

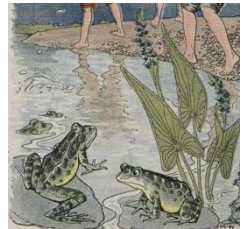
AESOP'S FABLE: "The Boys and the Frogs"

A Dramatic Play Written by Connie Frank



Narrator on the Story: The Boys and the Frogs. What's the difference between a frog, a chicken, a mouse and a human? Not as much as you'd think, according to an analysis of the first sequenced amphibian genome. Researchers say that the amphibian's genome closely resembles that of the mouse and the human, with large swathes of frog DNA on several chromosomes having genes arranged in the same order as in these

mammals, according to Science Magazine. The gene order has changed very little since the last common ancestor" of amphibians, birds and mammals about 360 million years ago. In the Princess and the Frog, the Princess kisses the Frog, who becomes a handsome Prince. However, in the real world, some frogs have poisonous skin like the poison arrow frogs, so kissing could result in a painful or quick death. Other frogs have poison glands in their skin that can ooze a milky secretion that can cause irritation, but as long as you don't kiss the white oozy stuff, you will probably be OK. Amphibians are known to carry salmonella, however, so be aware that kissing frogs could cause some serious intestinal discomfort! Some frog/toad toxins are neurotoxins and can be hallucinogenic. There is great risk in neurotoxins as they also interfere directly with the nervous system. They can disrupt your ability to think, move, and even interrupt your regular heartbeat.



Characters:

Narrator:

Boy 1:

Boy 2:

Boy 3:

Lollihops:

Bogart:

Mr. Bullfrog:

Jeremiah:

Hopscotch:

Mountain Lion:

Script:

Narrator: Sitting under the dark green leaves, Bogart looked through the underbrush to watch the humans as they walked through his environment, thrashing the branches of the trees aside and kicking the dirt floor. Bogart had lived in these woodlands all his life, and as a father he had helped raise many young tadpoles to grow into adult frogs. Bogart was now moving to return to the beautiful pond where all the frogs gathered to meet and celebrate life. As the human smell grew stronger, Bogart grew more anxious. These humans needed to leave so that the frogs could continue their traditions. For millennia, frogs like Bogart symbolized fertility in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia. In Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, Bogart's ancestors had been associated with fertility and harmony. The gathering at the pond represented his ancestors and their traditions, and Mother Nature was calling to Bogart to follow her instructions. The human noises were headed toward the pond, and Bogart's anxiety was rising.

Boy 1:	(Throwing and waving his fist in the air): Stop kicking me!
Boy 2:	(Pointing his hand down to a rotting stump in the path): I couldn't help it! I almost fell!
Boy 1:	You clumsy oaf! Move back! Get away from me!
Boy 3:	You two stop fighting!
Boy 1:	Tell him to quit kicking me!
Boy 2:	I didn't mean to!
Boy 3:	Alright, guys. Enough! We are almost there!
Boy 1:	Remind us again of why we are going there, through the poison ivy?
Boy 2:	And the wild animals that may have rabies!
Boy 1:	Yeah, rabies! My parents have been really worried about me getting rabies. She told me not to go into the forest. Now here I am! Following you guys!
Narrator:	As Bogart quietly hopped toward the pond, he kept his eye on the boys moving noisily to his side. A sudden sound to his left made Bogart turn his head.
Lollihops:	(Looking at him and then toward the boys): Hi Bogart! It has been a while.
Bogart:	Lollihops! It is so good to see you! (Tipping his head toward the boys): We have to be quiet! We have intruders!
Lollihops:	(Frowning) What are they doing here? This is our home. They are intruding on our peace.
Bogart:	I know. I have been watching them for awhile. They are loud, clumsy, and seem to hate each other more than having any kind of friendship. They keep attacking each other!
Lollihops:	Yes, I thought for a minute or two there that they were going to start fighting! I watched a mountain lion sneaking up on them, and the boys never even noticed. Foolish humans!
Narrator:	Bogart was growing increasingly uncomfortable. The beautiful blue-green pond was in sight, and it looked like the boys were heading to the pond. Bogart was worried about his friends who may have already been there. These boys did not have the level of respect for the forest that the woodland creatures expected from all those who entered their forest, and this unnerved Bogart and Lollihops. Hopping into the high weeds, the two frogs hopped into the pond, feeling better as the water slapped against their bodies. Frogs must be able to move quickly through their environment to catch prey and escape predators. Their unique adaptations, like webbed feet, toe pads, and camouflage, were their survival tools.
Mr. Bullfrog:	(Sitting on a lily pad) Bogart! Lillihops! It is good to see you again! It has been a while since I have seen you both at the same time. How was your trip?
Bogart:	(Blinking his eyes and crawling up on a lily pad with Lillihops): Have you seen the three humans who are heading to our pond? They are loud and they seem to be about to start a fight.
Lillihops:	(Nodding): They certainly do not seem friendly. They have no respect for our home or our ways. I think they are dangerous.

