happen in summer, winter, fall, spring?
    * What is special to you about the summer, winter, fall, spring?
• Have the students present their ‘reasons for the seasons’ to the class or to a small group.

Further Extension:
Using the different ideas, create a class poem. Have students write out the poem and post it somewhere in the classroom.
### ACTIVITY 2.1: TEMPLATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Photocopy for use in your classroom!
**ACTIVITY 2.2: EXPLORING THE SEASONS THROUGH MOVEMENT**

**Directions:**
- Begin by telling the students that they are going to explore the different seasons using their entire bodies.
  - **NOTE:** You may want to begin with a quick stretch and warm-up

The following is an example of how a season can be explored through the movement of the body.

- **Spring:**
  - Pretend you are a tiny seed, just planted into cold soil.
  - The sun is shining over you on your first days in the ground. Feel the hot sun on your outer seed shell.
  - Soon the hot sun begins to go behind a cloud and the weather begins to turn a little chilly. Rain starts to come down. What sound does it make?
  - The next day the sun decides to poke its head through the clouds. The warmth mixed with the nutrients of the rain helps you to grow. You slowly start to poke your stem through the warm soil towards the hot sun. Your stem grows, strong and taller. As it is growing, you start to notice leaves sprouting from the sides of the stem. Growing large and long. Stretch your leaves and give them a shake. Feel the warm sun on your new stem.
  - Soon it starts to get a little windy, blowing your stem to the left and the right. What sound does the wind make?
- Using this example, brainstorm a list of events that take place within winter, summer, and fall, with your class.
- Using key words, have the students explore the movement of the words. (How does snow fall? How do bunnies hop? How do trees lose their leaves? etc.)
- You can also combine seasons. Have the students transition from Spring to Summer or Fall to Winter or Summer to Fall and Winter to Spring.

**Further Extensions:**
- Explore different types of music with the students. When the class decides on a song that complements each season discuss setting the movement piece to the chosen music.
- Divide the class into two groups. Have one group focus on the movement of the plants, while the other group focuses on the weather’s pattern of movement.
- Using the poem from the extension activity on pg.7 create a movement-based performance about the seasons. Be sure to complement the movement piece with music. Invite another class to see your performance!

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**GRADES 2 — 3**

**Curriculum Expectations:** By participating in these activities, students will
- listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes;
- use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes;
- reflect on and identify their strengths as listeners and speakers, areas for improvement, and the strategies they found most helpful in oral communication situations.
- use editing, proofreading, and publishing skills and strategies, and knowledge of language conventions, to correct errors, refine expression, and present their work effectively.
**ACTIVITY 1.1: GIVING YOURSELF TIME TO REFLECT**

In the play, Frog decides he wants to be on his own. When Toad realizes that Frog has left to sit on his own, he assumes that Frog must be upset. Toad comes up with a plan to make Frog happy, only to realize that Frog was never sad. He just needs time to reflect.

In the song “Alone” Frog says:

