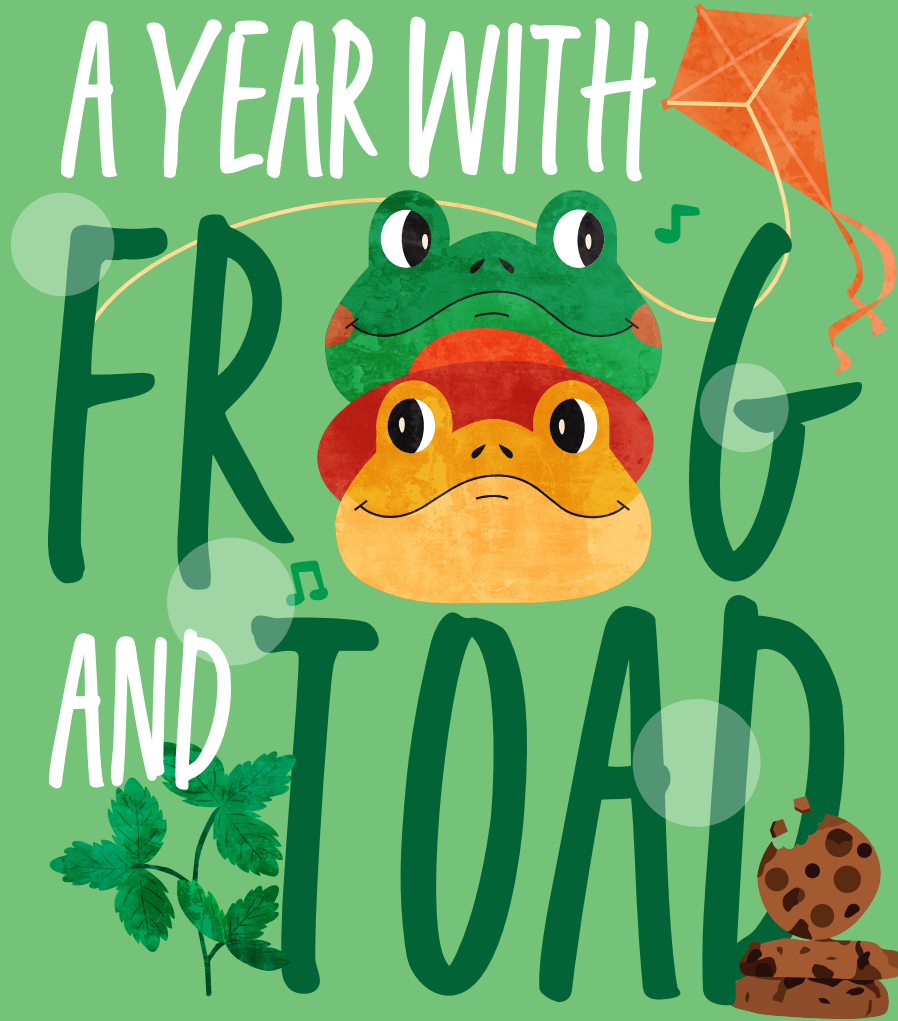


# *A Year With Frog and Toad* Educator Guide



2023-2024 Season

children's  
theatre  
company

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# Behind the Scenes



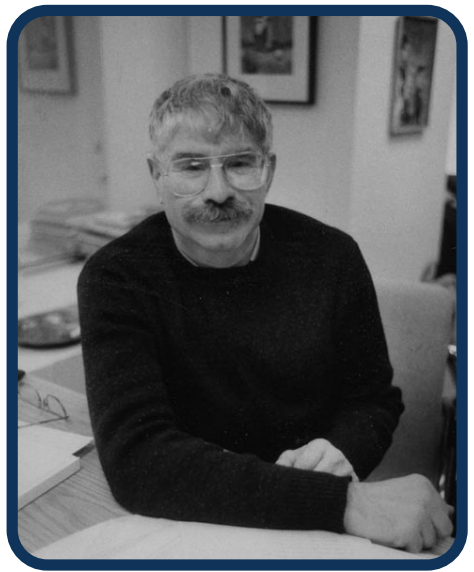
Learn more about the artists, history, and themes of this production.