Mr. Bullfrog:	(Jerking his head and staring at the edge of the pond): Dangerous? Oh! I see!
Boy 3:	Stop fighting, I said!
Narrator:	Two of the boys were yelling at each other, sending flocks of all types of birds flying from the tops of the trees surrounding the pond. One boy was kicking the other one, sending dirt, weeds, and grass flying.
Boy 1:	I said, get off of me!
Boy 2:	Stop it! I didn't do anything!
Boy 3:	Stop right now!
Narrator:	As more frogs popped their heads out of the water, they watched and summarized that the third boy seemed to be the leader of the pack to the frogs.
Jeremiah:	Hi guys! What are those weirdos doing?
Hopscotch:	It sure looks like they came here to fight!
Jeremiah:	I think you are right, Hopscotch!
Hopscotch:	I am so angry! They come to our home and attack our peace of mind. They make us put up with their nonsense.
Lollihops:	I agree, Hopscotch! They have no right to do this!
Narrator:	The third boy stopped the fighting by putting his fists in the face of the other two boys. An uneasy truce brought silence to the pond community as they watch the boys begin playing at the end of the pond. With no warning, Boy 1 picked up a stone and threw it into the pond, sending Jeremiah off of his lily pad and scrambling into the water.
Boy 2:	Hey, that looks like fun!
Boy 3:	I found a lot of rocks over here that we can throw.
Boy 1:	I bet I can throw farther than you can!
Narrator:	As they amused themselves by throwing stones into the pond, competing to see how many of the stones they could skip on top of the water and who could throw the farthest. The stones were flying thick and fast. The three boys were enjoying themselves very much, but the poor Frogs in the pond were trembling with fear.
Hopscotch:	Help! Help! Jeremiah!
Jeremiah:	I am coming, Hopscotch! I am almost there! Hold on!
Lillihops:	Hopscotch! Please get her, Jeremiah!
Narrator:	Hopscotch had no clear hold on the lily pad, which had slid deeper into the water. The stone that had hit the lily pad had slammed into Hopscotch, and she was afraid of drowning. After several seconds of desperation, Jeremiah rose from the water with Hopscotch, who was helplessly holding onto Jeremiah. He dragged her to the far edge of the pond and protected her with his own body, trying to keep her from being hit by more flying, sharp stones. Mr. Bullfrog, Bogart, and Lillihops sat frantically holding onto the lily pads, eyes wide and their bodies trembling.
Mr. Bullfrog:	(Shaking with anger): Stop! You monsters! Stop!

