SHOW STUDY GUIDE FOR:

Book and Lyrics by Willie Reale

Music by Robert Reale

Based on the books by Arnold Lobel

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Theatre Terminology

Actor: The people who use their imaginations to bring a character to life on stage.

Blackout: Before the beginning of a show, the lights on stage and in the audience all go out. Don't worry, they will come back on very quickly!

Box Office: Tickets are sold at the box office.

Character: A person, animal or figure in a story.

Choreographer: The person who creates and teaches the dance moves to the actors.

Costumes: The clothing the actors wear on stage.

Designer: The people who create the look and sound of the show.

Director: The person with the vision for the show. He oversees the entire production.

Music Director: The person who teaches the music to the actors and helps them sound great!

Prop: Something an actor carries or uses on stage.

Set: The structures that create the physical environment of the production.

Stage Crew: The people who help backstage. The stage crew might move sets or help with costumes.

Stage Manager: This is the supervisor of the actors, designers, and stage crew. He or she helps everyone stay organized and informed of the many parts of the creative process!

The ABCs of Being a Great Audience Member

Applaud!

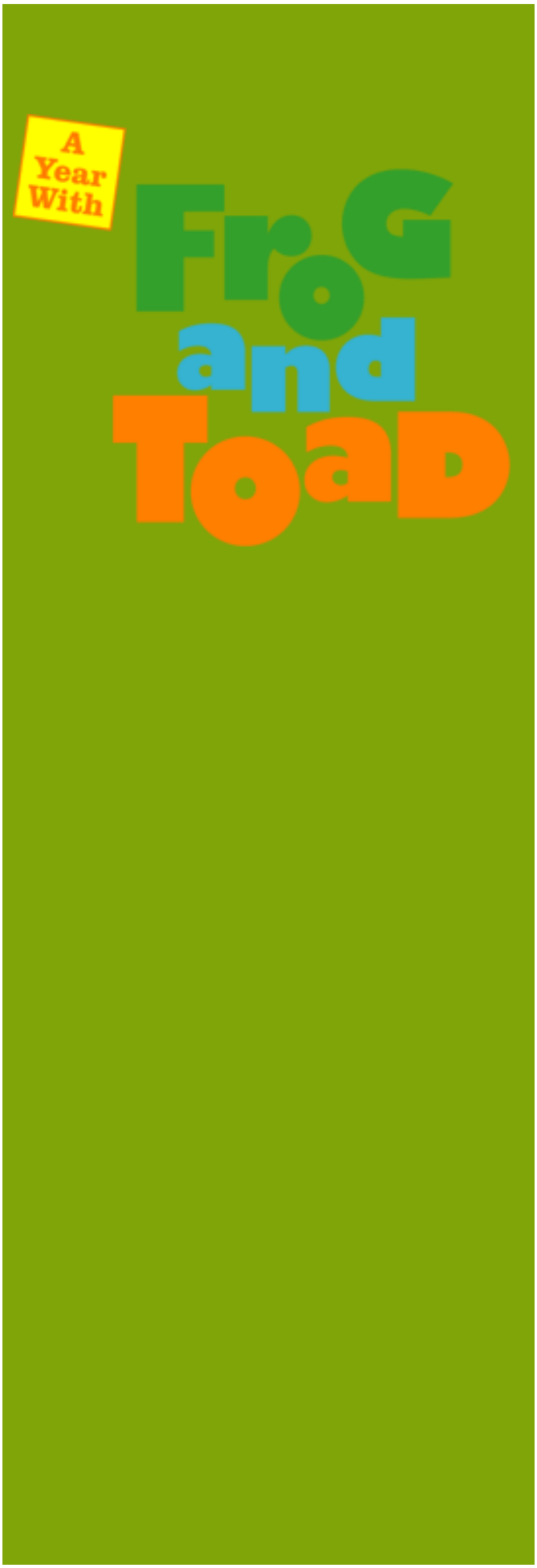
When the show finishes and the actors come on stage to take their bows, make sure to applaud for their hard work. If you like something during the show, it's OK to give a short round of applause, too.

