



Frog & Toad American Idol

Audience

Activity designed for ages 8 years old and up.

Goal

Students should have a better understanding of frog and toad calls and be able to make connections with their importance within the ecosystem.

Objective

- To be able to imitate and identify frog and toad calls.
- To understand that frogs and toad species each communicate differently.

Conservation Message

Why are amphibians so important? What is their purpose? Amphibians are responsible for eating pesky insects such as mosquitos. Amphibians are also prey for many animals which means they play an important role in the food web.

Background Information

Frogs and toads produce very distinct sounds primarily during the late springtime. In fact, around dusk you can walk out your front door and often hear bullfrogs and American toads. Frogs and toads generally start "singing" closer to the evening time because they are protected from the sun and it is easier for them to hide from predators. Each amphibian has a special call that they use to find others of the same species. Scientists can study these calls by listening and tell how different amphibian populations are doing.

Materials Needed

- Internet access (to listen to frog/toad calls)
- Comb
- 2 Marbles
- Balloon
- Small Cardboard Box
- Rubber Band

Length of Activity

Approximately 20-30 minutes

Procedure

- Start by listening to some common frog/toad sounds. Some examples are Spring peepers, Wood frogs, bullfrogs, and American toads.
- Imitate their sounds, examples:
 - Using your voice, imitate the following frogs:
 - Spring peepers make a “peep, peep, peep”
 - American toads sound like “trilllllll”
 - Bullfrogs go “murr, murr, murr”
 - Wood frogs make a “quack.quack.quack” very quickly
 - Cricket frog – Click 2 marbles together.
 - Leopard frog – Make a squeaking sound by rubbing a wet hand on an inflated balloon.
 - Chorus frog – Run your finger over the teeth of a comb.
 - Green frog – Stretch a rubber band across a hole cut in the top of a cardboard box. Pluck the rubber band like a banjo string.
- Take turns imitating the sounds with a partner and have them guess what frog or toad you are imitating
- After a couple of rounds go outside around dusk or nighttime and see if you can identify any frog or toad sounds!

- Frogs found in Oklahoma.
 - American Bullfrog (*Lithobates catesbeianus*)
 - American Toad (*Anaxyrus americanus*)
 - Bird-voiced treefrog (*Hyla avivoca*)
 - Cope’s gray treefrog (*Hyla chrysoscelis*)
 - Wood frog (*Lithobates sylvaticus*)
 - Spring peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer*)
 - Southern leopard frog (*Lithobates sphenocephalus*)
 - Red-spotted toad (*Bufo punctatus*)