## What is this show about?

Meet Frog and Toad, best friends who embark upon a year's worth of adventures with great merriment, comedic agility, and joyful song-singing. Join them as they go swimming (and boy does Toad look funny in a bathing suit), rake leaves until they ache, ache, ache, and send letters via a real live Snail with the Mail! Sing along while Frog and Toad bake cookies, cookies, cookies in the only show from Minnesota ever to be nominated for three Tony Awards®, including Best Musical!

## About Arnold Stark Lobel

Arnold Lobel was born in 1933 in Los Angeles, California, but grew up in Schenectady, New York. He loved reading picture books as a child in the care of his grandparents. He studied illustration in college and went on to illustrate more than 70 books by other authors. He began writing his own books in 1962. Some of his most successful books were *Fables* (a collection of 20 original tales featuring animal characters), *On Market Street*, and *The Adventures of Frog and Toad*, which became a very successful series of children's books.





# Before You Go

Use these activities in your classroom to prepare your students for their field trip to CTC.



# Actor's Tools

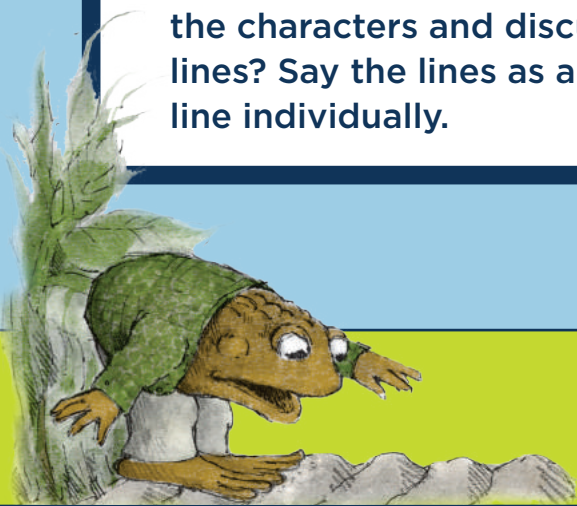
**Grades:** Grades K and up **Time Required:** 5-10 minutes **Supplies:** None

**Set up:** This activity works best when students have room to move around the classroom. Make sure there is space to move that is free and clear from desks and chairs.

Actors use many tools to help them tell a story; the three we focus on at CTC are **body**, **voice**, and **imagination**. In this activity, students will practice using their actor's tools to convey different emotions and begin to embody different characters.

## Instructions:

1. Explain that **projecting** means using a loud voice and **enunciating** means speaking clearly. Have students practice projecting and enunciating by saying "A Year with Frog and Toad" as a group.
2. Brainstorm together different emotions that actors might need to portray (happy, sad, mad, afraid, etc.). Try saying the following lines from the show with different emotions:
  - "Hello Frog/Hello Toad."
  - "I never get any letters."
  - "Do you want some cookies?"
3. Brainstorm together different physical gestures to add while they say the lines from the show. Allow a few students to showcase their work as a solo.
4. If your group is familiar with Frog and Toad stories, brainstorm some of the characters and discuss how each of those characters might say these lines? Say the lines as a group first, then ask for volunteers to perform the line individually.



## Reflection Questions

What was your favorite emotion to portray? Why?  
Who was the most challenging character to portray?

## Variations and Adjustments

After exploring different characters from the story, challenge students to come up with other lines that each character might actually say. Have volunteers share their ideas.



# The Great Cookie Bake-Off!

**Grades:** Grades K and up

**Time Required:** 10-15 minutes

**Supplies:** None

**Set-up:** This activity works best when students have room to move around the classroom. Make sure there is space to move that is free and clear from desks and chairs.

In this activity, students will be practicing how to clearly mime their actions and how to create sound effects.

