

# THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG

ADAPTED BY ROBIN KINGSLAND

INSIGHT PACK

Nottingham  
Playhouse

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If you would like this as a Microsoft word resource please email us and we will send it to you [laurar@nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk](mailto:laurar@nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk)

## Plot synopsis

Filbert the Frog lives in a well in the wood at the bottom of the Palace Garden. One day Princess Fenella is playing with her dad's golden ball and she drops it. It lands at the bottom of the well. Filbert says he will rescue it on three conditions - that he should be a guest at the Royal Palace, that he should be able to sit with the princess in the palace and watch TV and eat snacks, and that he can sleep in one of the palace beds. The Princess agrees and leaves with the golden ball. She is horrified when Filbert appears at the Royal Palace expecting the promises to be fulfilled. Once at the Palace the Princess and the frog become friends and Filbert is able to explain to the Princess that he is under a spell from an enchantress as a punishment for breaking promises. Should he not have found someone able to keep their promises to him within a year and a day he will be gobbled up by a seagull. As time runs out, Princess Fenella and Filbert have to fight the evil seagull to save Filbert's life. As Fenella saves Filbert's life and shows him true friendship, the results of the spell begin to dissolve and Filbert is transformed back into a Prince.

## Cast and Creative Team

Princess Fenella                      Charlotte Ellen

Filbert the Frog                      Lee Rufford

Writer                                      Robin Kingsland

Director                                    Allie Spencer

Designer                                  Dorrie Scott

Lighting Designer                      Stephanie Bartle

Composer/Orchestrator/  
Sound Designer                      Adam P McCready

Movement Director                    Amanda Hall

Production Manager                    Jill Robertshaw

Stage Manager                          Louise Pearson

**Rehearsal  
photography by  
Robert Day**

**Production  
photography by  
Alan Fletcher**

Insight pack written by Allie Spencer, Nathan Powell and Jane Siddons.



## Meet The Team

### Lee Rufford plays FILBERT

What other acting jobs have you done?

All types of acting. Mainly stage but also Film/TV and Radio. I've recently finished recording the part of Smith in BBC Radio 4's adaptation of 'The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner'. I have also appeared in Paddy Considine's directorial debut Tyrannosaur which won a BAFTA for best film in 2011.



I've also done several national tours - playing Tony in Richard Conlon's 'The Boy at the Edge of the Room', Tim in Gary Owen's 'Free Folk' and the Corporal in Rory Mullarkey's 'Each Slow Dusk'.

How long have you been acting?

7 years... and three years training before that.

Did you have to have special training to be an actor?

I trained at The Oxford School Of Drama.

What has been your favourite part/character so far?

The Corporal in Rory Mullarkey's *Each Slow Dusk*... but I haven't started rehearsing for the frog yet...



**What is the best thing about being an actor?**

Getting the time to explore and research other people's lives in depth and to bring them and their words and stories to life. Also getting to meet new people and tour the country.

**What is the hardest thing about being an actor?**

Managing to get seen for the right parts.

**When you are not acting, what other jobs do you do?**

I try to keep creative and I write poetry and play music sometimes. I work for a private events company in London and pick up other flexible work to pay the bills when there is no acting for a while. I also worked as a greenskeeper for a while and I'm quite good at grafting and gardening so these skills come in handy in the summer months from time to time.

**What are you looking forward to most about *The Princess and the Frog*?**

Working with a small, tight-knit team and exploring a kind of storytelling and theatre that is fairly new to me.

**How are you like your character?**

I'm calm and athletic. Both very frog-like characteristics.



**What instruments do you play?**

I play guitar and I sing.

**How long have you been learning?**

4/5 years.

**How much practice did you have to do a week when you started learning?**

I'd play for an hour so three or four times a week.



**Do you still have to do lots of practice?**

I go through phases and it's an ongoing process to improve. You never stop learning with the guitar.

**Would you recommend learning an instrument while you are still at school?**

Yes, yes, yes. It will teach you patience and healthy discipline and it will bring you joy. Also, it's so much easier for us to absorb information and learn new skills when we are younger. I wish I had started earlier.

**What's the best thing about playing an instrument?**

The joy it gives to others. I go to folk gigs often just to revel in the musicianship and the storytelling.