Narrator:	Mr. Bullfrog, the oldest and the bravest of all of the frogs, was angry. He was trembling with anger. Bogart and Lillihops, who had been looking at the far side of the pond at the dazed Hopscotch and Jeremiah, turned their eyes toward Mr. Bullfrog. Mr. Bullfrog was infuriated.
Mr. Bullfrog:	Oh, please, dear children, stop your cruel play!
Narrator:	Just for a moment, the three boys stared at the old frog, amazed to hear the creature speak to them.
Mr. Bullfrog:	Though these actions may be fun for you, it means death to us!
Boy 1:	Hey, listen to that old frog!
Boy 2:	It can talk!
Boy 3:	I bet we could get tons of money for that frog. Get it!
Narrator:	The old frog realized his error in bringing attention to himself as he watched the boys rush toward him.
Boy 1:	(Spotting a battered old net in the weeds) Grab that old net!
Boy 2:	I got it!
Boy 3:	Grab him!
Narrator:	Mr. Bullfrog was known to be a really fast hopper. He had actually been celebrated as a superior frog, with high intellect and physically strong, but the boys were younger and quicker than he was. After many minutes of hopping in several directions, even hiding in the high grasses near the pond, Mr. Bullfrog made the mistake of trying to move away from the pond. The boys drove him right into the net, and when the net plopped down on top of the old frog, Mr. Bullfrog let out a tortured sound that caused the boys to turn to look at him, astonished. They had never heard a frog make that sound.
Bogart:	I have to find that mountain lion! Where was he, Lillihops?
Lillihops:	No, Bogart! You cannot bring the mountain lion here! He will eat you before you can get him to come!
Bogart:	Lillihops! Where was that mountain lion?
Narrator:	After a few more minutes of discussion, Bogart hopped as fast as he could back into the forest. The vision of Mr. Bullfrog being eaten stayed in his mind, driving him to the place where Lillihops that seen the big cat. Bogart stopped to catch his breath, but suddenly a shadow fell over him. Bogart's big eyes grew bigger as he saw the face of the mountain lion very close to him.
Mountain Lion:	Hmmm. You are not much of a dinner!
Bogart:	Please, Mr. Mountain Lion, I need your help.
Narrator:	The Mountain Lion laughed, a low rumbling sound.
Mountain Lion:	You need MY help? Why would I help you?
Narrator:	Bogart cleared his throat, his body trembling.
Bogart:	Mr. Mountain Lion, there are three humans attacking everyone at the pond.
Mountain Lion:	So?
Bogart:	They have caught Mr. Bullfrog!
Mountain Lion:	Hmmm. Three human boys? Are they loud and smell bad?
Bogart:	Yes!
Mountain Lion:	And they have Mr. Bullfrog?
Bogart:	Yes! They captured him and I fear for his life!

Narrator:	The Mountain Lion stood, contemplating what he had been told. Bogart watched the Mountain Lion carefully, weighing his chances of whether he could get away. He was beginning to regret approaching the Mountain Lion, much less asking him to help Mr. Bullfrog.
Mountain Lion:	I have something to tell you.
Narrator:	Bogart was astonished. He was shocked and stood there, frozen. The Mountain Lion cleared his throat.
Mountain Lion:	There were three humans, three boys, who attacked me the other day.
Bogart:	What!
Mountain Lion:	Stop interrupting me!
Bogart:	(Squeaking) Yes, sir.
Mountain Lion:	These three humans ambushed me. I was tracking a rabbit for dinner, and these three boys started throwing rocks at me. The boys attempted to trap me in the rocks, but I know this forest better than they do. What do these humans look like?
Bogart:	They just look like humans to me. But they like to fight.
Mountain Lion:	Fight?
Bogart:	Yes! The last one in the line kept stepping on the one in the middle.
Mountain Lion:	Hmmm. That sounds like the same humans who attacked me.
Narrator:	A silence descended between them. The Mountain Lion and the Frog looked at each other in mutual agreement. The Mountain Lion nodded to the Frog and then smiled.
Mountain Lion:	Let's go. I can handle this.
Narrator:	The huge mountain cat walked, his powerful muscles gliding his body through the forest. The much smaller green and brown frog hopped alongside the great cat. Anyone viewing these two gliding through the forest, side by side, would have been amazed to see such a magnificent creature walking calmly with a lowly frog. However, as they walked and talked, the Mountain Lion and the frog got to know each other and found commonalities between them.
Mr. Bullfrog:	Help! Help! Someone help me!
Bogart:	That's Mr. Bullfrog! We have to help him!
Mountain Lion:	See if you can get him free. I will handle the humans.
Bogart:	(Looking up at his newfound friend): Be careful. I do not trust them.
Narrator:	The Mountain Lion nodded and then glided back into the edge of the forest, quietly, stealthily, waiting for the right moment. Bogart slowly hopped toward the side of the pond farthest away from where Mr. Bullfrog sat tangled in the net. There he found Hopscotch, Jeremy, and Lillihops huddled together, trying to figure out how to get Mr. Bullfrog free. The three boys were laughing, dangling long blades of grass at the old frog.
Lillihops:	Bogart! Where have you been? I have been so worried!
Hopscotch:	We have been so scared! Jeremiah has been keeping us as safe as possible, but we cannot get out of here without the humans seeing us.
Bogart:	Don't worry. All will be well soon.

