STUDYGUIDE
For
Company of Fools

Directed by John Glenn
Musical Direction by R.L. Rowsey

Free student matinee tickets have been made possible by Company of Fools' Guardian Fools

This production was also made possible by
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Book and Lyrics by Willie Reale
Music by Robert Reale
Adapted From the Children's Stories of Arnold Lobel

Company of Fools
A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD
2006-2007 Season
Post Office Box 329, Hailey, Idaho 83333
208-788-6520
www.companyoffools.org
A live theatrical production is exciting and vibrant. The actors, the audience, and the backstage personnel are all part of the experience. You, as part of the audience, play an important role in the atmosphere of the production and your response to the performance of the entertainers.

How students can help:

· It is important to remain seated throughout the entire performance.

· Try to fight back the urge to rock madly in your Liberty seats. They will and do break.

· Restroom visits are best made before leaving the school. A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD is 90 minutes in length with one intermission. The Liberty Theatre has limited restroom facilities and these matinees will be full.

· Lights Out = Quiet Time. When the lights in the theatre dim to blackout, this is a signal that the show is about to begin.

· Do not talk, whisper, sing, or hum during the performance. Sometimes we think that if we whisper, it is okay. But if everyone in the audience whispers, it will be disruptive to the performers.

· Turn cell phones and watches to silent. If you forgot to turn off your cell phone and it goes off during the performance, immediately turn it off, do not answer the call. You can always check for messages during the intermission.

· Do not eat and drink during the performance.

· Unwrap cough suppressants during applause, laughing, or loud musical numbers.

· Keep feet on the floor, not on the seat or balcony in front of you.

We hope you enjoy your theatre experience!
WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A FROG AND A TOAD?

**Frogs**

- Frogs have long powerful legs and webbed feet perfect for jumping and swimming.
- Most frogs have teeth in their upper jaws.
- Frogs have smooth wet skin.
- Frogs are most at home in the water.
- Frogs lay eggs in clusters.
- Frogs have two bulging eyes that help them to see in all directions without having to move their heads.

**Toads**

- Toads have chubbier bodies and shorter legs than frogs, better for walking and hopping on land.
- Most toads don’t have any teeth at all!
- Toads have dry bumpy skin.
- Toads are most at home on land.
- Toads lay eggs in long chains.
- Toads have poison glands on both sides of their necks, making predators think twice about eating them.

**Frogs and Toads**

- Both frogs and toads are tadpoles when they are young.
- Both frogs and toads lay eggs in the water.

A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD is about friendship. It emphasizes an important reality we all live with: people who are very different can make very good friends. Before they see the show, ask students to talk or even write about their own friends, exploring how they are alike, how they are different, and which brings them the most joy.

A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD is made up of a combination of adventures gleaned from four of Arnold Lobel’s prize 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.

A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD is filled with music! There are many moods, as there are several seasons in the world, and in friendship. By turns, the music is light and jazzy, sweet and soothing, and absolutely spunky. Sometimes it is ragtime, Dixieland, hoedown...it is delightfully varied and feels good. The actors sing A LOT - to one another, about one another, and together. Their emotions are often much too large for simple spoken words to suffice.

What Kind of Animals Are They?

Both frogs and toads belong to a group of animals called amphibians. Amphibians are animals that can live in water and on land. They are cold-blooded animals - that means their bodies stay at the same temperature as their environment. Frogs and toads have been around for millions of years, and haven’t changed very much since the time of the dinosaurs. They can live anywhere there is fresh water, from deserts to mountains, and on every continent except Antarctica.

What’s So Amazing About Frogs and Toads?

A lot of things! One of the many things that are fascinating about frogs and toads is how they grow up. Both frogs and toads lay their eggs in the water. When the eggs hatch, what comes out doesn’t even look like a frog! It’s a tadpole.

It has a head and a tail, and it breathes through gills like a fish. As the tadpole grows up, it keeps changing. First, it grows back legs, then it grows front legs, then it loses its tail. Over time, the tadpole develops lungs for breathing, so it can leave the water and go on land. This transition is called metamorphosis.

Another interesting thing about frogs and toads is how they eat. Both eat insects, earthworms, small fish and spiders. They use their long, sticky tongues to catch food and slurp it back into their mouths. Frogs and toads must swallow food whole, because frogs don’t have any bottom teeth and toads don’t have any teeth at all!

Frogs and toads have really clever ways of protecting themselves. Some have very brightly colored skin to convince predators that they are poisonous, and others may have skin that looks like the forest so they can hide without being seen.

Fun Facts About Frogs and Toads!

The largest frog is the Goliath frog of West Central Africa. It can grow to be more than 1 foot long (over 30cm).

The smallest frog is the Cuban Pygmy frog, which grows to be about 1/2 inch (1 cm) long.