**What is your favourite children's story?**

I loved and still do love *The Animals of Farthing Wood*. Why? I like that it's set out in nature and tells a very real, beautiful and brutal story about family, togetherness, loyalty, our environment and change.

## **Charlotte Ellen plays PRINCESS FENELLA**

**What other acting jobs have you done?**

I have just finished playing Phyllis in *The Fletton Railway Children* in Peterborough and before that I was performing the part of Leonid Borodin in a new dramatisation of a lost Russian book. I have done a fair bit of Shakespeare playing roles as varied as Puck and Emilia in *Othello*, Phebe in *As You Like It* and Juliet Capulet.



I love panto and have played Peter Pan, Cinderella, Maid Marion and the Villain, Fleshcreep. Once I had to go on as the Dame (Nurse Penny Cillin) at two hours notice because one of the cast got sick.

**How long have you been acting?**

I have been acting professionally for 5 years, since I completed my repertory training, but I did my first professional job 10 years ago. I have known it was what I wanted to do since I studied drama at school at the age of 15.

**Did you have to have special training to be an actor?**

I think I have been constantly 'training' since I began acting. Like any craft there is always more learning and honing of skills to do, so you certainly can, and will, get better by doing the work, regardless of whether or not you formally train first. I trained in a very traditional way as an apprentice with a repertory company which I loved and helped me develop strength and versatility of voice, emotion and physicality as well as teaching me to read and access a text quickly to recognise character and structure. However, I know training at an accredited drama school can be very useful, especially when you are starting out.

**What has been your favourite part/character so far?**

I honestly enjoy the variety in the roles I get to play, having said that there are always the classic roles which you dream about playing and it's fun when those opportunities come up. A *Midsummer Night's Dream's* Puck was certainly one of those, Elvira, the mischievous ghost in *Blithe Spirit* was

another. There are also sometimes moments that you could never have imagined, for example I got to play Peter Pan on the 110th anniversary of the first performance, in Dumfries, which the writer, J.M. Barrie called 'The genesis of Neverland', there was a strong sense of that role passing from performer to performer, introducing new audiences to a beloved character and welcoming those that knew the story back and I felt fortunate on that day to be part of that legacy.

### **What is the best thing about being an actor?**

The best thing about being an actor is making magic happen for a living. I love the variety of the work, the travel, the collaborative environment with creative people, I even find satisfaction in the tenacity and discipline needed to find the work in the industry, but mostly I love discovering and sharing stories. At its best, particularly in theatre, you get to perform a form of alchemy, becoming someone new and transporting the audience in to a different world for a while, these moments are my favourite thing about being an actor.

### **What is the hardest thing about being an actor?**

It's learning to retain self-worth and confidence between productions. It took me a long time to understand and even longer to master the fact that I'm still an actor between roles. Applying for work and auditioning is in fact a crucial part of the job when you chose to undertake it as a profession. What made this realisation more difficult is the fact nobody pays you during this time and you are basically only accountable to yourself, which goes against the ways society normally measures success. However realising that my time and effort is an investment in my own business means I spend less time worrying and I am better able to use the times between work to make progress.

### **When you are not acting, what other jobs do you do?**

I have done a lot of things; I have managed a Sushi Bar whilst training, taught drama workshops and led parties and done a lot of corporate work and promotions, which use a similar skill set to acting. I have worked in attractions like Disneyland Paris and The York Dungeon and I also make costumes which can provide a useful income between jobs.



**What are you looking forward to most about *The Princess and the Frog*?**

I grew up in Melton Mowbray so Nottingham Playhouse was one of the first theatres I visited and it is exciting to get to work on a project there. I also love working at Christmas and it is wonderful to be sharing the magic, doing my favourite thing in a family show at this time of year.

**How are you like your character?**

I'm quite young at heart and my size and playing age means I often play children, also, I think I relate to the fact that Fenella has a good heart and is always trying to do what she thinks is best, which is why she is so likeable, even when she's in the wrong. But I actually love her most because of what makes her different to me; her attitude and the fact she's quite spoilt with a sense of entitlement makes her great fun to play because she's shameless. I'm not sure I could get away with being an actor with that sense of entitlement because it's hard work... but every now and then I get to pretend I am a Princess and I won't complain when that happens.

**What instruments do you play?**

I play the clarinet and the recorder. I'm learning the soprano saxophone for this show.

