

Stick
By Steve Breen
Illustrated by Steve Breen
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About the author:

Steve Breen is a Pulitzer prize-winning cartoonist based out California. Stick is his first attempt at authoring a children's book. Steve Breen has made quite a name for himself as a political cartoonist, having cartoons published in over 150 newspapers in the country, *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, and numerous syndicated magazines, such as *Newsweek*. Mr. Breen has been the recipient of the Pulitzer Prize in 1998 and 2009 for Editorial Cartooning and has also received the Scripps Howard Charles M. Schulz Award in college. He has also won the John Locher award for Outstanding College Editorial Cartoonist. Mr. Breen almost became a history teacher until he was offered a job at the Asbury Park Press. Steve Breen is also the author of Violet the Pilot. Steve dedicated the book to all those who were affected by Hurricane Katrina because he has always been interested in life in the south.

Steve Breen is also the illustrator.

Steve Breen. (2009, April 22). In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved June 16, 2009 from

http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Steve_Breen&oldid=285369282)

Puffin website for Steve Breen:

<http://us.penguin.com/nf/Author/AuthorPage/0,,1000068481,00.html>

Annotation:

Title: Stick

Author: Steve Breen

Summary:

Breen, S. (2007) *Stick*. New York: Puffin.

Steve Breen uses a goofy frog named Stick to tell the story in Stick. Stick the frog manages to get himself into some sticky situations that take him all sorts of places from the big city to right back where he started from. Even after he returns home the adventure does not end. Stick learns to be more careful while on his journey and he is treated to travel through various modes, from a

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motorcycle to a plane to a bunch of balloons. Stick returns home with a new view of adventure and what it means to be careful and take your time. The illustrations are perfect for a early childhood book because they are bright and vibrant. The colors are lively and there is a nice contrast in the illustrations.

Genre:

This book is written in the fable genre. It gives a lesson at the end of the story, although there are few words actually in the story.

Point of View:

The book is written in the omniscient point of view, because the readers are taken along everywhere Stick goes.

Theme:

The theme from the story is thinking before taking action. The title, although it is the frog's name, also has a little pun attached to it because Stick actually *sticks* to everything he puts his tongue to, and that is how his adventure occurs.

Conflict:

Stick finds himself on an unwanted journey after making a poor choice of food at lunch. Stick needs to find a way to get home.

Conflict Resolution:

Stick found a bird who was kind enough to bring him home.

Characters:

Stick, Stick's mother, various other people and animals Stick met along his journey.

Setting:

There were multiple settings, each one changing with Stick's journey across the cities and towns.

Interest level:

Early readers; ages 4 - 8

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Reading level:

Preschool to Grade 3

Booktalk:

Who knew a frog could have such a personality without saying a word? Stick by Steve Breen is a book about a funny little frog that manages to get himself into all kinds of trouble. One day when he decides to have a simple lunch, that lunch leads him on a fantastic adventure! Stick only has one problem. He wants to go home. Will Stick be able to get home? To find the answer to this question and read a silly story that will bring a smile to your face, read Stick by Steve Breen.

Discussion questions:

Pre –reading questions:

- What do you think frogs eat?
- How do they get their food?
- If a frog wants to travel, how does he get there?

Post –reading question:

- Do you think Stick will be more careful about how he catches his lunch?
- How do you think Stick felt when he finally made it home?

During reading questions:

Pages 1– 2 Who do you think the frog is that Stick is sitting with?

What do you think they are talking about?

Pages 3 – 4 Look at the pictures of Stick, what does it look like he’s

doing? How does his mother feel about that?

Do you see a difference between the color of Stick and the colors around him? Why do you think the illustrator did this?

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Pages 5 –6 There are four pictures on this page. Tell me the differences between each.

Pages 7 – 8 What would happen to Stick if the alligator caught him? How would that have changed the story?

Pages 8 – 9 Tell me about the expressions on the faces on the person and animals that see Stick fly by.

Pages 10 – 11 What is different about the city Stick sailed into than the city you live in?

Pages 12 – 13 What are some kinds of animals that Stick has met on his journey? How would you react if you met those same animals?

Pages 14 – 15 Stick has people chasing him. Do you think they are all chasing him for the same reason? Why or why not?

Pages 16 – 17 Do you think the people in the car were surprised when Stick landed on their car? Would you be?

Pages 18 – 19 Look at the man's eye in the rearview mirror. He looks surprised, was it a good idea to turn the windshield wipers on to get Stick off the windshield? Where do you think he will land next?

Pages 20 – 21 The motorcycle rider was very surprised by Stick. Is it safe to ride with a frog on your face? What are some important things to remember when riding in a car and/or on a motorcycle?