## Instructions:

1. Ask students to brainstorm all the different steps that go into baking cookies and what sounds you might hear in the kitchen while baking. Write them down on the board.
2. Have students break into pairs. Person A will be miming how to make cookies. Person B will use their voice and body to create sound effects that you might hear while someone is baking. Coach A and B to make their movements and sounds as accurate and specific as possible.
3. Ask volunteers to come to the front of the class and perform their cookie baking for the rest of the class.

## Variations and Adjustments:

If students are hesitant to perform one at a time, turn it into a group activity by asking students to mime cookie baking in large groups of 4-6 students.





# Animal Shapes

**Grades:** Grades 2 and up

**Time Required:** 10-15 minutes

**Supplies:** Optional—Pictures of each of the animals from the story.

**Set-up:** This activity works best when there is open space to move, but it is okay to move around desks and tables for this exercise.

## Instructions:

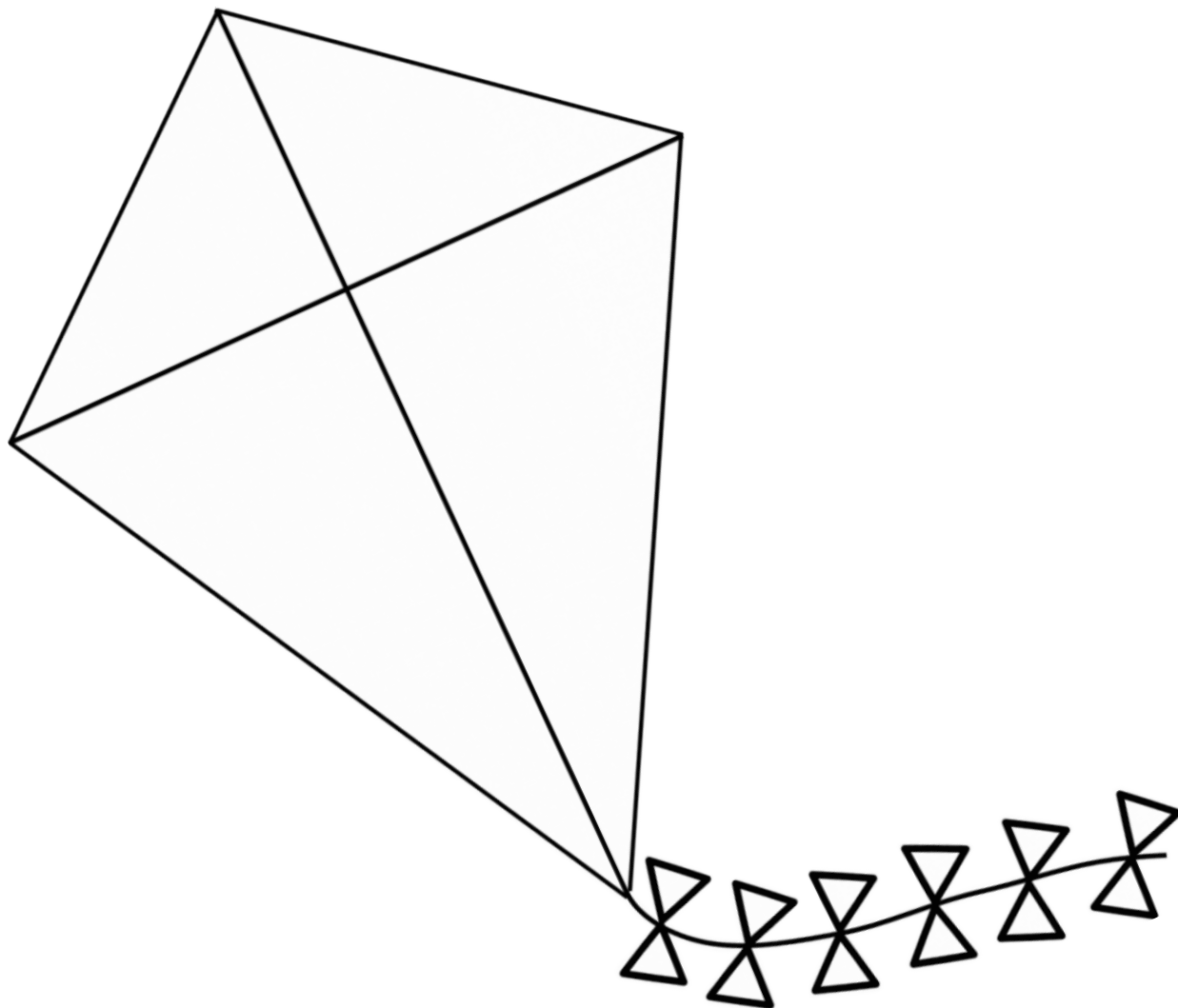
1. Ask students to make the shapes of animals that they might see onstage in *A Year With Frog and Toad* (frogs, toads, birds, turtles, moles, snails, mice, and lizards) by embodying them in a frozen position and then moving around the room as those animals.
2. Next, challenge students to make the shape of these animals with a partner. They must work together to create the shape of one animal with two bodies.
3. Continue to add more and more students to the group until each group has 4-6 people.