**How long have you been learning?**

I started playing the recorder when I was 6 and the clarinet when I was 8.



**How much practice did you have to do a week when you started learning?**

I had my hour long lesson every week and used to play in a couple of local orchestras. My mum used to ask us to practice for 30 minutes a day, but I am not sure I always did it, which is probably why I was never truly excellent. But as with everything in life the more you put in the more you get out of it!

**Do you still have to do lots of practice?**

I don't practice nearly enough, often I'm away for work and I'm not always required to play so sometimes I can go for a long time without playing, but I look forward to playing more and rebuilding my skills when I get the chance as part of a job, as in this case.

**Would you recommend learning an instrument while you are still at school?**

Yes. Playing an instrument is a life skill. If you learn to read music it means you can learn more than one instrument. It's a fun way to meet and make friends by joining orchestras and if you really love it, it can lead to a creative career - even as an actor, it certainly helps that I was taught to play an instrument as a child.

**What's the best thing about playing an instrument?**

Learning to play your favourite songs and being able to get together and create music with other people.

**What is your favourite children's story?**

*The Secret Island* by Enid Blyton. Ever since reading this book (where four children run away and live all by themselves without any grown-ups) I have always dreamt of living on an island and keeping a cow in a cave!



## **Robin Kingsland is a playwright and is the WRITER of *The Princess and the Frog***

### **What's the best thing about being a writer?**

The best thing is when you suddenly think of an idea - a line, or a bit of action - that you just know will work and solve a problem or create a moment that very simply tells you a lot about the characters or the story. There's a posh word for it - "Epiphany" - but most writers just call it a "light-bulb moment" because it's just like the moment when a character in a cartoon strip gets an idea and a little light-bulb appears above their head. See if you can guess when I had my "light-bulb" moments in "Princess and the Frog"!



### **How many plays have you written?**

I've written eighteen plays - including plays for young audiences, young adults, and adults, three "Urban Family Pantos" and a hip-hop blank verse adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. A couple of my plays have toured and there have been productions in Singapore and Mexico. In addition I've written and directed 6 narrative scripts for a Performing Arts School that I'm very involved in, and countless sketches and comedy links.

### **Is it hard to write a play for children? Why/why not?**

I started my career setting up my own theatre company with college friends so I've been working for children and young people from day one. The only hard thing about writing (or performing) for this audience is that if you lose or bore a grown up audience, they will still be polite, and stay quiet and applaud at the end. If you bore a child for even 30 seconds, they'll start doing something else! So you have to keep things interesting. I think writing for children should be compulsory for adult playwrights!

Did you have special training to be a writer? No. I tried to write a play when I was at college training to be a teacher - it was *terrible*. When we set up the company, someone from the group fancied himself as a writer, but invited me to join early so that he could "bounce ideas off me". When the final script was cut and performed, I realised that all bar about two pages were mine. He suddenly left the company and I realised that perhaps I could be a decent writer... After that I studied how audiences reacted, and I

learned a lot from working with excellent theatre companies like Polka and Quicksilver Theatre.

### **Was it difficult turning a well-known story into a play?**

The most difficult thing was having to tell the story with only two characters. The story itself is nice and simple, and they are the most fun to adapt because if the plot moves in a very simple way, you don't have to spend ages explaining things (there's a posh word for that too - it's called "Exposition"), which means you have more time to have fun with the characters - and the characters are what turn a piece of *storytelling* into a play!

### **Which scene did you enjoy writing most?**

I enjoyed writing the whole thing. It was lovely to get inside Fenella's sense of 'princessy' importance and bossiness, and work Filbert's "secret identity" in. But in a way the most fun element for me was brought in by having only two actors and being asked if they could stay in the same characters. I wanted the King to be present - and Allie (the show's director) and I had discussed Fenella being quite "modern" - with a telly, and action figures and popcorn - and that gave me the idea that she could have a royal mobile phone.

I was then able to create "Her Dad the King" just through the phone conversations Fenella has with him. I hope that audiences will almost feel that have seen him, just by building a strong picture of him in their heads through those "conversations".