Pages 22 – 23 Don't you think Stick's tongue would be tired by now?

Pages 24 – 25 How did Stick know that the seagull wouldn't hurt him?

Pages 26 – 27 Why didn't Stick decide that he needed help until he was all alone for a while? Do you ever ask for help?

Pages 28 – 29 How did Stick feel when he was by himself? Is that why he asked for help?

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Pages 30 – 31 The next page shows that it is night time. Based on that picture, how long of a journey did Stick take?

Pages 32 – 33 Look at the expression on Stick's face. Do you think he was glad to be home?

Pages 34 – 35 How do you feel when you are safe back home with your loved ones after a trip? Do you think that is how Stick felt?

Pages 36 – 37 Stick was looking for some dinner. Would it have been a good idea to eat a lightning bug?

Pages 38 – 39 Do you think Stick learned any lessons from his trip?

Definitions:

- Jazzy – upbeat, lively

Indiana Academic Standards:

K.1.1 Raise questions about the natural world.

K.2.2 Draw pictures and write words to describe objects and experiences.

1.2.7 Write brief informational descriptions of a real object, person, place, or event using information from observations.

1.4.4 Explain that most living things need water, food, and air.

1.6.1 Observe and describe that models, such as toys, are like the real things in some ways but different in others.

2.1.3 Describe, both in writing and verbally, objects as accurately as possible and compare observations with those of other people.

2.4.4 Recognize and explain that living things are found almost everywhere in the world and that there are somewhat different kinds in different places.

2.4.5 Recognize and explain that materials in nature, such as grass, twigs, sticks, and leaves, can be recycled and used again, sometimes in different forms, such as in birds' nests.

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Anticipation Statements:

- Frogs can only survive in ponds.
- It is always better to do things on your own.
- If a frog ate a lightning bug it would light the frog up.
- A frog could take a ride on a dragon fly.
- Frog adventures are different than human adventures.

Art Medium used:

The mediums used to make the illustrations for this book were created by watercolor and acrylic paint, colored pencil, and Photoshop. It would be beneficial for the students to use the various kinds of mediums. If the school has the opportunity for students to use Photoshop, it could be used to create a page similar to those in the book. The mediums used in the book are easily manipulated and can produce clear and concise results. The mood of the book is light-hearted and fun and silly. The art mediums used are also bright and colorful and express a mood of whimsy, that accompanies the book perfectly.

“If you like *Stick*, you’ll love:

Violet the Pilot by Steve Breen

Your Grandma Rocks, Mine Rolls by Steve Breen

Grandpa For Sale by Dotti Enderle

Velma Gratch and the Way Cool Butterfly by Alan Madison

The Perfect Nest by Catherine Friend

Cross-Curricular connections:

Science: Information about frogs. Find three interesting facts about a frog and write them into a paragraph.

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Social studies: Stick visited many places. Choose which mode of transportation you would like to take and tell where you would go, why, and how you would get there.

Book Activities:

Activity 1: Charting the life cycle of a frog.

Since Stick lives in a swamp it lends itself to studying frogs. The activity could be an individual guided activity or a whole class activity.

This activity will relate to the book's subject of a traveling frog and will also be a good cross-curricular connection to science. Students in grades K – 2 will benefit from this activity.

It will encompass multiple learning styles. Students will create a frog life cycle chart. (see handout)

Activity 2:

Students can wear these visors while we are finishing up our frog unit and it will be a nice keepsake for them.

