




**92NY Theater
for Young
Audiences**


Presented by The Diamond Family

A Year *with* **FROG** **& TOAD**



Curriculum Guide

The fun doesn't have to stop at the theater. Keep the fun going and continue the experience of *A Year with Frog & Toad* at home or in your classroom!



How to Use This Guide - What's Inside?

This curriculum guide is designed in connection with 92NY Theater for Young Audiences production of *A Year with Frog & Toad*. The activities are not only meant to engage children artistically, but kinesthetically and through sensory learning as well. These activities can be done at home and many can be done in the classroom as well.

The hidden benefits of this curriculum guide include:

- Gross Motor Development
- Fine Motor Development
- Developing Color Recognition
- Fostering Imagination and Creativity
- Building Literacy and Comprehension Skills
- Writing Skills
- Balance and Coordination
- Learning Various Scientific Concepts
 - Biology
 - Light & Shadow
 - Animal Science
 - Earth Science

The *Frog & Toad* book series is a prized children's classic; one that many parents and grandparents enjoy sharing with their children. The series has seen many adaptations including a Broadway musical and the most recent animated series on Apple TV.

Frog & Toad is a collection of short stories that beautifully illustrates the highs and lows of friendship, and how a strong friendship can weather any season. With this in mind, the activities in this guide are meant to be done with a friend, or group of friends. Friends

can be classmates, siblings, parents, or grandparents! Start with **Snail with the Mail** by writing a friend to come over for a **Frog & Toad Friendship Tea**. Invite a friend, or make new friends, to attend a **Children's Garden Class** in the Spring. Make Cookie Ice Cream Sandwiches in **Eating Eight Cookies with Toad**. Get moving and challenge a friend to an **Animal Workout!** Exchange **Shadow Puppet Stories** or create a **Snow Ballet** with a friend or two or more! No matter the season, your time with *Frog & Toad*, and friends, doesn't have to end once the final bows have commenced.

Did You Know...?

- Arnold Lobel is the author of the beloved *Frog & Toad* book series.
- Lobel grew up in Schenectady, New York, but moved to Brooklyn for college and lived out the rest of his days in Park Slope.
- Lobel's sense of humor was inspired by some hit TV series, including "Bewitched" and "The Carol Burnett Show."
- Lobel began his career as an illustrator for children's literature at Harper & Row in the early 1960s.
- The books were published as part of Harper & Row "I Can Read" series, which is designed to teach children to read.

Arnold Lobel

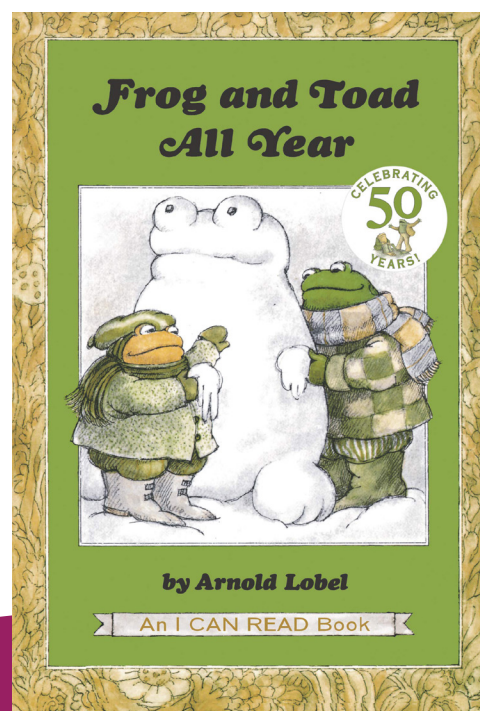


FROG & TOAD ALL YEAR READ ALOUD

We all know that learning to read is a vital life skill. Many children struggle not only with learning to read but learning to LOVE reading. You can help foster your child's passion for reading by reading aloud to, and with, them, and what better series to start with than *Frog & Toad*! After all, it is a book series that was designed to teach children to read. Reading aloud to your child has numerous benefits: building vocabulary, strengthening social and emotional development, improving comprehension and fluency, developing problem solving and critical thinking skills, and so much more.

Take a trip to the library to check out a physical copy of the book to read aloud or check out this [link](#) to a Read Aloud on YouTube. You can even

challenge your child to read aloud to YOU. Whether you see the show before or after you have read the book, it will help establish a deeper understanding of the story, as your child will be able to visualize the story they are reading.



FRIENDSHIP, JUST THE PERFECT BLENDSHIP!