**When you are writing a song, do you come up with the words or the tune first?**

I usually find myself trying to think of a rhythm first - do I want the song to have a bouncy energetic feel, or a slightly sadder or "scuffing along the street feeling sorry for itself" feel (Like Filbert's Song). Then a tune will start to come into my head, and usually a key phrase will come by itself. After that, I often write down in ordinary, very un-rhyming writing what I feel that character is feeling and thinking, and then I fit that into a rhyme scheme that fits the tune. Then comes the painful bit for my family, which is when I plonk about on the piano trying to find chords that fit. It's a bit like the musical equivalent of the ugly sisters trying to fit the slipper on their feet!!

**What's the hardest thing about writing a song?**

Most of it! Actually the hardest bit is finalising the rhyme scheme and the precise wording. Lines in a song have an internal rhythm and rhyme, and you find yourself tweaking it in your head even when you want to be finished with it. It does have its light-bulb moments too though - I remember when I had the idea for the extra rhyme in the line "The promise you keep is worth a heap of gold". That was very satisfying.



**What instruments do you play and when did you start learning? If you started learning at school, how much practice did you have to do every day/week? Do you still have to do that much practice?**

I'm afraid I only ever learnt one instrument at school and that was flute - and I didn't keep it up. However I was very lucky to grow up in a very musical home. I had a brother who was a brilliant guitarist, my mum played piano, and we all sang (I know - we sound like the Waltons!). One day my parents went to collect my brother from collage - a round trip of three hours or so. I sat down when they left and tried to work out the chords of Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody". Next thing I know I'd worked out the chords and they were walking back through the door! I started playing drums when I was a teenager - and I can now "plonk" on the piano and thrash out simple chord sequences on the guitar. What I can't do is play and sing at the same time! As soon as I start singing, the chords start to wander all over the map! Truly awful!

**What other jobs do you do when you are not writing plays?**

When I'm not writing, you'll find me acting (I have worked quite a few times at Nottingham Playhouse, and I'm about to go to the theatre to perform as I write this!) or increasingly, directing. I've also in my time written for Children's Television, and when I write children's books, I've been very lucky to have the chance to illustrate them myself. I like to keep myself busy!

**Have you a message for your audience?**

I hope you all enjoy watching *The Princess and the Frog* as much as I enjoyed writing it. Someone once said that "if you do something you love, you never work a day in your life". I feel incredibly blessed and privileged that my life has been exactly that. I work hard, but because I love what I do, I come out with more energy, rather than less! I'm very, very lucky!



## Dorrie Scott is the DESIGNER

What do you have to consider/think about when designing for a theatre production?

We know what happens in the story, but what does the story look like? What do the characters look like? How big is the stage? Will all of the audience be able to see everything on stage? Will it fit through the door of the theatre or school?!

What are the stages you go through when designing for a show?

First you read the script and talk to the Director about their ideas. Then you work out the different settings in the play, so in *The Princess and the Frog* there are 2 settings which are outside the palace walls, and inside the princess's bedroom. Then you draw sketches of the different places and how you might want them to look, playing around with lots of different ideas at this stage.

Then you choose the settings that work best with the show, you then make a very small 3D model of the whole stage and set, with all of the furniture, shapes, materials and colours that you want to see in the finished set - this is usually so small it could fit in your lunch box. The designer will give the model to the set builders and painters who will make it to be exactly the same but in life size pieces.





Princess  
Fenella



Filbert  
- Outside

The designer will choose costumes for all of the characters to wear. They will draw pictures of all of the characters in their different costumes which will be made for the actors to wear. These are my original costume designs for Fenella and Filbert.

### What other design jobs have you done?

In the past I have designed *Jack* for The Nottingham Playhouse, *Hansel and Gretel* for Red Earth Theatre and Derby Theatre, *Elves and the Shoemaker* for Big Window Theatre Company and Derby Theatre and *Snow White* for Engine House Theatre Company.

### How long have you been designing?

I first started in 2012, which was 4 years ago.

### Did you have to have special training to be a designer?

I did a 3 year Theatre Design course at Nottingham Trent University where I learnt about how to design set and costume for theatre shows. I also learnt a lot by working in theatres, practicing and learning from other people.



*Jack* at Nottingham Playhouse  
2012



**What is the best thing about being a designer?**

My job is really creative, I love making the models - it's like making really fun dolls house. I still get to play all of the games that I did when I was a child, but I get paid for it! I love working with a team of people who take a script on a page and make it into a fun and magical world.