# Design a Kite Worksheet

Frog and Toad love flying their kites together, but they must try to fly it many times before they are finally successful. If you could design a kite for Frog and Toad to fly together, what would it look like? Use the space below to design your kite and then answer some questions about your design process.



**1. Give your kite a name! What is your kite called?**

---

**2. Explain your design. What shapes, pictures, or patterns did you draw?**

---

**3. What colors did you pick and why?**

---

# 3 Things



In the day or so before your field trip, share the following prompts with your students. You can read them aloud to your class or give each student a copy. When you return from the performance, review the list again. What do they remember noticing or thinking about during the performance?

## During the performance:

### Look for...

1. A letter in an envelope. Who is the letter for?
2. Ingredients to bake cookies. What kind of cookies are being made?
3. A calendar. How many months are in one year?



### Listen for...

1. An alarm clock ringing. What makes the alarm clock stop?
2. Water rushing on a river. Who is nervous to go swimming in the river?
3. Wind blowing. Which character is trying to fly a kite in the wind?

### Think about...

1. Which animals onstage have you seen in real life?
2. Is a snail the best animal to deliver mail? Why or why not?
3. What are other activities that you think Frog and Toad would enjoy?





## Before You Go—At Home

Print this section and send it home with permission slips. This section supports family engagement and provides tools to help families reflect with students about their theatre experience.

# Resources for Families

*Extend your child's theatre experience at home!*



## Questions to ask your child BEFORE they see the show:

- Frog and Toad like to do lots of activities together! They bake cookies, fly kites, go swimming, tell stories, share meals together, and more! What are activities you like to do with a friend?
- In one year, we have 4 seasons: spring, summer, fall, and winter. What is one thing you enjoy doing during each of those seasons?
- During the show, Frog tells Toad a spooky story about “The Large and Terrible Frog.” What spooky stories do you know? Is it a true story or is it made up?

## Questions to ask your child AFTER they see the show:

- What do you think about the way the animals treated Toad when he felt embarrassed about how he looked in his bathing suit? What could the animals have done to be better friends to Toad when he felt embarrassed?
- Frog and Toad go sledding during the wintertime. What did Frog and Toad wear to keep themselves warm while sledding? Would you wear anything else to stay warm?
- Frog writes a letter to Toad to make him feel better about not receiving mail. Have you ever sent or received mail before? What did you send or receive in the mail?

Check out CTC's Audience Guide for more information, discussion questions, and activities for the whole family.

[childrenstheatre.org/FrogToad](http://childrenstheatre.org/FrogToad)







# Seasonal Activities

Frog and Toad love doing fun activities together. *In A Year With Frog and Toad*, we see Frog and Toad do activities together all year long, no matter the weather outside. What are activities that you like to do during each of the seasons? Use the boxes below to draw a picture of an activity you like to do during spring, summer, fall, and winter.

**Spring:**

---

**Summer:**

---

**Fall:**

---

**Winter:**

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# Heading to CTC

Provide this resource to all teachers, staff, and chaperones attending the field trip. This section contains field trip procedures, accessibility information, and CTC's approach to theatre etiquette.