Found at: <http://home.howstuffworks.com/frog-crafts4.htm>

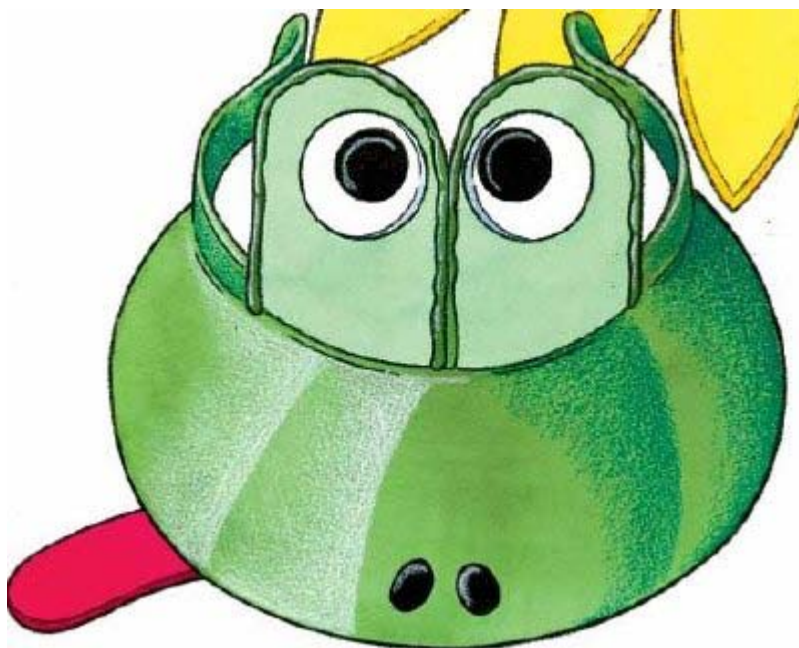
Frog Visor

Kids will have fun making the frog visor and have even more fun wearing it. Not only that, this frog craft shades the face on a sunny day, making it both playful and functional.

What You'll Need:

- Green plastic visor
- Tracing paper
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Craft foam in green, white, black, and red
- Glue
- Fabric paint in black and green

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The frog visor craft puts a fun frog on your head.

How to Make Frog Visor:

Step 1: Trace and cut 2 large frog eye shapes out of green craft foam, using the pattern (download [pattern PDF](#)). Put a little glue along the straight edge of each cutout, and glue the foam to the top edge of the green visor.



Glue the green craft foam eye shapes to the top of the visor.

Step 2: Cut 2 circles out of the white craft foam and 2 smaller circles out of the black craft foam. Glue each white circle to each green frog eye shape. Glue the black circles onto the white circles.

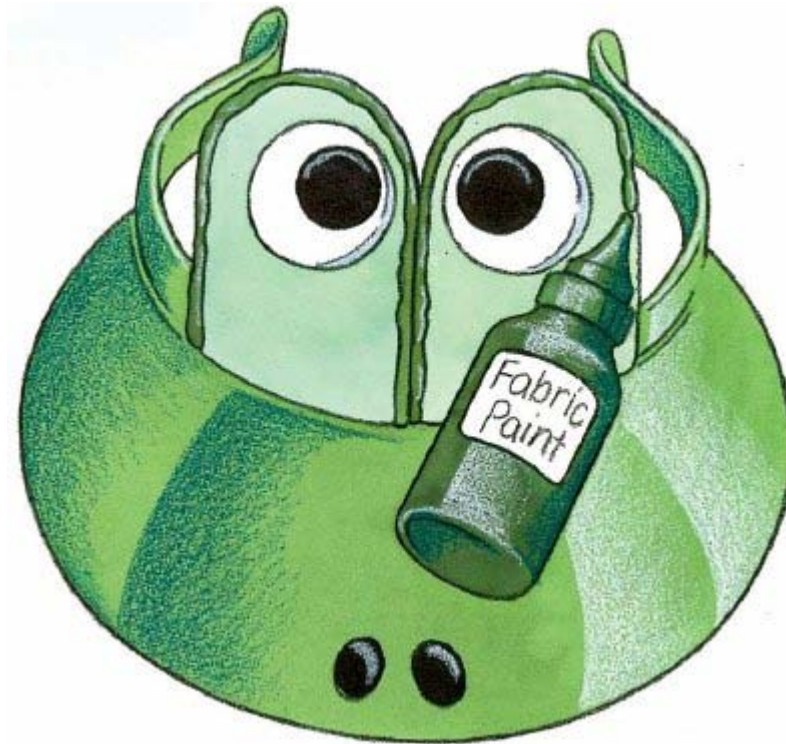
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Glue the black circles to the white eye circles.

Step 3: Make 2 nostrils on the visor with the black fabric paint. Outline the green of each eye with green fabric paint.

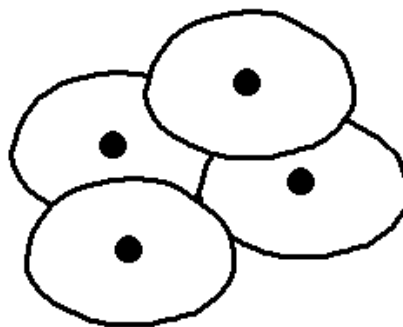
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Outline the green foam eye shapes with green fabric paint.

Step 4: Use the pattern (see downloadable PDF above) to make a tongue shape out of the red craft foam. Glue the tongue along the curved edge of the visor.