“He is the finest friend of all the critters in the neighborhood.”
- Willie Reale

Snail With the Mail

It is never too early to start learning about the art of writing letters, whether your little one is tracing a message you wrote or is writing simple messages themselves. You can write different types of letters: thank you letters, invitations, letters of complaint, letters to Santa, or letters to friends! Frog and Toad enjoy writing letters to each other, and getting a letter in the mail from a friend can brighten your day!



Steps to Writing the Best

Friendship Letter:

Step 1: Choose your preferred paper. This can be construction paper or colored cardstock folded in half. It could be stationary paper with a pretty design printed on it. It could be an actual card picked out at the store. It could be a really cool postcard from a really cool place you visited!

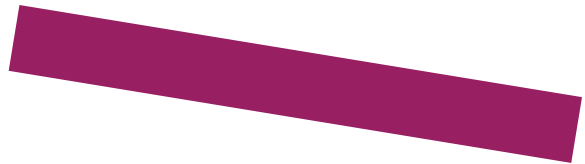
Step 2: Choose your writing utensil. There are so many writing utensils to choose from: #2 pencil, gel pen, fine point marker, a marker in your favorite color, or a rainbow pencil.

Step 3: Write your letter. Talk with your little one about what they want the message of the letter to be. Write out a draft on practice paper before writing the final draft. Depending on the age of your little one, you may need to lightly write out the message and help them trace it. Don't forget to sign your name!

Step 3a (optional): Add your own design to your letter. This could be a drawing or fun stamps or sparkly stickers!

Step 4: Address your letter. Depending on the age of your little one, you may need to address the envelope yourself, but talk through what you are doing with them. If they are old enough, encourage them to address the envelope. Feel free to add a fun sticker to help seal the letter into the envelope. Don't forget to add a stamp!

Step 5: Mail your letter, snail mail style! Take a trip to the post office or the mailbox with your little one to mail the letter.



FROG & TOAD FRIENDSHIP TEA



When it's a rainy day and you just need something for your kids to do — have a jolly Friendship Tea party at home! It doesn't need to be fancy. It can be as frivolous or as creative as you and your kids desire. Here are some ideas to use, or not use, at your jolly Friendship Tea party:

Setting the Table:

- Bring out your fine china.
- Your kid's plastic tea party set, or plastic tableware.
- A tiered tray or cool plate to serve finger foods.
- Make tissue paper flowers!

- Visit this [link](#) for a tutorial on how to make tissue paper flowers. All you need is tissue paper, a pipe cleaner, and a pair of scissors. Safety Tip: Do not let your little one handle a pair of scissors unsupervised.

- Pro Tip: Have your little one help you with the folding and fluffing of the tissue paper. It is a great way to build fine motor skills.

**“I love
a lively dialogue...
chatting over cozy
cups of tea.”**
- Willie Reale



What to Serve:

- Ham & Cheese or Turkey & Cheese or PB&J sandwiches. Cut them into squares or triangles or fun shapes using a cookie cutter.
- Pizza Bites
- Fruit
- Goldfish – very appropriate for Frog & Toad
- Mini cupcakes (store bought or homemade!)
- Of course you can serve tea in the teapot, but you can also serve hot cocoa or chocolate milk or juice instead.

Getting Ready:

- Dress up! Encourage them to wear their fancy clothes (princess costume, superhero costume, cowboy costume, etc).
- Invite friends! These friends can be stuffed animals or neighbors.



“I’M COMING OUT OF MY SHELL”

Boosting Confidence with Drama

Children can gain confidence, self-expression, and learn the importance of teamwork through drama games. Have some fun with “Deer!”, a drama game designed to not only build confidence and teamwork, but explore various animals as well. Visit this [link](#) from *Beat by Beat* for detailed instructions on how to play the game. For younger age groups, only do part 1. A simple modification can be to do part 1 as a whole class rather than in groups.



SPEND THE YEAR WITH FROG & TOAD

Explaining the four seasons can be a little complicated for some young minds to comprehend, but *A Year with Frog & Toad* offers a great opportunity to have an engaging, sensory-based, conversation about the four seasons. Listen to **The Seasons Song** from *Scratch Garden* as a way to introduce the topic. Talk with your child(ren) about the different activities Frog and Toad do throughout the play and point out the time of year in which these activities take place. Check out the various activities you can do for each season to continue learning and discovering about each season.