# Trip Guide



## CTC Theatre Etiquette

At CTC, we encourage audiences to engage with the live theatre experience and react freely. It's ok to laugh if something is funny, exclaim if something is surprising, gasp if something is scary, and maybe even dance along in your seats if the music inspires you. We value the real-time, honest reactions of our student audiences.

We do, however, thank you for your partnership in making sure that any reactions from your students are kind and respectful towards the actors onstage and towards all of the people who worked so hard to make the show possible. If there is a group seated near you that is being disrespectful, please don't hesitate to notify an usher.

## Arrival

Check-in begins 1 hour prior to the performance. Buses can unload in the circle driveway on 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave S between 24<sup>th</sup> St. and 25<sup>th</sup> St. An usher will greet you at your bus and will need to know the name of your school and how many buses you are traveling with. If all of your buses have arrived, we will ask you to unload and make one line. We will lead you inside and upstairs to the Target Lobby.

Groups are seated in the order of arrival, and your entire group must be present before you can check in. Seating begins 30 minutes prior to the start of the performance.

CTC does not print or issue individual tickets or stickers for student matinee performances. Instead, as you line up in the lobby, one of our ushers will count your group to ensure that you are not over your allotted number of seats. It is helpful if you can provide the usher with a final count for your group, but not required.

## Seating

Seating in the theatre begins 30 minutes prior to the performance. An usher will lead your group into the theatre in one line. We recommend spacing chaperones throughout the line to aid in guiding the students. To ensure that everyone gets a seat, please take whichever seat the usher is asking you to, including chaperones. Once your whole group has been assigned a seat, you are more than welcome to rearrange students and chaperones as you need to and utilize the restroom facilities.

## Lunch

Lunch space must be reserved in advance. If your group has reserved space in our lobby to eat lunch after the show, please bring the lunches inside with you when you arrive. We will store them in the lobby during the show. We recommend consolidating lunches into paper or reusable shopping bags. Large coolers and bins can be heavy and unwieldy, and individual lunches can easily be lost or forgotten on the bus.

After the show, those with reserved lunch space will have a designated area of the lobby to utilize. The lunch space allows for picnic-style eating on the floor. You may be sharing the lobby with other schools or may be directed to our other theatre's lobby if we have multiple groups staying for lunch. Custodial services are provided by CTC.



# Accessibility



## Mobility Accessibility

The Target Lobby and UnitedHealth Group Stage are on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. At the building entrance, school groups will be lead to the right and up a flight of 28 stairs to get to the lobby. Those wishing to use the elevator will find it to the LEFT of the entrance doors. CTC’s accessible seating area is located in the last row of the main level of the theatre. Please email [schools@childrenstheatre.org](mailto:schools@childrenstheatre.org) in advance to request accessible seating, if needed. The rest of the seating on the main floor can be accessed by going down a set of gradual stairs, and the balcony is accessed by going up another flight of 18 stairs. There is no elevator access to the balcony level.

An Accessible/All-Gender/Family Restroom is located next to the elevator on the 2<sup>nd</sup> level in the Target Lobby. An adult-sized changing table is available upon request.

## Quiet Room/Sensory Sensitivities

The Quiet Room is located at the rear left side of the main floor of the UnitedHealth Group Stage. There are 3 stairs to get to the seating in the Quiet Room. The Quiet Room is separated from the audience by a glass window, so students can verbalize freely. Those utilizing the Quiet Room can still see and hear the performance. The performance is also live streamed in the lobby. The Quiet Room is open to everyone and cannot be reserved. Please feel free to come and go from the Quiet Room as you need to throughout the show.

Please let an usher know if someone in your group would benefit from a fidget, ear plugs, noise canceling headphones, or coloring/activity sheets during your visit.

## Assistive Listening Devices

Please let an usher know if you would like to use an assistive listening device. These devices come equipped with an over-the-ear earpiece. This earpiece can be unplugged, and other devices, such as cochlear implants, can be plugged into the receiver using the 1/8” jack. If you will be plugging in your own device, please bring the appropriate cord as CTC does not have these on hand.