Be respectful!

Everyone's attention should be on the actors on stage. To help with this, make sure not to talk to the people around you, kick the seat in front of you, or stand up during the show.

Cooperate with the actors.

Sometimes, the actors need YOUR help to tell the story. If they ask the audience a question, go ahead and answer! Also, feel free to laugh if something is funny—the actors LOVE honest laughter.



Show Synopsis

A hit on Broadway, *A Year With Frog And Toad* was nominated for 3 Tony Awards - including Best Musical. Based on Arnold Lobel's well-loved books and featuring a hummable score by Robert and Willie Reale, this whimsical show follows two great friends -- the cheerful, popular Frog and the rather grumpy Toad -- through four, fun-filled seasons.

Waking from hibernation in the Spring, Frog and Toad plant gardens, swim, rake leaves, go sledding, and learn life lessons along the way. The two best friends celebrate and rejoice in their differences that make them unique and special. Part vaudeville, part make believe, all charm, *A Year With Frog And Toad* tells the story of a friendship that endures, weathering all seasons.

Pre-Show Questions

Ask students to make predictions about the play they are going to see based upon their knowledge of the source texts, as well as other works by Arnold Lobel they may have read or seen on stage or film.

Not every character or event in the books appears in the play. Which ones do you expect to see on stage?

How do you imagine the scenery, costumes and props?

Do you think that there will be music? If so, how will it sound?

There are only animal characters in the play. Have students brainstorm ways they think the animals will be portrayed by the actors. Remind them to consider techniques such as movement, voice, costume and makeup.

A Year with Frog and Toad takes place over the course of one year. Discuss the four seasons and their characteristics, especially with regard to more extreme climates in other regions of the country students may not have visited in person.

Discuss how the students' lives change from year to year. What is different from year to year? What stays the same?

Project 1:

Animal Interviews

Story Connections: *A Year with Frog and Toad* is full of fun and interesting animal characters.

Curriculum Connections:

ELA/writing—writing with facts, writing fiction, personification, brainstorming

Science—animal behaviors, habitats, seasons

Technology—Web-based content writing

Objectives:

The students will compose an article combining factual information with fictional information.

Materials:

Mind map template

Paper/pencil OR

Computer access

1. Imagine that you are a reporter interviewing one of the characters in the play.
2. Brainstorm a few facts about the character using a mind map similar to the one included in the resources at the end of this packet. Include facts you remember from the show as well as facts you may know about the character's species, such as its habitat and what it likes to eat.
3. Think of some imaginative questions to ask them! Examples include: What do they like to do for fun? What is their favorite season? Who are their best friends and why?
4. Write a short blog post or magazine article about the character you "interviewed." Make sure to include some of the facts you recalled as well as your imaginary content!
5. Share your article aloud with a friend or to your class.

Project 2: *Frog and Toad* Stories

1. Introduce Arnold Lobel's *Frog and Toad* stories to the class by either reading aloud or asking students to read aloud.

2. Ask students to:
   a.) Identify the main events of the plot, their causes, and their effects on future actions.
   b.) Discuss the traits of major characters, their motivations and contributions to the dramatic action.
   c.) Identify speakers or narrators.
   d.) Talk about the story's underlying theme(s) or message.

3. Discuss the differences between realism and fantasy. Have them talk about what they like and dislike about these two literary genres, identifying universal themes, character types and actions.

Curriculum Connections:

ELA-Plot, cause and effect, characters, theme

Objectives:

To introduce students to the characters and styles of *Frog and Toad* stories.

To analyze a piece of fictional literature.

Materials:

One or more Arnold Lobel novels such as *Frog and Toad* or *Frog and Toad Together.*

Curriculum Connections:
Math-Telling time, story problems, arithmetic
ELA-Writing

Objectives:
To solve time-telling word problems
To write time-telling word problems

Materials:
Frog and Toad Tell Time worksheet
Teaching clock

Project 3: Telling Time

Poor Toad is often troubled because he doesn't have a clock to tell the time! Luckily, he has his friend Frog to help him out.