**What is the hardest thing about being a designer?**

Before rehearsals start, most of the work is done on your own, which is sometimes lonely.

**What are you looking forward to most about the princess and the frog?**

I can't wait to see the children's reaction when the princess's bedroom is revealed.



**What is your favourite children story? Why?**

*The Three Little Pigs*, because although two of the little pigs were lazy and silly, the three of them still manage to trick and catch the big bad wolf.

## Allie Spencer is the DIRECTOR

Allie is Education Officer for Nottingham Playhouse. She runs workshops and groups for all ages, both at the Playhouse and off-site, creates online resources for Playhouse shows, and is directing *The Shakespeare Schools Massive* in the Spring.



### What other plays have you directed?

I directed last year's *Hare and Tortoise* and I've directed three other plays for Nottingham Playhouse that have toured around schools - *Lessons at 10*, *The Chalk Story*, and *The Bulwell Plays*. I also direct plays for our Youth Theatres, Ensemble and Summer Schools. I directed *Bugsy Malone* in the Summer with a cast of forty 9 - 14 year olds. That was loads of fun!

### Why did you want to direct this play?

I wanted to direct a play that only had two characters in it, who learn something about each other, and themselves. I've always liked the story of *The Princess and the Frog* and it is not performed very much so I asked Robin Kingsland to write a brand new version for us that used a modern Princess.



### What's the most exciting thing about directing the play?

I can't wait to work with the actors in the rehearsal space, especially the section where Filbert arrives at the Palace and wants to play with all Fenella's toys. We're going to have so much fun! I'm also looking forward to using the actors' musical instruments in the space. They are both great musicians and I think live music in a theatre production is really exciting. The songs are great too.

*Rehearsal Photography by Robert Day*

**What will children like about this play?**

You will love the characters of the Princess and the frog - they are both very funny - and maybe even a bit like you! You will also love the fact that you can get involved in the performance. How? You'll have to wait and see!

**What is your favourite children's story?**

My favourite children's stories are all by Noel Streatfeild - "Ballet Shoes" "Curtain Up" and the "Gemma" series. I love them because they are about ordinary children from a fairly poor background who fall in love with the Performing Arts (Drama, Dancing and Music) and make a career out of it. They made me feel that I could do it too if I worked hard enough - and I have!

Fun in rehearsal: (Photographs by Robert Day)



## **Amanda Hall is MOVEMENT DIRECTOR**

**What do you have to consider/think about when choreographing for a theatre production?**

I think about the story we want to tell and the space we are working in. Then I look at the actors and what they can do and any music.



**What are the stages you go through when creating movement for a show?**

I read the story and listen to any music or learn any songs. Then I think about actual steps and movement. I try and prepare as much as I can at home then when I work with the actors we develop the movement together.

**What other choreography jobs have you done?**

I've done a lot of Musical Theatre like *Grease & Bugsy Malone*, and many Pantomimes. I've also choreographed some plays like *Romeo & Juliet* and I choreographed last year's *Hare and Tortoise*

**How long have you been choreographing?**

I have been working as a choreographer for over 30 years!

**Did you have to have special training to be a choreographer?**

I first started dancing when I was 3 years old. I did a lot of performing through school and youth theatre and developed my skills for working with other people. So, my training was more about having lots of experience along with my dancing.

**What is the best thing about being a choreographer/movement director?**

I love being creative and working with people. I like to encourage people to do things they might not have thought possible. Dancing and movement is fun.

**What is the hardest thing about being a choreographer?**

Because dance and movement are physical activities it can be hard work. The actors sometimes have to work very hard to make the movement look easy to the audience.

**What are you looking forward to most about *The Princess and the Frog*?**

I'm looking forward to adding some movement to this lovely story so that it is fun to watch.



**What is your favourite children's story?**

I loved reading *Ballet Shoes* by Noel Streatfeild when I was young but *Matilda* by Roald Dahl is probably one of my favourite stories. It says that we are all unique and should not be held back by our background. It just takes one person to encourage us and we can achieve great things.

## **Louise Pearson is the STAGE MANAGER**

### **What does a stage manager do?**

In rehearsals: I watch rehearsals and write down everything that happens during the show, in a special script called The Book. This means if something is forgotten on stage, I can check the book to see what is supposed to happen.