## Sign Interpretation and Audio Description

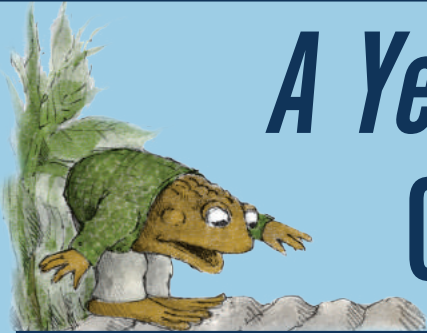
A sign interpreted and/or audio described student matinee performance is scheduled for each production at CTC. We suggest booking your field trip for these scheduled performances if you need either of these services. Please contact [schools@childrenstheatre.org](mailto:schools@childrenstheatre.org) if you are unable to reserve your field trip for the scheduled performance(s) and need to request this service for a different date. CTC requires at least 3 weeks’ notice to schedule ASL interpretation or Audio Description.

## Prayer/Private Nursing Space

During your visit, please ask a member of our staff to use our private space for nursing, pumping, prayer, or other needs.



# *A Year With Frog and Toad* Content Advisories



**Language: 0 out of 5 stars** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Themes and Situations: 1 out of 5 stars** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Turtle and friends sing about Toad looking funny in a bathing suit. Toad worries Frog doesn't want to be his friend anymore. Birds laugh at Toad as he tries to fly a kite.

**Violence and Scariness: 1 out of 5 stars** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In the song "Shivers", a terrible green Frog threatens to eat Frog. Frog then ties the terrible green Frog to a tree and escapes. Toad rides on a sled on a dangerous path with boulders and trees and is catapulted from the sled.

**Sensory Advisories: 1 out of 5 stars** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

There's the potential for loud sounds when Toad smashes his alarm clock, falls off Turtle into the water, plays the tuba, and is catapulted from the sled.

**Potentially Anxious Moments: 2 out of 5 stars** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Turtle and friends sing about Toad looking funny in a bathing suit and wait around to 'getta loada toad' even though Toad wants them to leave. Toad worries Frog does not want to be his friend anymore. In the song "Shivers", Frog recalls a scary story where he got lost with his family after a picnic and met a terrible green frog who wanted to eat him. Toad rides a sled on a dangerous path and is catapulted into a snowbank.

Please contact [schools@childrenstheatre.org](mailto:schools@childrenstheatre.org) with any questions.

## Trip Guide

This tool is called a **social story** and tells students what to expect at the theatre. Hand it out to anyone who may benefit from knowing procedures in advance.



**Bus**—I will ride on the **bus** from my school to the theatre.

---



**Lobby**—I will enter the **lobby** and be greeted by the theatre staff and ushers. I can say hello to them. There may be a lot of other students from different schools in the lobby at the same time. I will stay with my teachers.

---



**Bathroom**—If I need to go to the **bathroom**, I will let my teacher know, and they can take me. I can go to the bathroom any time I need to during the show.

---



**Enter the Theatre**—When it's time to **enter the theatre**, there may be a line at the door. I will wait in line for my turn to go through the door.

---



**My Seat**—An usher will show me to my **seat**. During the show I will sit in my seat next to my classmates.

---



**During the Show**—If the show is funny, I can **laugh**. If something surprises me, I can **gasp**. At the end of the show, I can **clap** to tell the actors I enjoyed the performance.

---



**After the Show**—I will wait **patiently** for my teacher to lead me out of the theatre.

---



**Leave the Building**—I will leave the building with my classmates and get **back on the bus** to my school. There may be a lot of other students from different schools leaving at the same time. I will stay with my teachers.



## After the Show

The discussion prompts and activities in this section are an extension of the theatre-going experience and allow students to reflect on the experience of seeing a live show and further engage with the art forms and themes of the performance.

# Springboard

Use this page to recall observations, reflect, and think critically about the show you just saw!