1. At the back of this study guide, you will find a sheet of word problems to help students learn to tell time and to solve time-telling problems.
2. After students complete the problems, model writing out your own time telling word problem.
3. Begin with a setting, a character and an activity. (Frog is sunbathing at the pond.)
4. Pick a time. (It is 9:30 AM.)
5. Decide on an operation, either adding time to figure out how long the activity will be done, or subtracting to figure out how long the activity has been done. (Addition—He wants to stay outside for 30 minutes. OR Subtraction—He has been outside for 30 minutes).
6. Write a question to be answered. (What time will he have to come inside? OR What time did he go outside?)
7. Figure out the answer together.
8. After modeling, students try it on their own using the Frog and Toad Tell Time worksheet.
9. Students can write down the correct answer on a separate piece of paper, then give the story problem to a partner to solve!

Project 4: Similarities and Differences

Frog and Toad are friends who have lots of similarities, but they also are very different from one another. Students can discover the things they have similar to and different from their classmates.

1. Place students in pairs.
2. Each pair receives a Venn diagram (a copy is available in the resources section of this guide.)
3. Students discuss facts about their lives such as family information, likes and dislikes, hobbies, or places they have visited.
4. Write all similarities in the area where the two circles join. Write all differences in the areas of the circles that are separated.
5. This activity can be completed two or three times with different pairings of students. Pair students with their friends one time, with someone they may not be friends with, and even encourage them to seek out an adult in their lives to complete the activity with another time.

Curriculum Connections:

ELA-writing

Objectives:

To discover the similarities and differences among classmates

Materials:

Venn diagram

Pencils

Project 5: If there was no...

Curriculum Connections:
Science—weather, cause and effect
ELA-writing to support a view, writing using factual information, writing using fictional information

Objectives:
To analyze the role of parts of the environment in weather.

To predict changes to the weather based upon changes in the environment.

Materials:
Pencil and paper or computer

Frog and Toad encountered many types of weather throughout the seasons of the year, and the weather had an effect on the characters in the story. Similarly, the weather affects our environment and our environment can also affect the weather.

1. Following a unit on weather, students can use their prior knowledge to analyze the importance of parts of our environment and predict what would happen if something important disappeared.
2. Write a short story on what would happen if there was no….(part of the environment). Students should use factual information to support claims, but they may also use imagination to predict how changes may influence day to day life.
3. The students can choose one of these story starters below, you may give them another option, or have them come up with their own.

If there was no sun, weather would change by… (change in temperature, no wind, no evaporation, etc.)
If there was no wind, weather would change by… (no precipitation over land, etc.)
If water did not freeze, weather would change by… (no glaciers, elevated sea level, etc.)
If there was no ozone layer, weather would change by… (global warming, melting of glaciers, etc.)
If warm air did not rise, weather would change by… (no condensation so no precipitation, no winds, etc.)
If water did not evaporate, weather would change by… (no clouds, no precipitation, etc.)
If there were no volcanoes, weather would change by… (no water anywhere, few gasses in the atmosphere, etc.)

http://lessonplanspage.com/themunit-html/

Project 6: Temperatures During the Seasons

A Year with Frog & Toad takes place throughout the four seasons of the year. We see them getting chilly during the winter and enjoying the warmth of the summer. This is because the days of the seasons can have very different temperatures. In this activity, students will discover how much the temperatures can change throughout a year.

