

Realistic  
Fiction

# Too Many Frogs



by  
Karen Alexander

illustrated by  
Barry Gott

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Graw  
Hill

PAIRED  
READ

Poetry

## STRATEGIES & SKILLS

### Comprehension

**Strategy:** Reread

**Skill:** Point of View

### Vocabulary

entertainment, humorous,  
ridiculous, slithers

### Vocabulary Strategy

Idioms

Word count: 1,124



**Education**

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**Essential Question**

**What makes you laugh?**

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## Chapter 1

# April Fools' Day

Nat wakes early and hops out of bed. Today is the best day of the year for him. Nat loves to play practical jokes, and today is April Fools' Day.

Some of Nat's jokes have been big hits. Last year, he short-sheeted his sister's bed. She couldn't understand what was going on. She started to think that her legs must have grown much longer during the day. When she realized what had happened, she laughed her head off.



Some of Nat's jokes haven't been quite so successful. Mom didn't think finding a furry toy mouse in the cereal was humorous at all. After she calmed down a bit, she said, "That's it! There's a ban on Nat tricks for two weeks."





Nat is the class clown. He is always making jokes in class. He likes it when he makes the other kids laugh. Since it is April Fools' Day, he feels like he has to come up with something really good to provide his classmates with some really good entertainment.

Nat thought long and hard before he came up with his brilliant idea. He has bought two toy frogs. They are made out of green plastic, and they look very realistic. Nat knows just the trick he will play on his classmates.

## Chapter 2

# Setting the Scene



Nat arrives at school early. To succeed in his plan, he needs to get into the classroom before anyone else. Nat's class has a rain forest terrarium. It has plants, insects, and three frogs in it. Nat's idea is to pretend that the frogs have escaped. He knows that Ms. Lopez, his teacher, isn't afraid of frogs. But several of his classmates are.

Nat slinks into the classroom. Good! There's nobody here. He puts one of the frogs on the floor, near the terrarium. He puts the other on his friend Stacey's desk.



Nat knows that Stacey really does not like amphibians. Also, she played a great trick on him last April Fools' Day. She put food coloring in his milk at lunch, turning it green, and he thought it had gone moldy. So he owes her.

To make his trick more convincing, Nat pushes the lid part way off the terrarium. Then he rushes off to morning assembly.





## Chapter 3

# Help, Frogs!



At assembly, the principal reminds the students to think carefully about their April Fools' Day pranks. He warns them not to do anything dangerous. When the students get back to class, no one notices the frogs—at first. Then Stacey screams and points at her desk. She has finally noticed the frog. A couple of other kids shriek, too, but most of them are laughing.

The teacher, Ms. Lopez, comes over to see what all the noise is about. She notices at once that the frog isn't real. She tells the children not to be ridiculous. Then she scoops up the frog and puts it in her pocket.

Just then, Mickey calls out that the lid is off the terrarium. At exactly the same time, Tessa yells when she steps on the other toy frog on the floor. Ms. Lopez scoops up the second frog and puts it in her other pocket.





Nat is feeling very pleased with himself. His prank is a success. He pretends that he is working, and reaches out for a piece of paper. Something cold and slimy slithers past his fingers. It's a frog—a real one! Nat realizes that he has opened the lid of the terrarium too far. At least one of the frogs has escaped! He starts to think he might have gone a bit far with his prank.

The frog hops away from Nat's desk onto the next desk, and the next. Nat's classmates are screaming. Ms. Lopez starts to look flustered. She tells the children to sit down quietly in their seats, explaining that all the noise will distress the frog. Then she very gently picks up the frog and puts it back in the terrarium. She begins to check to make sure that the other frogs are still there.



## Chapter 4

# No Harm Done



Ms. Lopez looks very serious as she inspects the terrarium. This is unusual for her. She's usually smiling and laughing. She's the best teacher Nat's ever had. She's a good teacher, and Nat likes her sense of humor.