**“Frog, I think that
this year I would like to plant a
garden.”**
– Toad; Willie Reale

Spring

Planting a Garden

What a wonderful way to learn about patience, science and nature all at the same time! This is a great activity to bond with your child and be there for them through the highs and lows of growing plants, just as Toad learns when planting his

seeds. Here are a few various ways to encourage and learn about planting a garden:

Planting at Home

Take a trip to your local garden store with your child to

continued on page 10

purchase seeds, potting soil, a shovel, and flowerpot.

Let them choose what they would like to grow – herbs, flowers, fruit or vegetables. If preferred, purchase a garden kit for kids online! There are a variety to choose from. Plant your seeds at home and then comes the hard part...waiting for the seeds to grow. This also comes with a huge responsibility to remember to water the plant when needed and trim any brown leaves.

Attend a Children's Garden Class

There are numerous locations across New York City that offer garden classes for children and families. There are drop-off class options as well as programs that require an adult-child pairing to participate. Some programs are free while others cost a small registration fee. There are many programs across the Big Apple, but here are some of our favorites:

- Brooklyn Botanical Garden
- NY Botanical Garden
- Queens Botanical Garden
- Garden Kitchen Labs through NYC Parks

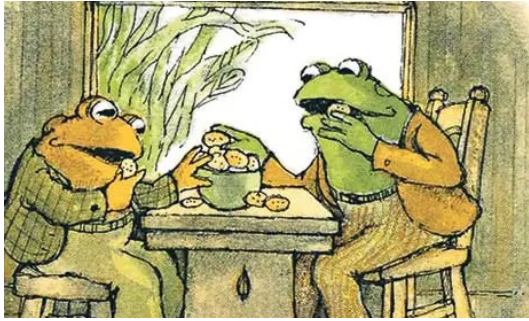
Visit a Family Farm & Garden

Everyone loves to go apple picking or pumpkin hunting in the fall, but what about a tulip festival in the spring or a sunflower festival in the summer? There are many family farms and gardens outside New York City that are within driving distance, or easy to get to by way of Metro North or the Long Island Railroad. Don't forget to bring a shovel and a pot so you can dig your own tulip or sunflower to take home! Here are a few of our favorites:

- Waterdrinker's Family Farm
- Heritage Farm & Garden
- Harbes Family Farm
- Queens County Farm Museum



Summer



**“This is
a marvelous cookie
sweet with an excellent
crunch.”**

- Frog; Willie Reale

Eating Eight Cookies with Toad

Toad enjoys baking cookies for his friends, and where is the fun in baking cookies if you can't eat them yourself? Embrace a little mess and have some fun baking these [Cookie Ice Cream Sandwiches](#) from *Sally's Baking Addiction*. They are the perfect treat to cool off on a hot summer day.

You'll Need:

- Flour
- Cornstarch
- Baking Soda
- Salt
- Unsalted butter
- Dark brown sugar
- Granulated sugar
- Eggs
- Vanilla Extract
- Desired Ice Cream flavor
- Sprinkles and Chocolate chips

Grab your aprons and mixing bowls and make some magical memories baking these delicious cookies! For an allergen free version, use gluten free flour, a plant-based butter, dairy free ice cream, and use an egg replacer of choice for the eggs.



Autumn

“The summer has ended. Notice if you will the swirling leaves.”
Man & Lady Bird;
Willie Reale



LEAFING THROUGH THE YEAR

One of the best parts about autumn is seeing the leaves change colors. Take a walk in the park, or go for a hike in the woods with your child(ren) and collect leaves in a variety of colors. Bring them home and preserve your nature findings with these two crafts:

Leaf Rubbing

Choose your leaf:

- Pick a leaf with interesting textures, such as one with bulging veins or unique shapes.
- Make sure the leaf is flat and free of dirt or moisture. If the leaf is too fresh or damp, you can press it

under a heavy book to flatten it for a few hours.

Position the leaf:

- Lay the leaf underneath the paper with the veiny or textured side facing up (the underside of the leaf usually has more defined veins).

If you want to create a full leaf pattern, you can use multiple leaves and create overlapping rubbings.

- Use a small piece of tape to secure the leaf in place so it doesn't move while you're rubbing.



Select a crayon or colored pencil:

- Choose a crayon (or pencil) in the color you want to use for the rubbing. Crayons are often better because they create a bolder effect and the wax helps pick up the texture.

Begin the rubbing:

- Hold the crayon flat and gently rub it across the surface of the paper over the leaf.
- Move the crayon in a side-to-side motion, covering the entire area of the paper that is above the leaf.
- You'll begin to see the outline of the leaf and its veins appear on the paper. Experiment with different colors for a layered look!