1. Set up four stations with water at various temperatures, representing the four seasons. Water can be microwaved to make it warmer and ice can be added to make it cooler.
2. Begin by scaffolding knowledge to see what students already know about the four seasons, thermometers, and units of measurement in degrees. Review reading a thermometer, if necessary.
3. Have the class make predictions about what temperature the water will be at each station.
4. Split students into four groups.
5. At each station, the students are to first look at the thermometer and find the temperature to the closest degree.
6. Students color paper thermometer to match the degrees on their paper thermometers and write the temperature in degrees.
7. After the groups have rotated to all stations, students return to their desks to work individually on drawing a picture to represent each season.
7. For an extension students or the class as a whole can graph the temperatures of the water on a bar or line graph to compare the differences.
8. If time allows, students can feel the water with their hands and talk about the differences they experience.

Curriculum Connections:

Science—Seasons, scientific experiment process

Math—Measurement, graphing

Objectives:

To read and record temperatures on a thermometer, and to make a connection to the seasons of the year.

Materials:

Four water stations, with water at different temperatures

Four or eight thermometers

Thermometer picture sheet for each student (in Resources section)

Curriculum Connections:

Science—Seed growth cycle, scientific process

Objectives:

To observe and record the changes in the growth of a seed into a plant.

Materials:

- Observation notebooks
- Seeds (Use any available kind; fast growing flowers work well.)
- Soil
- Styrofoam cups, one per student (or small planting pot if making as a gift.)
- Watering can full of water
- Wooden tongue depressors or other flat wooden sticks, one per student
- Newspaper (for catching the mess)
- Spoons (for scooping soil)

Project 7: Growing a Seed

Toad decides to build a garden, but he has some interesting ideas on how he thinks his seeds will grow! Discover the process of growing a plant from a seed in this activity. You can even give the plant away as a gift.

Day 1

1. Each student will need a styrofoam cup or planting pot, a wooden tongue depressor, a marker, a spoon, and a few seeds.
2. Use a spoon to fill the styrofoam cup about halfway with soil.
3. Place the seeds in the center of the cup. **Note:** Read directions on the seed packets for best practices for planting, watering, and caring for the type of plant you are using.
4. Cover the seeds with more soil. Leave about a half inch of space between the soil and the top of the cup.
5. Pour a small amount of water from the watering can into the cup.
6. Write each students' name on a wooden tongue depressor. Stick the tongue depressor into the student's cup for identification.
7. Place the cups in a sunny location in the classroom.

Day 2 and Beyond

1. Over the next week or so, have the children water the seeds, watch, and write their observations in their notebooks.
2. Have students write about their experiences with planting seeds. **Optional:** The students could illustrate and write about plants using a computer software program, like *KidPix*. Print the final product (or a screen capture).

After 3-4 Weeks (Depending on seed type)

1. Have the students make a card for their gift recipient, explaining how they took care of the plant and including a kind note.
2. Send plants home with students.

Note: You may want to try to plant a few extras yourself, just in case some don't grow!

http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/lets-grow-plants

Project 9: Write a Letter

Frog is a very good friend to Toad. He decides to write Toad a very important letter because Toad never has received one. Even though Frog and Toad see each other regularly, he knew it would make Toad feel very special to receive a letter.

Your family and friends would love to receive a handwritten letter from you, too! Even though we have the ability to text, email, and share pictures online and on our phones, a handwritten letter is very special.

1. If needed, model writing a letter including the major parts: a greeting, a body with 3 or 4 topics, questions, and a closing.
2. Students think of the person they would like to send the letter. They don't have to live far away, but they can if you would like.
3. Brainstorm topic ideas to include in the letter. These can include any news in the child's family, what he or she is studying at school, afterschool activities, or something they hope to do soon.
4. Students write a letter to their chosen recipient.
5. Actively monitor to make sure students include all of the necessary components.
6. When they are finished, place them in an envelope, seal it, stamp it, and place the recipient name.
7. Send a note home with parents with the letter, encouraging them to address the letter and send it on its way!

Curriculum Connections:

ELA-writing a letter

Objectives:

To compose a letter to a friend or family member

Materials for each student:

Paper

Pen or pencil

Envelope

Stamp

Curriculum Connections:

ELA—Plot, Character

Theatre—Movement, tableau

Objectives:

To work as a group to recreate plot points of *A Year with Frog and Toad.*

Materials:

None

Project 10: Act It Out

A tableau is when actors stand in frozen, silent "pictures," showing different parts of a story, like the kids in the photo below.

