

A Place for Frogs

Written by Melissa Stewart and
illustrated by Higgins Bond

ISBN: 978-1-56145-521-8 | HC | \$16.95
Ages 4 – 8 | Nonfiction

Book Level Scores

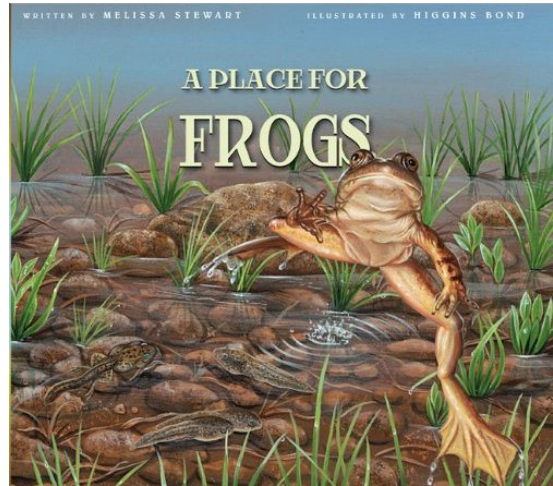
Accelerated Reader | Level 4.8 | Quiz #: 136838
Reading Counts | Reading Level: 5.4 | Points: 2
Fountas & Pinnell | Level: N | Grade Level: 3

ABOUT THE BOOK

Sometimes people do things that make it hard for other creatures to live and grow. *A Place for Frogs* clearly yet gently explains some of the ways human action and inaction can affect frog populations. This follow-up to the award-winning titles *A Place for Butterflies* and *A Place for Birds* focuses on eleven North American frog species and shows each one in its natural habitat. Simple text describing each frog's struggle to survive is perfect for young children reading on their own. Sidebars with additional information extend the usefulness of the book to older children and to young children reading with a teacher or parent. The book also works well in Reading Buddy programs, which are now popular at many schools. Sections at the beginning and end of the book include information about the frog's life cycle, the role of frogs in food chains, and simple things readers can do to help protect frogs and their habitats. The endpapers feature range maps for all the frog species discussed in the book. *A Place for Frogs* introduces readers to a wide range of environmental issues, and its concrete examples of cause and effect show children how the choices we make can have far-reaching consequences for frogs and other creatures that share our world.

AWARDS

 NSTA Recommends —*National Science Teachers Association*



REVIEWS

“...a good starting place for environmental studies.”
—**Booklist**

“...beautifully illustrated... and makes a strong case for conservation.”
—**School Library Journal**

“The beautiful, realistic paintings are so lifelike that readers almost expect the subjects to jump off the pages.” —**Booklist**

THEMES

- Frogs
- Amphibians
- Habitats
- Food chains
- Lifecycles
- Human impact on the environment
- Interdependence of living things
- Animal adaptations
- Endangered species
- Plant & animal diversity

SKILLS REINFORCED

- ✓ Compare and contrast
- ✓ Sorting and sequencing
- ✓ Cause and effect
- ✓ Size and scale

NATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS

SCIENCE

[National Science Education Standards provided by the National Academies of Science.]

Grades K–4

NS.K-4.3 LIFE SCIENCE

As a result of activities in grades K-4, all students should develop an understanding of the characteristics and life cycles of organisms and organisms [in relation to] their environments.

NS.K-4.6 PERSONAL AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES

As a result of activities in grades K-4, all students should develop understanding of personal health [in relation to] changes in environments.

Grades 5–8

NS.5-8.3 LIFE SCIENCE

As a result of their activities in grades 5-8, all students should develop understanding of a structure and function in living systems; populations and ecosystems and diversity and adaptations of organisms.

MATH Grades PreK-12

[National Mathematics Standards provided by the NCTM.]

NM-PROB.PK-12.3 PROBLEM SOLVING

Apply and adapt a variety of appropriate strategies to solve problems.

LANGUAGE ARTS K-12

[Language Arts Standards provided by the NCTE.]

NL-ENG.K-12.1 READING FOR PERSPECTIVE

Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

BEFORE YOU READ

Grades K-2

- Work with students to create a Know-Want-Learn (K•W•L) chart for frogs on the chalkboard. Begin by asking students what they Know about frogs and their environments. Write their responses on the board. Next, ask students what they Want to learn by reading this book. Record their answers in the chart to come back to later.
- Provide a list of vocabulary words and discuss their meanings.
- Look at the range maps on the endpapers and have students identify frogs that live in your area.

Grades 3-6

- Have the students discuss the following questions in small groups. Before reading the book, compile the groups' answers on the chalkboard.
 - What human actions positively affect frog survival? Explain how.
 - What human actions negatively affect frog survival? Explain how.
 - List some habitats where you might find frogs.
 - Does the survival of frogs affect the survival of plants and other animals? Explain why or why not.
- Provide a list of vocabulary words. Have students look the words up in a dictionary and write a definition. This may be done individually or in groups.