The part of the show that grabbed my attention the most was

The show made me think about

Before seeing this show, I didn't know that

A question I have about the show is

If I were the director, one thing I would change is

One thing I saw during this show that I've never seen before was

After seeing the show, my friends and I talked about

Overall, the show made me feel

While watching the show, I had the strongest reaction to



**Grades:** Grades 2 and up      **Time Required:** 10-15 minutes

**Supplies:** Paper and pencil or pen. Optional—markers, crayons, or colored pencils

**Set-up:** This activity works best when students are seated at desks or tables with their supplies.

In this activity, students will use their writing skills to write a letter to someone they care about.

## Instructions:

Frog wrote his friend Toad a letter so he would receive some mail. Write a letter to someone you care about using a piece of paper and a pencil or pen. If you have time, you could draw them a picture, too!

Feeling stuck with what to say in your letter? Here's some things you can talk about or questions you can ask:

1. What is something you've done recently that you enjoyed doing? Share about it!
2. Ask about how their family, friends, or pets are doing.
3. Tell them about a school project that you are working on or one you recently completed.
4. Ask them if they have any fun weekend or holiday plans coming up.
5. What is something you want to do with them the next time you see them?

## Variations and Adjustments:

If students have trouble with writing, they can draw a picture or dictate their letter to an adult in the classroom.



**Grades:** Grades 2 and up    **Time Required:** 10-20 minutes    **Supplies:** None

**Set-up:** This activity works best with students seated on the carpet or on chairs in a big group.

In this activity, students will use their imagination to invent backgrounds, justify actions, and answer questions from a character's perspective.

## Instructions:

1. Place a chair in front of the room. Ask for a volunteer to come to the front of the class and pretend to be Frog or Toad.
2. The rest of the students will play the role of news reporters who are interviewing the character for a local newspaper. The student playing the character should respond as if they really were that character. It may be helpful to model asking that student a couple of starter questions before opening it up to the class.
3. After the first interview, do the same activity for other characters in the story such as one of the Birds, the Snail, the Large and Terrible Frog, or others.

### Sample Questions:

1. Who is your favorite animal in the forest?
2. What is your favorite thing to eat?
3. What is your favorite winter activity?



## Variations and Adjustments:

If time allows, give multiple students the opportunity to play Frog, Toad, and the other characters. Encourage students playing reporters to act in character. How would a reporter sound and move their body?