In a group of three to five, think of an event in the plot of *A Year with Frog and Toad.* Each of you decide which character you will be, and create a tableau of that event. See if your classmates can guess which event you are trying to show! Remember – a tableau does not move or make sounds!

Project 11: Alone…together

Frog sings, “Sometimes the days, they can be very busy. So I like to stop and think now and then. I think of the reasons I have to be happy and that makes me happy all over again.”

Our lives are very busy, too! Students can benefit from a few moments of being alone and quiet and remembering what they are thankful, what makes them happy, or just any thoughts that they may have.

1. Give students a few minutes to just sit and think quietly, as a positive moment rather than as a punishment.
2. Write a prompt up on the board such as “What makes you happy?” “What do you like best about yourself?” or, “What are you thankful for?”
3. Hand out a blank writing page for each student to answer the writing prompt. Younger students can also draw a picture. Continue to encourage the students to work alone and quietly.
4. Students can select a colored piece of construction paper and glue their writing page.
5. Use a 3-hole punch to place holes in each paper and use yarn or ribbon to bind all of the papers together to create a book that they created alone...together.

Curriculum Connections:

ELA—writing

Objectives:

To quietly reflect and to write their thoughts.

Materials:

Blank writing paper or writing page with a spot for drawing.

Writing instruments

Multi-colored construction paper

Glue

Yarn or ribbon

3-hole punch

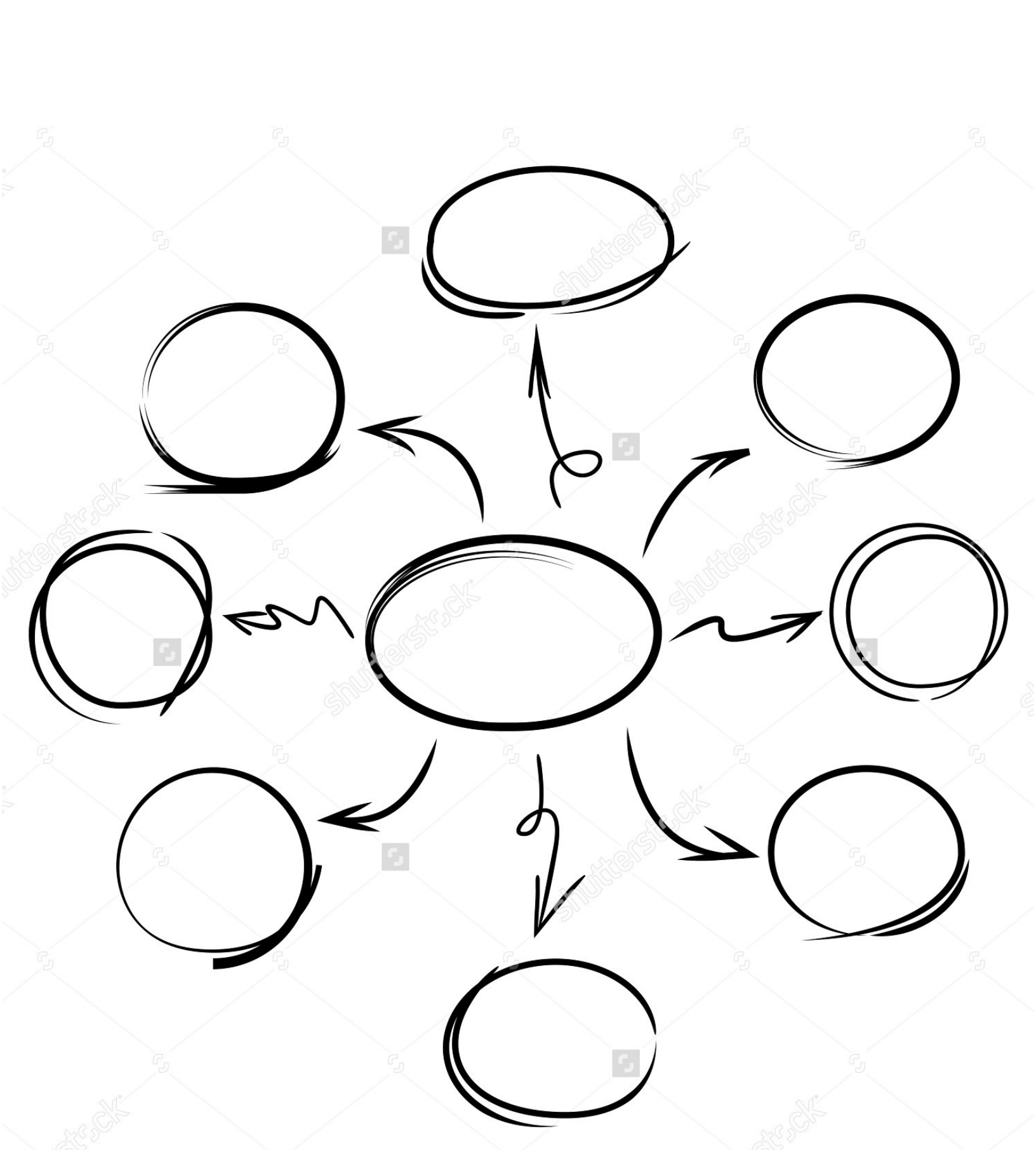


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IMAGE ID: 295717676
www.shutterstock.com

Telling Time with Frog and Toad

Use a teaching clock to help Frog and Toad tell the time!

1. Toad plants a seed at 10:25 AM. He goes back to check on it 30 minutes later. What time does he check on his seed?

2. At 1:16 PM, Frog decides to write a very important letter to Toad. Snail wants to leave to deliver the letter at 2:00 PM. How long does Frog have to write the letter?

3. Frog and Toad watch the clock strike 12:00 AM on Christmas Day. They have been watching the clock for 37 minutes. What time did they start watching the clock?

4. Toad was very worried when Frog was late to his house. He was supposed to arrive by 5:23 PM, but he arrived at 6:02. How many minutes late was Frog?

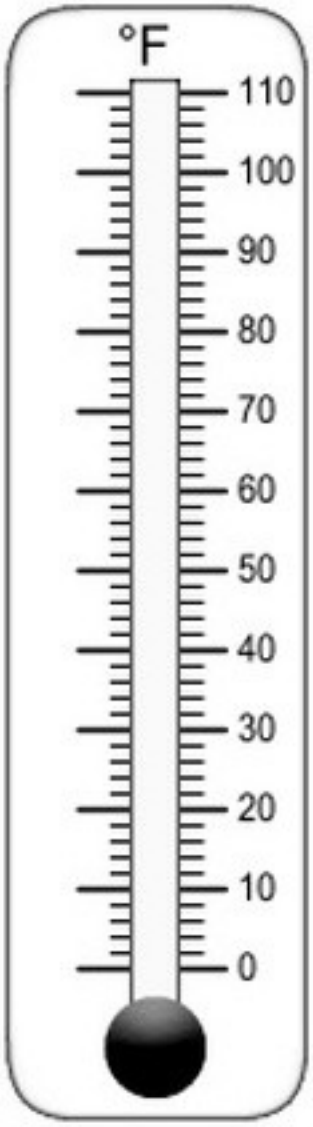
Write your own word problem to help Frog and Toad tell the time. Fill in the blanks to help you remember your facts.