Nat starts to feel foolish. He looks down at his book, and tries to look as if butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. But Ms. Lopez has guessed who the culprit is. She doesn't say anything to Nat, but she looks directly at him.

Suddenly, there is a loud croak from under Nat's chair. He almost jumps out of his skin with fright. The whole class laughs.



Ms. Lopez catches the frog and puts it back in the terrarium, closing the lid carefully and securely. Then she walks toward Nat's desk.

Ms. Lopez tells Nat that he has now had a taste of his own medicine. She says that she knows Nat was just trying to be funny. She says that no harm has been done, but the ending could have been very different. Lifting the top off the terrarium was not a very good idea.

Nat apologizes to Ms. Lopez. He promises that there will be no more practical jokes in class.

Stacey is still chuckling about seeing Nat jump out of his seat, but she stops laughing long enough to send Nat a sympathetic glance.





# Respond to Reading

## Summarize

Summarize *Too Many Frogs*.  
Use the Point of View Chart  
to help you.

Details

↓

Point of View

## Text Evidence

1. What kind of fiction is *Too Many Frogs*? Which details tell you this? **GENRE**
2. From whose point of view is the story told? How do you know? Reread page 4 for a clue.  
**POINT OF VIEW**
3. On page 12, Nat almost “jumps out of his skin.” What does that mean? **IDIOMS**
4. What is Ms. Lopez feeling about Nat’s prank? Use details from the text to support your answer. **WRITE ABOUT READING**

**Compare Texts**

Read about a cat that didn't want to go to school.

# Pet Day



My school is having pet day,  
And I would like to take my cat.  
But Mom has always said, “No! No!  
I really cannot permit that.”

“Right on,” thought Bubbles,  
As she licked her paw.  
“A cat doesn’t like that kind of thing.”  
And then she stretched out on the floor.

“But, Mom,” I cried, “You always said  
You’d let me when I got to ten.”  
Next year I go Middle School.  
Pet Day is over for me then.

“Oh, no,” thought Bubbles.

“Please don’t give in.  
I see a Pet Day looming.  
I really wish I had a twin!”

Said Mom, “Imagine how you’d feel  
With big dogs all around you drooling.  
Forget pet day and all that fuss.  
I’d rather that you got some schooling.”

“Yay,” thought Bubbles. “That’s the way!  
I’d much prefer to stay right here.  
But Mom is beginning to hesitate.  
I think it’s time to disappear!”





“What say I come with you?” asked Mom.  
“Your friends can pet and cuddle her.  
I’ll hold the cat and keep her safe.  
I’m sure we’ll even make her purr.”

“Oh, yes,” I said, “Oh please do that.  
I’m so excited. Where’s my hat?  
Bubbles, Bubbles, where are you?  
She’s gone—oh, drat that cat!”



## Make Connections

Did you smile or laugh when you read *Pet Day*?

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Which is funnier, the story or the poem?

### TEXT TO TEXT

# Focus on Literary Elements

**Rhyme** Poetry is language that is arranged into rhythms and patterns. It may rhyme, too, but it doesn't have to. A narrative poem tells a story. Some poems are written in groups of lines, which are called stanzas.

**Read and Find** *Pet Day* is a narrative poem. It has eight stanzas. In each stanza, the last word in line two rhymes with the last word in line four. There is rhythm in the poem, too. Read the poem aloud to hear the rhymes and the rhythm clearly.

## Your Turn

Choose a subject and write your own narrative poem. It can be written in rhyme or free verse. Remember that a narrative poem tells a story.

# Thinkmark

## Characters

Describe Nat's character.

Does he change at all during the story?

## Plot

What was the problem in *Too Many Frogs*?

Was the problem solved, and if so, how?

## Conclusions

What conclusions can you draw after reading *Too Many Frogs*?

## Make Connections

What things make you laugh?

Do you have a family member or pet that makes you laugh?

# Funny Times

GR P • Benchmark 38 • Lexile [t/k]

Grade 3 • Unit 6 Week 5

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