Narrator:	The four grew very quiet, as the three humans were now standing up, listening. Bogart began to move toward Mr. Bullfrog, trying to get in a position where he could free the old frog, who was so tangled in the net that he had grown quiet because of being so tired of the struggle. Slowly, quietly, Bogart sneaked up to the net, hiding in tall grass right beside Mr. Bullfrog and within inches of a boy's shoe.
Mr. Bullfrog:	Wha-?
Bogart:	Shhhh.
Narrator:	Very quietly, Bogart signaled for Jeremiah and Lillahops to come help them. Hopscotch had been hurt in her fall, and everyone signaled for her to stay put. The three frogs rubbed a sharp stone against the net, very slowly, straining to push the heavy stone up and down, then side to side, against the netting in an attempt to cut it.
Boy 1:	Hey! I see another one!
Boy 2:	Yeah! I see it! Let'ss get that one too!
Narrator:	Shocked, the three frogs looked up to see Hopscotch hopping as fast as she could from the two boys. The third boy was still standing right next to Bogart. The three frogs began working faster, making a bit more noise, but with the two boys yelling, the third boy could not hear them working on the net.
Boy 3:	Have you got it?
Boy 1:	Just about got it!
Boy 2:	Grab it NOW!
Narrator:	Just as the Boy 2 had his hands around Hopscotch, a low, loud growl could be heard coming from the forest. Looking up, the three boys saw a large mountain cat moving toward them stealthily. The cat looked ready to spring on the two boys who dropped Hopscotch and ran, screaming. They threw themselves at Boy 3, who almost fell with their weight. Frightened now, the boys turned and saw the mountain lion almost on them, and they ran, sprinting as fast as they could back into the forest and away from the pond.
Bogart:	There! You are free now, Mr. Bullfrog.
Mr. Bullfrog:	Thank you, my friends. (Panting) I was growing too tired to struggle.
Jeremiah:	We have to get out of here! The mountain lion will be coming back here soon!
Hopscotch:	Did you guys forget me?
Jeremiah:	Hopscotch! Are you okay?
Lillahops:	Oh, you were so brave!
Narrator:	The four frogs hopped over to where Hopscotch lay half in and our of the pond water.
Hopscotch:	(Shaking) I am fine. Terrified, but fine. They dropped me! I still cannot believe that they dropped me!
Lillahops:	What a terrible ordeal for you! I was so scared for you!
Hopscotch:	I was scared for me too!
Jeremiah:	I am glad that you are okay.

Hopscotch:	I am too. Ahhhhhh!
Narrator:	Suddenly, looming over the frogs was the mountain lion, looking gigantic and fearsome. Hopscotch had seen him first, and had a hard time of trying to stop screaming. To everyone's surprise, Bogart walked up to the mountain lion.
Bogart:	That was amazing! You really scared them to death!
Narrator:	The other frogs looked at each other, suddenly realizing that Bogart was not afraid, but actually friendly, with the gigantic creature.
Mountain Lion:	Yes, well, I am very pleased to say that those three boys will not be back anytime soon. I ripped holes in all three of the humans' pants, and they were screaming so loud that you would think I was murdering them. By the way, they were the same humans who tried to trap me. I do not think they will ever return to our forest.
Bogart:	Thank you so much!
Mountain Lion:	Well, isn't that what friends are for?
Narrator:	Bogart introduced all of his friends to the Mountain Lion, who seemed very happy to meet them. The frogs were shy with him at first, but the Mountain Lion and Bogart seemed very comfortable with each other. After that day, the Mountain Lion was always welcomed to the pond and even shown where tasty fruits were growing in the forest. Having the Mountain Lion as their friend gave the frogs the protection they needed, and the Mountain Lion took on the task of keeping them safe as long as he lived.
Narrator:	The three boys had felt themselves entitled as though they owned the forest, but in fact, Mother Nature always has the last laugh on arrogance. The boys showed no respect for the forest and her creatures. They also felt nothing while attacking the innocent frogs, who had very few protections against bullies. The boys were not entitled to have fun at the expense of the other creatures of the forest, and the Mountain Lion taught them a very valuable lesson that they would never forget.
The moral of this story is:	
<i>"Always stop to think whether your fun may not be the cause of another's unhappiness."</i>	