What activity are Frog and Toad doing? _____

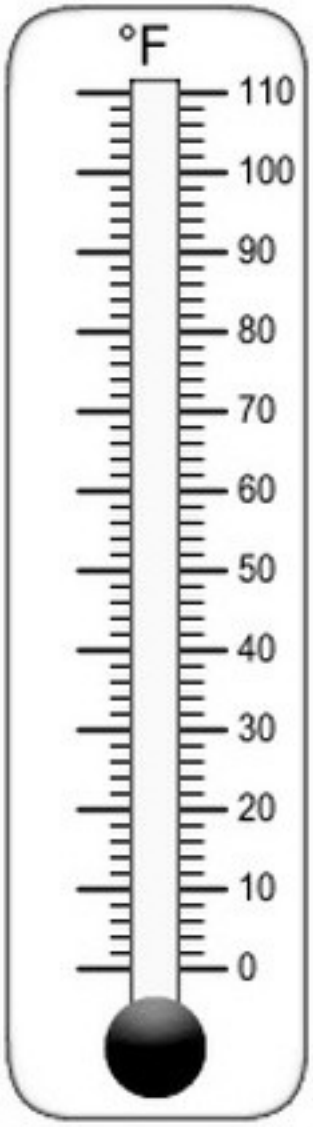
What operation would you like to use? Circle One: Addition -OR– Subtraction

If you chose an ADDITION problem, answer these questions to get your facts:	**If you chose a SUBTRACTION problem, answer these questions to get your facts:**
What time did your character start an activity? _____	What time did your character end an activity? _____
How long have they been doing this activity? _____	How long have they been doing this activity? _____
Do the addition to figure out what time they finished. _____	Do the subtraction to figure out what time they started. _____
Turn these facts into an ADDITION word problem below.	Turn these facts into an SUBTRACTION word problem below.