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“SOMETIMES THE DAYS
THEY CAN BE VERY BUSY
SO I LIKE TO STOP
AND THINK OF THE REASONS
I HAVE TO BE HAPPY
AND THAT MAKES ME HAPPY
ALL OVER AGAIN”
```

**Source:** A Year With Frog and Toad

**Directions:**
- Ask the students why Frog likes to reflect on his own
- Using the template provided, have the students sit quietly and reflect. Have them complete the following sentences (provided on the template):
  - In my quiet time I...
  - It makes me feel happy when...
  - When my friends are sad I...
  - I can help others by...
  - Reflection is good because...

**ACTIVITY 2.1: WEB OF APPRECIATION**

**What you will need:**
- A large ball of yarn
- Tape or small pieces of ribbon
- Labels (optional)

Both Frog and Toad are great friends who love to help each other. In the opening song, Toad expresses his appreciation of Frog’s friendship. Some of the things Toad appreciates Frog for are:

- Knowing just what to say to brighten his day
- Being very kind in nature
- Telling good stories
- His strength in friendship

**Directions:**
- Ask the classroom to think of various reasons why they appreciate friends, family, and classmates.
- Have the students sit in a circle around a large piece of paper. Ask one person to volunteer to hold the end of the string. This student will begin the appreciation process.
- The leader will pick one student and tell them why they appreciate them. That student will now receive the string and fasten it in place on the large piece of paper. The student that was appreciated, appreciates someone else and so on.
- This continues until each student has had a turn. If everyone fastens their end of the string to the paper, the end result will be a giant web.

**Further Extensions:**
1. Secure each point of the web to the paper and hang it in the class.
   - Attach notes of appreciation where the web has been tied off.
2. If the students are having trouble directly appreciating another students change the activity to a general appreciation activity.
   - When the student receives the yarn, have them announce why they appreciate their friends, family, or classmates generally. (e.g. “I appreciate Sarah for sharing her markers with me” or “I appreciate the class when we play well together”)

A Year with Frog and Toad Study Guide
Debrief:
Have the students reflect on the question:
• How does what makes you happy contribute to the classroom community

In Frog and Toad, Frog is able to find time to reflect on his happiness. This reflection time provides him with the ability to understand what actions he can take to make those in his community happy too.

POST-SHOW UNIT

Curriculum Expectations: By participating in these activities, students will:
• listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes;
• use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes;
• reflect on and identify their strengths as listeners and speakers, areas for improvement, and the strategies they found most helpful in oral communication situations.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS — ALL GRADES

• What is time?
• How do you determine the passing of time?
• What are the markings of time?
• What are the rituals and traditions that help you determine what time it is?
• What is anticipation?
• How does it feel to anticipate something exciting?

ACTIVITY 2.1: I JUST CAN’T WAIT FOR....

Directions:
• Using the template provided on pg.12, have the students creatively answer the question “I just can’t wait for...”. This can be written on the face of the clock, with a picture to illustrate their response.
• Attach the hour and minute hand to the clock with a brass fastener split pin. The students now have a clock that they can use to work with time.

ACTIVITY 2.2: WRITING A LETTER TO A LOVED ONE

Directions:
In A Year With Frog and Toad, writing a letter is used as a vehicle to make friends happy.
• Using the stationary provided, ask the students to write a letter to a family member or friend that could use a little cheering up. (More Frog and Toad)
• Have the students write the letter without asking the recipient to respond. The joy is in knowing that you have made someone else’s day, without asking them to make yours.
A Year with Frog and Toad
FOR PRE-SCHOOL-GR 5: This Tony Award-nominated Broadway musical follows the cheerful Frog and the rather grumpy Toad through four fun-filled seasons.

THEMES: Friendship, Joy, Understanding

BOOKS
Frog and Toad All Year and the other Frog and Toad books. By Arnold Lobel, Harper Collins
Best Friends for Frances by Russell Hoban, Harper, 1969
Travels with My Family by Marie Louise Gay and David Homel, Groundwood Books, 2006
Toy Dance Party by Emily Jenkins, Schwartz & Wade, 2008
Minnie and Moo go Dancing by Denis Cazet, DK Children, 1998

Titles include friendship between unlikely people (or stuffed animals!), getting along, and some music strands thrown in since this is a musical.

BIBLIOGRAPHY/WORKS CITED


Arts Impact: Making a difference in the lives of students

LKTYP is proud to have Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life as lead sponsors for its Arts Impact programme, which provides opportunities for schools in low-income areas of Toronto to participate in quality arts education. Arts Impact’s goal is to deepen students’ understanding of theatre, allowing them to be inspired by the material presented on stage and to think in ways that challenge their own perceptions.

Connections: Addressing the pattern of poverty

There is empirical evidence that children who live in poverty are at greater risk of dropping out of school. Studies have also proven that exposure to the arts improves scholastic ability and attendance. Thanks to the generosity of CIBC Children’s Foundation, LKTYP can offer special subsidized tickets to qualifying schools.
LOURANNE KIMSA THEATRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
(formerly Young Peoples Theatre) is the largest Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA) company in Canada and a significant institution in the Canadian professional theatre community. Over our 45-year history we have produced many of the most important works that now form the canon of plays for young audiences in this country. At the heart of founder Susan Rubes’ idea for Young Peoples Theatre (YPT) was a belief that children deserve a theatre of their own – with resources and standards no lesser than those for adults. She believed – as we do today – that young people deserve good theatre because theatre is good for young people.

Through the communal experience of the theatre we create for them, children can receive indications of what is important, funny, trivial; positive, negative, wrong, right, rightish, wrongish; frightening, reassuring, empowering, avoidable; familiar, new, eternal … We strongly believe that even through the most playful of plays, we are speaking powerfully to children about the community and the world in which they live.

Therefore, at the centre of the artistic policy of LKTYP is a desire to have a positive and lasting impact on the emotional, social, and intellectual development of young people. We want children to be imprinted with experiences that will increase their access to the world, in order for them to grow into the unique and wonderful people they were born to be. To do this, our programming is drawn from the world classics of children’s stories, from contemporary works, from the new plays we develop, and from productions showcasing the most innovative and accomplished theatre for young audiences by other Canadian and international theatre companies.

At LKTYP, because we are serious about child development through theatre art, children can experience our work as either audience members or theatre creators. We extend the learning opportunities of our professional productions through our substantial Education & Participation Department. The Department’s services for teachers and students helps connect curriculum objectives and learning outcomes to the content of our professional productions; its Community Participation projects link our theatre skill with the educational aspirations of partners who are dedicated to the growth of young people; our interest-based Drama School offers young people the chance to engage deeply in the excitement of theatre art; and our Community Volunteer programme offers everyone who wants it, the opportunity to participate in the mission of LKTYP.

LKTYP is not only a professional theatre for young audiences but a vital community-based centre of arts education.