

## Teacher's Notes



***Frogs Are Our Friends***  
Written by Toni D'Alia

Illustrated by Madeline White

Teacher's Notes by Bec Kavanagh

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### LEARNING OUTCOMES

#### RECOMMENDED FOR

primary-aged readers (ages 3-6, grades Prep+)

#### KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: HASS, English
- General capabilities:
  - Develop questions (level 1)
  - Transfer knowledge (level 1)
  - Phonological awareness (level 1)

### THEMES

- Flora and fauna
- Pond-life
- The environment
- Conservation

### SYNOPSIS

*Down in the garden,  
one bright sunny day,  
a little green frog,  
is hiding away...*

Have you ever thought about what might be living in your garden? In *Frogs Are Our Friends*, one frog shelters during the day, but at night comes out to have fun!

Spend a day with this playful frog – jumping and splashing across his home.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

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**Toni D'Alia** is a Melbourne-based author of children's books and contemporary fiction. With a background in primary education, Toni writes heartwarming stories to inspire, educate, empower and entertain. Her children's stories have humour, heart and a gentle focus on wellbeing and the environment.

**Madeline White** is an illustrator, visual artist and designer living and working on Bundjalung Country, from her studio in Murwillumbah NSW. Madeline's work has been described as imaginative and joyous as she illustrates vibrant, dreamlike scenes, drawing inspiration from nostalgic childhood memories, old films and music, and the joy of humanness. Since 2013, Madeline has created bespoke commissioned illustrations for customers, as well as illustrating for commercial sectors across editorial, fashion and textiles, hospitality and tourism. Primarily using watercolors, pencils and markers, Madeline combines both traditional and digital methods, by scanning and finishing her works on her tablet.

## THEMES

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### Conservation:

According to the National Geographic, conservation is 'the act of protecting Earth's natural resources for current and future generations' (<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/conservation-encyclopedia/>).

It's not just people who need these resources – it's our backyard buddies too (<https://fnpw.org.au/project/backyard-buddies/>). This book encourages us to think about how we can conserve the environment locally (in our backyard, parks, schools) to protect it for future generations of people and animals (including frogs!) who rely on it to survive.

- What do you notice about the environment in the book?
- Where can you find this kind of environment locally?
- Discuss local efforts (re-planting, ponds/creeks, clean-up efforts etc) that are being made to conserve this kind of environment in your area.
- Brainstorm a list of ways that you (or your family, class or school) could contribute to these efforts.

## WRITING STYLE

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*Frogs Are Our Friends* is written using a gentle rhyme. We could write it out as ABCB, which is a way of showing that the last word of the second and fourth lines rhyme.

Eg:

But he must be careful, (A)  
there's danger nearby! (B)  
He shelters from those (C)  
Who slither and fly. (B)



In the above example, I have underlined the words that rhyme. Using a rhyme structure like this one brings rhythm into our reading and can also help us to predict what's coming next. This block of text (ABCB) is called a 'verse'. Look for other verses in the story and underline the rhyming words in them.

## WRITING EXERCISE

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Use the rhyming structure outlined about to write your own rhyme about one of the creatures from the story.

## ILLUSTRATION STYLE

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Have you ever seen a frog in the wild? The detailed illustrations allow us to zoom into parts of nature that we can't or don't otherwise notice. Perhaps we look out at a park or garden and notice the trees, but these illustrations reveal how busy with life the natural environment can be.

- Make a list of all the other creatures you can find in the story.
- Where do they live or find shelter?
- What does the frog notice about his environment that you wouldn't necessarily notice if you were walking past?

## COMPREHENSION

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- Where does the little green frog hide and rest?
- How does he keep himself cool?
- When is it time for fun?
- What activities does the frog do with his friend?
- What three verbs does the author use to describe the frog's movement?
- How would you describe the frog's expression when he jumps into the water? Why do you think he feels this way?
- What do tadpoles become when they grow up?
- What's on the menu for the frog when he gets hungry?
- Read the last page – 'facts about frogs'. What facts surprised you? Do you have any facts you could add to this list?

## CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

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- Research a specific type of frog and make your own 'Facts About Frogs' poster. Make sure you include details about its diet, habitat, colour and any threats or dangers it faces.
- Become a citizen scientist! Download the FrogID app from the Australian Museum and use to track and record frogs that live in your area. If you can't find any nearby, ask your parents or



carers to take you to a local pond or wetland and see what you can find there. Draw a picture of the frog you think you've heard. <https://australian.museum/get-involved/citizen-science/frogid/>

- Create a frog house. Using materials from your backyard or a nearby park, create a house fit for a frog. Based on the book, what elements does your frog house need to make a frog feel at home? Use plasticine or paper to create a frog to live in the house you've designed.
- This story follows a day in the life of a frog, but what other creatures can you find in a pond? Choose one and imagine what a day in its life looks like.

## RELATED READING

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*Bees Are Our Friends*

By Toni D'Alia

*Worms Are Our Friends*

By Toni D'Alia

*Snap*

By Anna Walker

*Oi Frog*

By Kes Gray and Jim Field

*Over and Under the Pond*

By Kate Messner and Christopher Silas Neal

*The Big Backyard Plan*

By Kirsten Ealand and Laura Stitzel