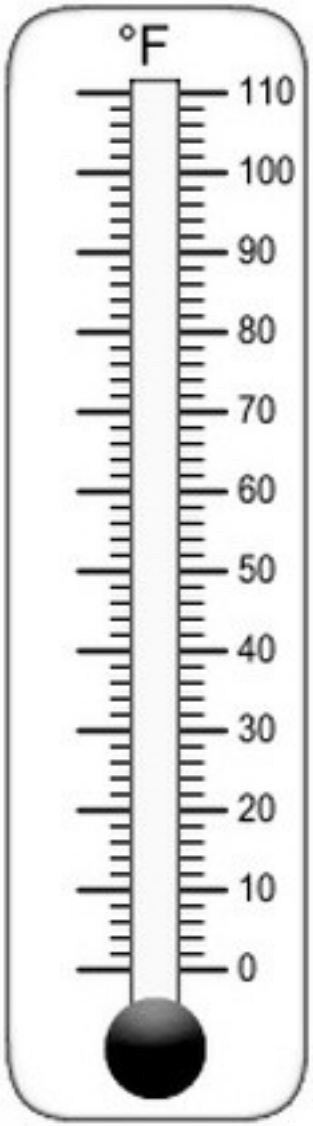
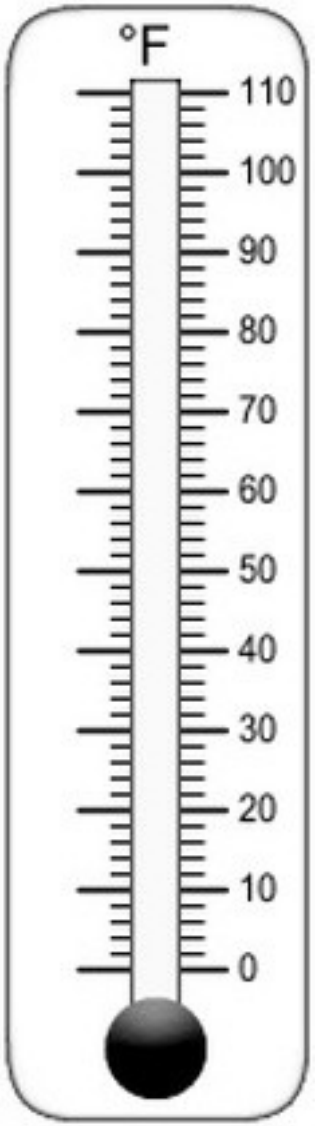
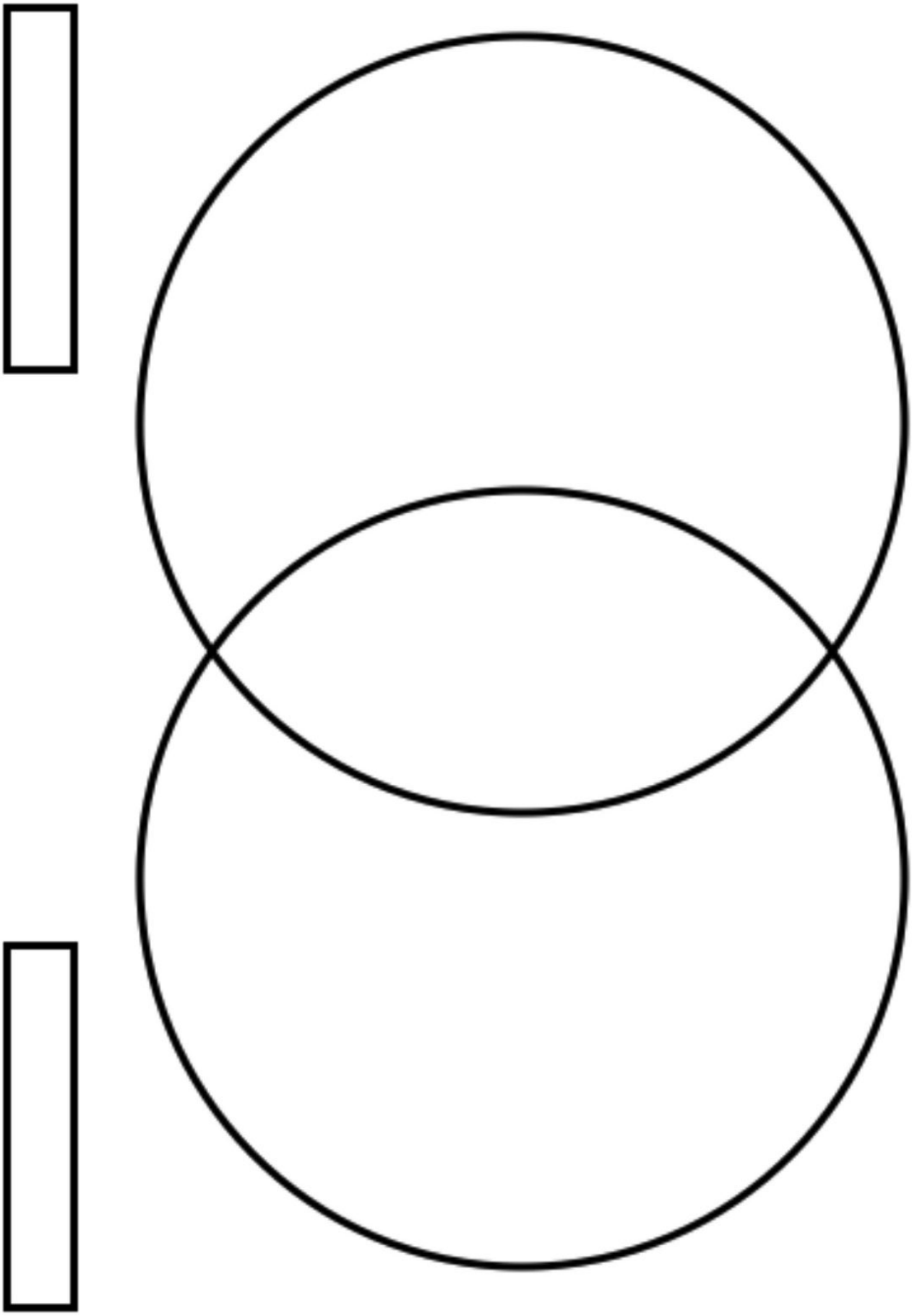
Spring



Summer



Fall



Winter