

FROG ON HIS OWN

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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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