



with



Learn About Frogs and Toads

Frogs and toads are both amphibians. That means they live part of their lives in water and part of their lives on land. All amphibians start their lives in water. They have gills and tails. As they mature, they develop lungs and legs, which prepares them for life on land.



Frogs and toads are both cold-blooded, which is called ectothermic in the scientific world. Whereas our body temperature stays roughly the same temperature all the time, frogs and toads have a body temperature that is the same as the air around them. Because of this, they cannot regulate their own body heat, but must instead rely on sunlight to warm them enough so they can be active. Also, if they become too hot they have to burrow into to cool mud or shade to help them cool down.



Both frogs and toads breathe through their skin. Frogs have lungs, so in a pinch they can inhale just like we do, but most of their respiration is performed through their skin. Tiny blood vessels near the surface of the skin help to diffuse oxygen in and carbon dioxide out, even when they are underwater. Toads also supplement their breathing by using their lungs, especially after periods of activity. Just like frogs, most of their respiration is done through the skin.

Another thing frogs and toads have in common is that they both go through a metamorphosis. A metamorphosis is what happens when an animal changes shape as it grows. Both frogs and toads start out as eggs. When they hatch, they do not look like their parents, but have a very different shape. As they mature, they begin to look more and more like the adult frog or toad we are used to seeing.



Even with all these similarities, frogs and toads are also quite different from each other and easy to tell apart when we see them in their natural habitat. For instance, frogs have smooth, wet-looking skin, but toads have dry, bumpy skin. Frogs can be various colors and even usually are multicolored, but toads are usually some shade of brown.

Frogs are also slimmer than toads and have much longer legs. They prefer to jump, while toads would rather walk or use small hops to get around. Frogs have tiny teeth on both the upper and lower jaws. Toads don't have teeth at all.

Frogs live mostly in the water, and must make their homes near a water source. Toads live on land, and proximity to water is not necessary. Frogs have bulging eyes where toads do not. Toads have poison glands behind their eyes to ward off predators, but many frogs have no such defense mechanism. Frogs eat spiders, worms, insects, and snails. Toads eat ants, moths, grubs, slugs, worms, and insects.

Finally, frogs lay their eggs in a cluster while toads lay their eggs in a long chain. A group of frogs is called an army, and a group of toads is called a knot.



Define the following words:

1. Ectothermic _____

2. Respiration _____

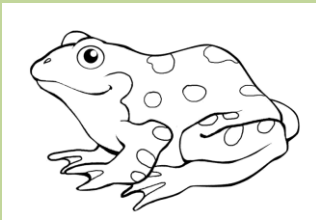
3. Metamorphosis _____

4. Army _____

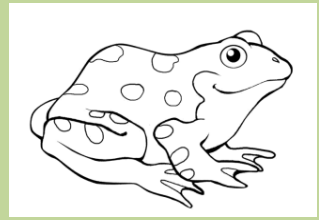
5. Knot _____

Use the following chart to list the differences and similarities of frogs and toads.

Frogs	Toads



Frog and Toad Observations



Frog or Toad (circle one)

Length _____

Color _____

Activity _____

Where found _____

Weather Conditions

sky (circle one):

Sunny

Cloudy

Rainy

Temperature:

Wind:

Strong

Light

None

Water source nearby?

Yes

No

How close is the frog to the water?

Size of water source:

Eggs spotted?

Yes

No