# Grow Your Garden

**Grades:** Grades K and up    **Time Required:** 10-15 minutes

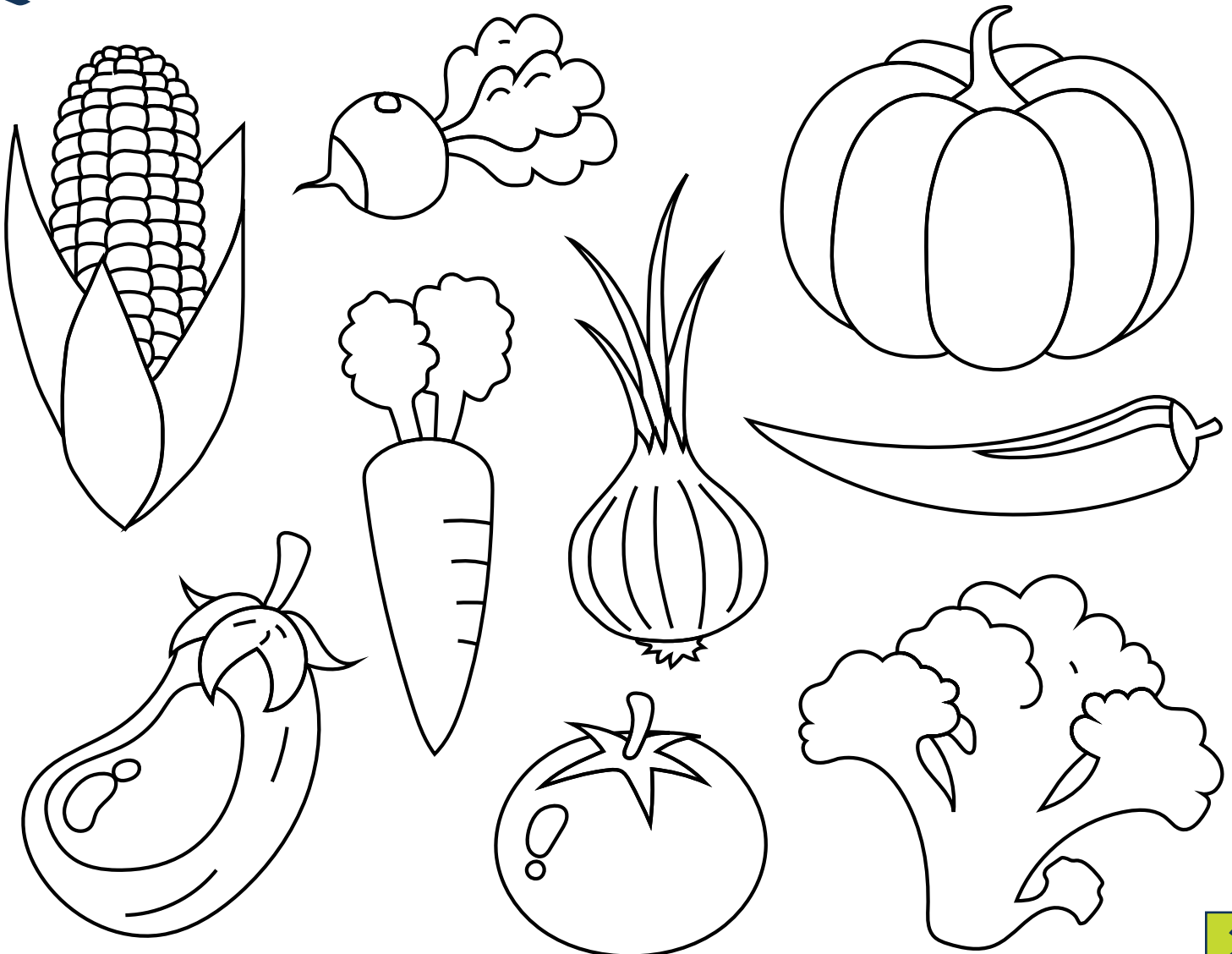
**Supplies:** Print out of coloring page, markers, crayons, or colored pencils, wall-safe tape, and scissors.

**Set-up:** This activity works best if students are seated at desks or tables.

Toad worked very hard in the spring to plant seeds for his garden to grow. In this activity, students will create their own “Class Garden” by coloring, cutting out, and displaying their fruits and vegetables for everyone to play.

## Instructions:

1. Students will color the fruits and vegetables on the coloring page.
2. Students have the option to cut out the fruits and vegetables individually or keep the whole page intact.
3. Students will tape their creation to the wall and collaboratively create their “Class Garden” with all their fruits and vegetables.



# Further Resources

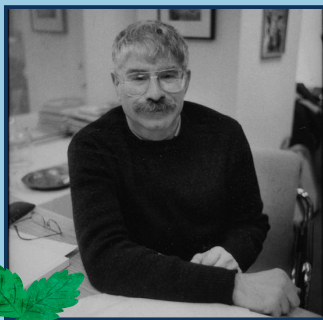


## More About A Year With Frog and Toad

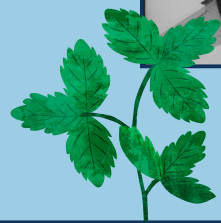


Frog and Toad Activities from "I Can Read" - [Frog and Toad | I Can Read Books | ICanRead.com](http://ICanRead.com)

Video about the difference between Frogs and Toads - [Frog or Toad? \(youtube.com\)](http://youtube.com)



Information on the author of the original Frog and Toad series, Arnold Stark Lobel - [Arnold Lobel - Students | Britannica Kids | Homework Help](http://Britannica Kids)



Mail letters to:  
**Children's Theatre Company**  
2400 Third Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Questions? Email:  
[schools@childrenstheatre.org](mailto:schools@childrenstheatre.org)

