

Frog and Toad: A Lost Button
A Free-Form, Interdisciplinary puppetry plan
For grades 2-3
By Professor Johanna Smith
www.professorjohanna.com

The following standards guide this lesson plan:

Grade 2 California Next Generation Science Standards:

2-PS1-1. Plan and conduct an investigation to describe and classify different kinds of materials by their observable properties.

PS1.A: Structure and Properties of Matter

- Different kinds of matter exist and many of them can be either solid or liquid, depending on temperature. Matter can be described and classified by its observable properties.

<https://www.nextgenscience.org/pe/2-ps1-1-matter-and-its-interactions>

Grade 3 National Standards for Theatre Education

TH:Cr1.1.3.

- b. Imagine and articulate ideas for costumes, props and sets for the environment and characters in a drama/theatre work.
- c. Collaborate to determine how characters might move and speak to support the story and given circumstances in drama/theatre work.

The Transformative Social and Emotional Learning (T-SEL) competency of social awareness:

3.B.1. Students recognize and name emotions in others using verbal and physical cues. Students describe how others may feel in a variety of situations and show empathy for others' experiences.

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/se/tselcompetencies.asp>

Session One: Puppet Making

Materials/Preparation

Copy of "A Lost Button" in *Frog and Toad are Friends* by Arnold Lobel

Pre-made foam buttons (storytelling props)

Frogs vs Toads chart (can be done on the whiteboard or on a poster) including this info:

Frogs: Live mostly in water, have smooth skin, are green or brightly colored

Toads: Live mostly on land, have bumpy skin, are usually dull brown and green (camouflaged)

Variety of puppet-making materials for free-form construction

(optional) Pre-made example puppets

Opening/Hook (5 min)

Discuss what it's like when you or one of your grownups loses something.. What kinds of things are easy to lose? What do you look like when you lose something important? (encourage the group to solo pantomime what they might look like). What kinds of things do your parents and loved ones lose? What do they look like? How do you help someone who's lost something?

Task 1: Read and plan together (15 min)

1. Read "A Lost Button." Use prop buttons as you read to show and compare the buttons Frog and Toad find. Make sure students describe their properties and physical attributes- specifically color, shape, and size. STOP before the ending is revealed (do not share what Toad did for Frog to apologize). Ask children to predict what they think Toad will do now that he has found his button was home all along.

Explore frogs and toads and plan for puppet making:

2. Explain that they will now be making their own frogs and toads and puppetizing the story. Discuss the differences between frogs and toads. Share the information in the frogs vs. toads chart.
3. Divide students into 2 groups by counting off 1-2 and having them remember their numbers. Tell students the 1s will be making Frogs and the 2s will be making toads.

Task 2: Free Form Construction (40 min total)

Place materials in an easily accessible area. Share example puppets and encourage children to use whatever materials they would like to create their puppets. It's helpful to have some materials that clearly evoke a frog or toad shape, such as a sandwich container. Remind them to remember their character's personality and see if that inspires any choices in design.

Allow 30 min. for construction and 10 min. cleanup and possible overtime.

Sharing (5-10 min)

Seat children in a circle and have them each hold up their puppet so everyone can see it. Go around to each student's work so their peers can share the things they see that show the puppet is a frog or a toad. Then have the puppet maker share what they were considering when designing their puppet. Allow students to share positive comments about each other's work.

Put puppets in a safe place to dry.

Assessment

(informal): During sharing, check student puppets for evidence of understanding of the difference between frogs and toads. If student work is not clear, allow them to explain their choices to you.

Session 2: Puppetizing

Materials

Completed puppets

Copy of "A Lost Button" in *Frog and Toad* by Arnold Lobel

Pre-made foam buttons (storytelling props)

Pre-made paper jacket covered with buttons

Raccoon puppet

Bird puppet

Teacher preparation: Place buttons and other props in an open area going around in a circle. This will represent Frog & Toad's walk. You can also place props or fabric along the way to show changes in place (meadow-woods-river-Toad's house). Place buttons in the following order:

Black

White -- 2 holes

White -- small

White -- square

White -- thin

At the end reveal White- big, 4 holes, round, thin (Toad's button- you can hide it in your pocket).

The bird appears in the meadow, and the raccoon appears in the woods.

Opening/Hook

Re-read or summarize "A Lost Button," remembering to stop before revealing Toad's apology.

Task 1: Planning the Puppetizing

Have students retrieve their puppets. Have each student who made a Frog line up single file. Have each student who made a Toad do the same next to the frog line. Now each frog will have a toad partner across from them. Tell students they will now puppetize the story with you. They are to repeat their character's lines after the teacher narrates them. Share any other rules for behavior (no touching, stay in line, etc). Have them improvise what Frog and Toad might be talking about that morning before their walk.

Task 2: Puppetizing

Bring the 2 lines over to the open play area. Start in Toad's house. Have the 2 lines follow you along the journey. Narrate the story and pause for students to repeat their character's lines or improvise new ones. Remember to grab the bird and raccoon puppets at the appropriate time.

At the end of the story reveal Toad's button in his house. Have students improvise what they think will happen next (as a group). Select several volunteers to share.

Read the end of the story and reveal the paper jacket covered with buttons. Have students predict and enact how frog and toad might celebrate.

Bring students back to their desks. Hand out assessment worksheet.

Assessment

See worksheet on sorting by qualities.