Frogs are great jumpers. Some frogs can jump up to 20 times their own body length; that would be like a person jumping 100 feet! The longest jump on record was by a frog named Santjie in South Africa. Santjie’s best jump was marked at 33 feet, 5.5 inches (or about 11 meters).
When Arnold Lobel was growing up in Schenectady, New York, he was out of school and sick through most of second grade. One of the ways he kept himself occupied was by drawing. Somewhat hesitant about returning to school, he used his animal drawings as a way to make friends with his classmates. It has been said that his sets of books about animal friends, such as *Frog and Toad*, were based on these experiences.

His health improved, and upon graduating high school, he decided to improve his artistic skills and attended Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, where he focused on illustration and met his future wife Anita, also a talented illustrator. They settled in Brooklyn and had two children Adrianne and Adam. The Prospect Park Zoo was right across the meadow from their apartment, and the family would go there often to observe and enjoy the animals.

Lobel’s books are warm, funny tales of love and friendship, most featuring animals as the main characters. His book *Frog and Toad* was a Caldecott Honor book in 1971. *Frog and Toad* was just the beginning of a long list of early readers written and illustrated by this talented man. Like the first book, the others are made up of short chapters and contain lovable, though often slightly wacky, characters.

Lobel called himself a daydreamer instead of an author or an artist. He would see the pictures in his mind before he would think up the words to go with them. "I cannot think of any work that could be more agreeable and fun than making books for children." Lobel has said.

He died in 1987 leaving a legacy of almost 100 books that he had written and illustrated.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

When you are sick in bed for more than a day, what do you do to pass the time?

- Arnold Lobel drew pictures to help make new friends. What do you do to make friends when you are new to the group?

- Lobel loved to make books for children. You will have a job one day. How would you fill in this sentence: "I cannot think of any work that would be more agreeable and fun than____________________.
GREAT HOPPING WEBSITES TO CHECK OUT!

www.enchantedlearning.com/themes/frogs.html
This website has numerous activities and lesson plan with a frog and toad theme. There are rhymes, crafts, printouts to color, games, quizzes, and much more.

www.exploratorium.edu/frogs
This page was developed for a previous exhibit at the Exploratorium. You’ll find information about frog adaptations and habitats, frog myths, and an activity and sound section.

www.nbia.gov/education/herps.html
This website features a collection of frog and toad resources grouped according to grade level.

www.theteachersguide.com/froglessonsplans.htm
This site contains links to frog thematic units, webquests, and lesson plans, as well as activities, crafts, games, related books and songs.

http://allaboutfrogs.org/weird/general/footsteps.html
When you click onto this page, you will see a frog that is almost as big as a small fawn.

CLASSROOM FUN

WRITE A LETTER
A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD is about friends, and 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 student 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."

CHARACTER FREEZE DANCE
Remind the students of the different characters in the play: Frog, Toad, Snail, Turtle, Mouse, Birds, etc. Discuss how each character’s physicality is different than the other characters in the play. For example, Frog moves faster than Toad, but Toad moves faster than Snail.

Using the music from Frog & Toad or any upbeat song, instruct the students to find an area around the room. Tell each student to choose his or her favorite character from the play. When the music starts, have the students move or "dance" around the room as their favorite characters (Keeping in mind the character’s physicality). Pause the music throughout the song. When the music stops, everyone should freeze as his or her character. Try it multiple times, manipulating the time between pauses. Also encourage students to experiment with different characters.
THE LIFE CYCLE OF A FROG

Color the picture and match the words to the stages of a frog’s life cycle.

TADPOLE  FROG  EGGS  FROGLET  POLLYWOG
STUDENTS, WRITE YOUR OWN REVIEW OF FROG & TOAD!

1. Write your name, grade and school.
2. What remains in your memory from the play that you saw?
3. How did the designers make the performance more exciting? (think about the set, lights, sounds, costumes and props)
4. Who was your favorite character and why?
5. Decorate your review with drawings of what you saw.
6. Give your review a headline.

Send your Frog and Toad Review to:
Company of Fools
Post Office Box 329
Hailey, Idaho 83333

TEACHER FEEDBACK:
A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD

1. Did using the Study Guide add to your theatre experience?
   a. YES
   b. SOME
   c. NO

2. How much of the Study Guide did you read?
   a. Didn’t have time
   b. About a quarter
   c. All

3. What do you think of what you read?
   (Mark as many as apply)
   a. Useful
   b. Nothing New
   c. Enjoyable
   d. Not for my students because _____________________________________________

4. Did you get the Study Guide in time to prepare your students to see the play?
   a. YES
   b. NO

5. What sections of the Study Guide did you find most important?
 _____________________________________________
 _____________________________________________

6. How did the experience of preparing for and then seeing the play impact your students?
 _____________________________________________
 _____________________________________________

7. Did you spend more time working with the material BEFORE or AFTER you saw the play?

8. Comments:
 _____________________________________________
 _____________________________________________
 _____________________________________________

PLEASE FAX THIS TO 788-1053
or Mail to Company of Fools,
Post Office Box 329, Hailey, Idaho 83333