

This activity will teach students about the amphibians living in their own backyards by helping them recognize frog calls using relatable examples.

Materials/Setup

- Frog calls found at <https://www.naturewatch.ca/frogwatch/ontario/>
Or https://animaldiversity.org/collections/frog_calls/
- Pictures of frogs + corresponding call description
- Rubber bands
- Combs

Activity Location

- This activity is designed to be done indoors, but can easily be done outdoors.
- If doing this activity outdoors, it would be ideal to choose a location and a time of year where frogs can actually be heard (wetland, spring).

Introduction

- Recognizing animal calls can be a very difficult endeavor. Bird and frog calls are distinct, but can have tiny variations that the human ear may have trouble picking up.
- Animals use sounds to communicate information to each other. It could be to announce territory, that a predator is approaching (a warning signal) or a signal to mates.
- Frog calls can be easily recognized, especially when attached to every day sounds that are commonplace.

Action

1. Have the students work in pairs.
2. Give each pair a kit with the following materials: pictures and names of frogs to be identified, sentence describing the sound of their call, a comb and a rubber band.
3. Play the students a frog call and tell them which frog it is. Have them use the materials in front of them to decide which description best fits the sound. For instance, the Green Frog's call sounds distinctly like someone playing the rubber band like a guitar.

4. Increase the level of difficulty by revisiting this activity a few days/weeks later and give them the sound but not the name of the frog.

Conclusion/Wrap up

Frogs (and most other amphibians) are indicator species. This means that they are extremely sensitive to their environment. If there are toxins or pollutants in the environment, frogs will be one of the first animals to show signs of stress.

Frogs also have incredible adaptations to survive the winter months. It is common knowledge that frogs burrow under the mud in ponds, lakes, and river in order to survive. Their bodies absorb the oxygen they need through their skin. However, one frog, the wood frog, has natural antifreeze in their cells (very high amounts of glycogen). The Wood Frog does not burrow into ground, but rather spends the winter months in the leaf litter on the forest floor. Due to this natural antifreeze property, up to 75% of the Wood Frog's body turns to ice!

Instilling a natural sense of awe and wonder in students is vital to ensuring they will be connected to the land. The more students know about the amazing animals we have sharing this land with us, the more likely they will be to help protect it. Teaching youth about nature is the most effective way to produce good stewards of the land.