Finish the rubbing:

- Once you've rubbed over the entire leaf, lift the paper to reveal your leaf rubbing.
- If you want to make the rubbing more colorful, you can repeat the process with different colors or use colored pencils to add shading and details.

Leaf Pressing

Materials Needed

- Iron
- Hand Towels
- Wax Paper
- Leave

Choose Your Leaves:

- Choose leaves of varying colors, shapes, and sizes.
- Make sure the leaf is flat and free of dirt or moisture. If the leaf is too fresh or damp, you can press it under a heavy book to flatten it for a few hours.

Pressing Your Leaves:

- Lay a hand towel on a flat surface.
- Arrange leaves on a piece of wax paper, on top of the hand towel.
- Place another piece of wax paper on top.
- Place another hand towel on top. No wax paper should be showing.
- With a hot iron, gently press and iron the top towel to fuse the wax paper together.
- Voila! All done! Preserve your pressed leaves in a picture frame or a scrapbook, or make it into a bookmark!



SHADOW PUPPET STORIES

Frog delights in telling Toad a scary story one cold autumn night. While some of us love a good ghost or scary story, many of us can get scared easily. However, that doesn't mean you can't have fun telling not-so-scary creative stories. Turn the most boring post-dinner evening into a fun night of Shadow Puppet Stories!

Shadow puppet stories are an excellent way to encourage creative thinking and storytelling, work on fine motor skills, teach your child(ren) about the science behind light and shadow, and the best of all, a wonderful way to bond with your child(ren). There are two ways you can make shadow puppets: with your hands or make your own puppet cut outs.

For those who love a cool art project, check out this [video tutorial](#) from Science Buddies on how to make shadow puppets with a few basic materials. The video includes guided questions on light, shadow, and types of materials used. You can ask your child these questions and discuss the answers together as you create some super cool puppets. Materials needed to make your own puppet cut outs include:

- Flashlight (can be the flashlight on your phone)
- Light colored wall
- Cardstock paper
- Box (like a shoe box or small Amazon box)

- Pencil
- Scissors (Adult use only)
- Wooden skewers or popsicle sticks
- Scotch tape



Make your own favorite characters, or characters seen in *A Year with Frog & Toad*, and enjoy telling your own stories with these characters.

For those who are not-so-into-crafts, try making shadow puppets with your hands! Check out this [video tutorial](#) from TheDadLab on how to make animal shadow puppets with your hands, and have a blast re-telling a story from *A Year with Frog & Toad*, or make up your own story using the characters from *A Year with Frog & Toad*. Play with the distance of your hands to the light. What happens to the shadows when your hands are closer to the light? What about when they are farther away?

Winter

“**Sure it’s cold but we’ve got hot chocolate and a fire burning away.”**
– Toad; Willie Reale

SNOW BALLET

Get moving with these [Snow Ballet Movement Cards](#)! Each word is associated with how snow moves, or falls, or activities you might do in the snow.

Go over each card with your child(ren), asking “How would you [swirl] in the snow?” Encourage them to create movement with their bodies. There is no wrong answer, as long as the movement is safe.

Cut the cards out and shuffle the deck. Place cards face down. Draw four cards and place them in a row. For example: FLY + MELT + SPRINKLE + GLIDE. Create a movement for each word, or reference the movement the child(ren) did earlier. Piece these four movements together to create a movement sentence, or phrase. Try this phrase with music! Use snow themed music like these:

- The Suite from *Polar Express*
- Winter Wonderland (Instrumental)
- Sleigh Ride

Challenge them to create another movement sentence with four more cards drawn from the deck. Can they piece the first movement sentence with the second movement sentence together? Try it with music! For an extra challenge, try doing the sentences in reverse order!

Snow Ballet Movement Cards

SWIRL	FLUTTER	GLIDE
SPRINKLE	FLOAT	BOUNCE
TWIRL	TUMBLE	MELT
SHIVER	SKATE	SKI
FLY	SKIP	FLURRY

Animal Workout

Warm up your body and get out some pent-up energy during those cold winter months with this [Animal Workout](#) by *Tabata Kids Workouts* or [Animal Action](#) by *Tumble Tots*. Many of the animal movements featured in these workouts are also characters in *A Year with Frog & Toad*, however some are missing. Encourage your child(ren) to create their own animal movement for the animals that are missing!



Resources

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92NY Theater for Young Audiences (TYA)

Presented by The Diamond Family

Kid-sized musicals. Giant-sized heart. The magic of musical theater in classic and original productions created especially for young audiences and their families — introducing a new generation to the joy of the art form in an intimate setting with unforgettable performances.

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