AS YOU READ

Grades K-2

Ask students to listen for answers to the questions listed in the W column of the K•W•L chart and any other information they'd like to add to the L column.

Grades 3-6

Ask students to think about the answers compiled on the chalkboard while listening to the book. Are there things they would like to change or add? They may want to make notes on a piece of paper.

AFTER YOU READ

Grades K-2

- Fill in the Learn column of the K•W•L chart. Review the information in the Know column and change anything that is incorrect.
- Discuss the inset images shown on each double-page spread. Ask students to guess how the illustrator decided what to highlight.

Grades 3-6

- As a whole class or in smaller groups, have students add new information or erase incorrect information on the chalkboard.
- Choose two frogs in the book and ask students to compare them. Students should consider each animal's body size and coloring as well as its range, habitat, food sources, and potential predators. Explain the usefulness of a Venn diagram (overlapping circles showing similarities and differences) and lead students in creating one.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

LANGUAGE ARTS

Grades K-2

- Have students create as many words as possible with the letters in "A Place for Frogs." Ask the children to sort the words by: number of letters in each word, word families, and vowel sounds. They can also alphabetize the words.
- Work with students to create see-saw books about two different frogs, such as western toads and wood frogs. On the first left-hand page, they might write: "Western toads lay their eggs in long strings." On the

facing right-hand page, they could write: “Wood frogs lay their eggs in clusters. The next page would read: “Both kinds of frogs lay their eggs in the water.” Subsequent pages should continue to compare the two species—size, food, habitat, range, etc. Students can use webs to help them organize their thoughts.

Grades 3-6

- Have students write letters to author Melissa Stewart, telling her what they liked best about **A PLACE FOR FROGS**. Send the letters to Author Fan Mail, Peachtree Publishers, 1700 Chattahoochee Ave., Atlanta, GA, 30318-2112. If you include an e-mail address, Ms. Stewart will send an e-mail to your class. If students send drawings, she will choose a few to post on her website.
- Read and discuss the following poem with your students. If you can't watch a real tadpole (polliwog) in action, try to find a video of one swimming on the internet. Working in small groups, have students write their own poems about a frog or tadpole. The poems can be silly, but they should also include some true facts.

The Polliwog

Oh, the Polliwog is woggling
In his pleasant native bog
With his beady eyes a-goggling
Through the underwater fog
And his busy tail a-joggling
And his eager head agog-
Just a happy little frogling
Who is bound to be a frog.

—Arthur Gutterman

All Grades

Have students pretend they are frogs. Ask them to describe how it feels to catch a fly, leap through the air, or swim in a pond.

MATH

GRADES K-2

Using the information below, students should create a bar graph that compares frog sizes. Then have students choose three frogs from the list below and draw them to scale. They can also color the frogs using the art in

A PLACE FOR FROGS as a guide.

- Pine barrens tree frog: 1 inch
- Wood frog: 2 inches
- Green frog: 3 inches

Northern leopard frog: 4 inches

Western toad: 5 inches

Bullfrog: 7 inches

GRADES 3-6

- A frog's tongue is attached at the back of its mouth and folded so that the tip faces toward the little hunter's throat. When a frog spots a tasty insect, its tongue flips out at lightning speed and grabs the prey. A frog's tongue is about one-third the length of its body. If our tongues were that long, we could use them to clean out our belly buttons! Write the frog sizes listed above on the chalkboard and have your students calculate the length of their tongues.
- A frog uses its powerful back legs to get around. Most frogs can jump about twenty times their body length. Write the frog sizes listed above on the chalkboard and have your students calculate how far each species can jump.

ALL GRADES

The world's longest recorded frog jump is 32 feet and 3 inches. Have a human jumping contest in your classroom to find out how far your students can jump. You may want to coordinate this contest with your school's Physical Education teacher.

SCIENCE

Grades K-2

Children love to learn by doing, so try this kinesthetic activity. Have your students count off by fours. All number ones should go to the front of the classroom. Ask them to pretend they are frog eggs. Number twos should stand on the right-hand side of the room. They will pretend to be tadpoles. Threes should go to the back of the room and act like froglets, and fours should stand on the left-hand side of the room and pretend to be adult frogs. After a few minutes, reassign roles so that eggs become tadpoles, tadpoles become froglets, etc. When all four groups have enacted each life stage, ask students to draw a frog life cycle.

Grades 3-6

Have each student research one of the frogs discussed in the book and write a report. Each report should include unique/important body features, habitat and range, diet and any fun facts the student discovers.

All Grades

- To help students learn to identify the frogs discussed in the book, have them play Frog Bingo. Make the cards by photocopying images from the book. To win, older students should tell you a fact about each species in their “line.”
- If you make two sets of cards, students can also play Concentration.