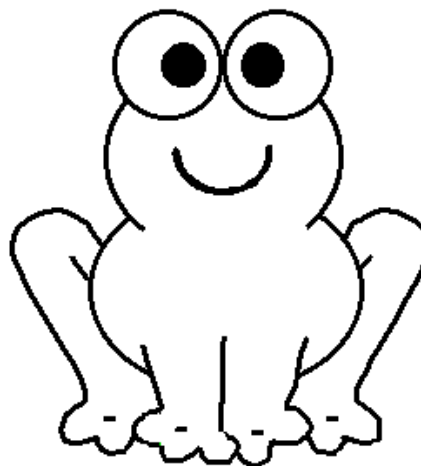
The
frogs
lay
eggs.



The
eggs
hatch
into
tadpoles.



The tadpoles
grow into
frogs.



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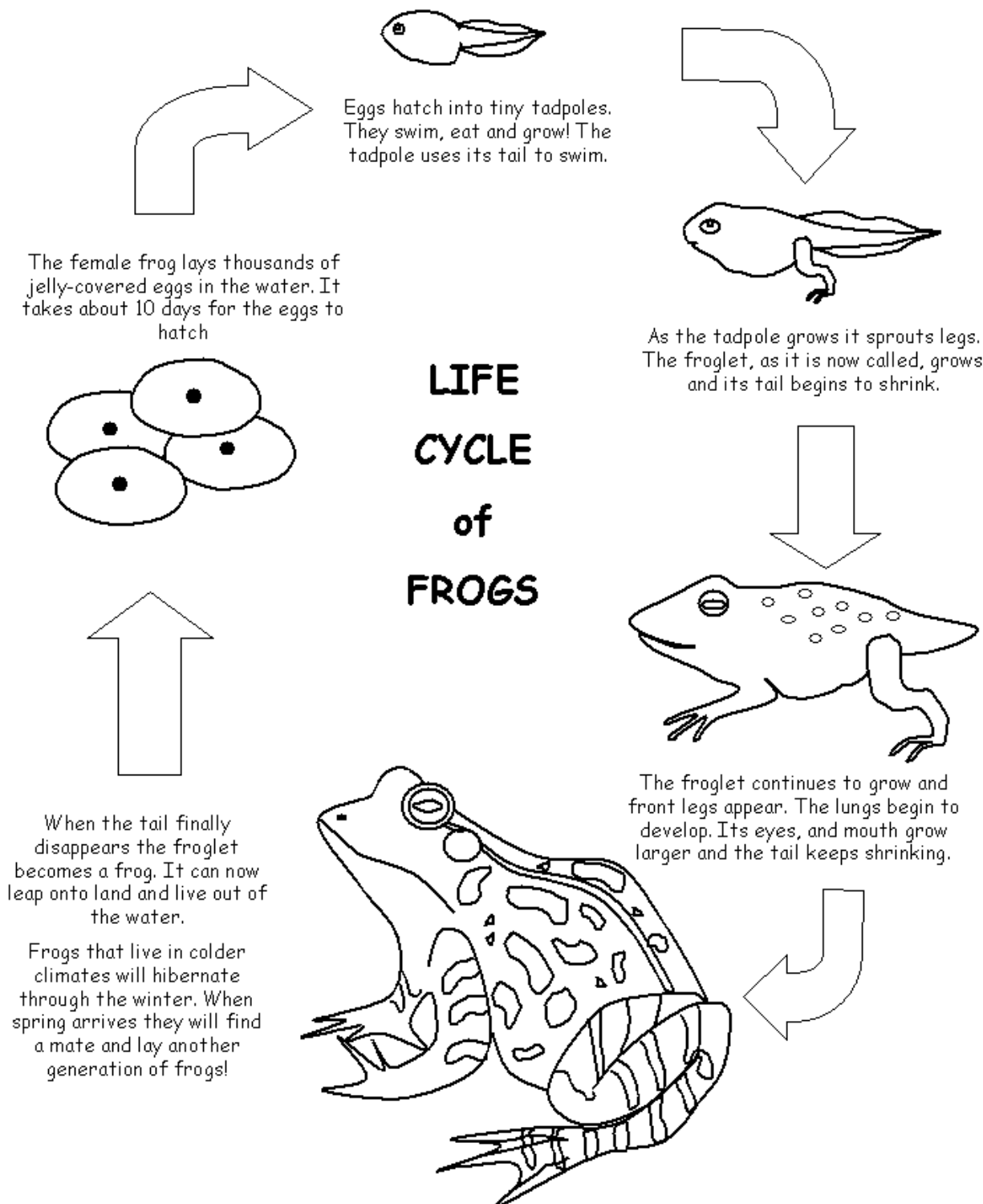
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http://www.amazon.com/Stick-Steve-Breen/sim/0803731248/2/ref=pd_cp_b_sexpl

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