SOCIAL STUDIES (Geography)

Grades 3-6

Have students study the range maps shown on the endpapers of the book. Ask them to list all the frogs that live in your area. Emphasize that the frogs discussed in this book represent just a few of the ninety-five species that live in North America. Have the students do research to find out about additional species in your area.

ART

Grades K-2

- Using yarn and construction paper, oak tag, or wrapping paper, have students make a frog life stages mobile.
- Let students use old socks or lunch-sized paper bags to create their own frog puppets. They can decorate their puppets with yarn, paints, crayons, scrap paper, and egg cartons. Some children may need help using glue or scissors.

Grades 3-6

Have students look carefully at the background art on each two-page spread of **A PLACE FOR FROGS**. As a class, list all the questions the book’s illustrator, Higgins Bond, had to ask herself and then research to make the habitats realistic and accurate. Possible questions include: Where is the habitat? What trees and other plants grow there? What time of day is it? What time of year is it? Are there eggs or tadpoles at that time of year? Which plants should be in bloom? What other animals should be shown? How many frogs should be shown? What are the frogs doing? Using their list of questions, have students research and create a mural that depicts a natural frog habitat in your community.

MUSIC

Grades K-2

As a class, listen to and practice the calls made by frogs that live in your area. Encourage students to listen for these calls on spring evenings.

Grades 3-6

Have students use field guides and internet resources to discover what kinds of sounds some of the frogs in this book make. As a class, create and record a song that includes many different frog calls.

ADVANCED ACTIVITIES

- Have students research organizations that support the protection of one of the frog habitats mentioned in this book. They should contact one organization and find out about its recent work. Students should write a report and deliver an oral presentation about what they have learned. (communication skills)
- Have students make a list of some of the things people do to harm the frogs discussed in this book. Then have them list ways people could change their behaviors to help frogs. Next, ask students to list some things they do every day that could harm the environment or the animals that share our world. (Possibilities include wasting electricity; wasting water; forgetting to recycle; littering; using straws, Styrofoam cups, and heavily packaged foods, such as drink boxes; and throwing out old clothes, games, toys, bicycles instead of donating them to charities) Can they think of ways to modify their behavior? (cause and effect)
- Have students write a letter to a school or town official asking them to change a policy that will positively impact a habitat where frogs live. (synthesis, communication skills)
- Divide students into teams of three or four and ask each group to pretend it is a news team. Each team should make a video of a mock news report about a local effort to protect frogs or other creatures and/or open space. (synthesis, communication skills)

RELATED READING

All About Frogs by Jim Arnosky, New York: Scholastic, 2002.

Frogs by Nic Bishop, New York: Scholastic, 2008.

Fun Facts About Frogs by Carmen Bredeson, Berkeley Heights, CA: Enslow Publishers, 2007.

Frogs! by Elizabeth Carney, Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2009.

Growing Frogs by Vivian French, New York: Walker, 2008.

Frog Rescue by Garry Hamilton, Buffalo, NY: Firefly Books, 2004.

Why Are Frogs Wet? by Judy Hawes, New York: HarperCollins, 2000.

A New Frog: My First Look at the Life Cycle of an Amphibian by Pamela Hickman, Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1999.

Frog in a Bog by John Himmelman, Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2004.

A Wood Frog's Life by John Himmelman, Danbury, CT: Children's Press, 1999.

300 Frogs: A Visual Reference to Frogs and Toads from Around the World by Chris Mattison, Buffalo, NY: Firefly Books, 2007.

Face to Face with Frogs by Mark Moffett, Washington, D.C.: Kids Can Press, 2008.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



MELISSA STEWART is the award-winning author of more than 100 nonfiction books for children. Her lifelong fascination with the natural world led her to earn a BS in biology from Union College and a

MA in science journalism from New York University. When Melissa isn't writing or doing research, she enjoys speaking about science, literacy, and the writing process at schools, libraries, nature centers, and conferences throughout New England. She offers school programs, including *Birds, Butterflies, and More*; *Bringing Science to Life with Readers Theater*; and *The Nature of Nonfiction*. For more information about Melissa Stewart's programs, visit her website at www.melissa-stewart.com.

(Intended audience: Grades K-5)

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



HIGGINS BOND has illustrated books for children for over twenty-five years. Her titles include **WHO HAS A BELLY BUTTON?; HEY DADDY! ANIMAL FATHERS AND THEIR BABIES;** and **A PLACE FOR BUTTERFLIES.**

Bond attended Phillips University in Oklahoma and received a BFA from the Memphis College of Art. She has also created illustrations for magazines and posters, calendars, ads, brochures, figurines, dolls, and individual paintings for various companies. She offers a slide show presentation, entitled *Yes, It Is Possible to Make a Living as an Artist*, aimed at aspiring artists and art students of any age. It lasts approximately thirty to forty minutes and concludes with a Q&A session. For more information about Higgins Bond's programs, visit her website at www.higginsbond.com.
(Intended audience: Grades 1-12)

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