It also means that if the show was done again with different people, they could look at my book and perform it exactly as we did. If the director or actors have any questions during rehearsals, it is my job to pass these on to the right people.

When the show is on: Before the show I set up the stage and put all the props where they need to start, as they often move around during the performance. During the show I operate the sound and lights from the back of the theatre, using the book I made in rehearsals to tell me when things need to happen. If there is something the actors can't do, like changing a scene, then I will do that too. I also help to look after the cast and make sure they are happy and safe on stage.

### **What training did you have to be a stage manager?**

I went to university to learn about how a theatre works and there I learnt the basics of a lot of different theatre jobs, because I wasn't sure what I wanted to do. When I knew I wanted to be a stage manager I did a lot of work experience, watching what stage managers do and learning 'on the job'. But there are a lot of ways to become a stage manager. You can go to university like me, or you can start by doing little jobs backstage, or you can just do lots and lots of work experience!

### **What is the best thing about your job?**

I love my job because it involves meeting lots of new people and doing different exciting things every day! My favourite part of the job is seeing the audience's reaction to the show, because it makes all our hard work worth it!

## PROMISES PROMISES

From "The Princess and the Frog". Music & Lyrics by Robin Kingsland

**C**                      **C#dim**  
A promise is a special thing  
**G**  
There's no doubt of it.  
**F**                                      **G**  
So don't go crossing your fingers  
**C**                                      **C7**  
To try and wriggle out of it.  
**F**                                      **Fm**  
Some people go back on their word -  
**C**                                      **A7**  
Once it's spoken...Or so I've heard - They don't  
**Dm**                                      **D7**                      **G**  
See the world's a little bit sadder, when they do...

FENELLA  
**C**                                      **Am**  
I promise- I promise- I promise

FILBERT  
**F**                                      **G**  
That's just words - so easy to say

FENELLA  
**Dm**                                      **G**  
I promise- I honestly promise

FILBERT  
**C**                                      **G**  
People say them a million times a day  
**F**                                      **Fm**

If you break a promise it's a bad, bad thing

**C**

**A**

If I may make so bold

**F**

**G**

**C**

**A7**

But the promise you keep is worth a heap of gold

FENELLA

A promise is easy-peasy

No big trick to it.

You just say what you're going to do -

And then just stick to it.

FILBERT

So when you get home, don't dare forget me

I could be a good friend if you'd just let me

It just takes a little bit of trust between me and you

FENELLA

I promise- I promise I promise

FILBERT

Just saying it, doesn't make it so!

FENELLA

I promise- I promise- I promise

And now I've really got to go!!

FILBERT/FENELLA

Promises, promises...

Cross my heart, and **greenie-swear**, it's true.....

FILBERT

Keep your promise to me and I'll always be there - For you!

*Riff continues under dialogue*

FENELLA: Wait.. is this a good promise or a bad promise?

FILBERT: Erm...



FENELLA: Because not all promises are good... like, like, if someone is being mean or doing something you don't like, or doing something that you know is wrong.

FILBERT: Okay, that would be a bad promise. A real friend wouldn't ask you to do that.

FENELLA: Or what if they say they'll hurt if you break your promise and tell.

FILBERT: That's not even a promise. You can't force someone to promise, or to keep secrets. Wait... (to audience) you heard me promise to get the princess' ball back didn't you? (Audience respond) and you heard the Princess promise to let me stay, too didn't you? (they respond) so none of what we promised is secret. It's all out in the open. Anyone can know about it... So, Princess ... do we have a deal?

FENELLA

Okay - I promise- I promise

FILBERT

Princess - I'm holding you to that!

FENELLA

I promise- I promise!

FILBERT

Cos I need a break from this dreary habitat!

Keep an eye out, cos one day soon you'll hear me shout "yoo hoo!"

**F**

And you'd better not ignore

**Cdim6**

The Froggie outside your door

**C**

'Cos in front of this lot you swore

**F**

**G**

**C**

That I could come - and- stay - with you!

This song looks at examples of when a promise should be kept and when it should be broken. Look at the dialogue that goes over the instrumental:

FILBERT:

Keep your promise to me and I'll always be there - For you!

*Riff continues under dialogue*

FENELLA: Wait.. is this a good promise or a bad promise?

FILBERT: Erm...

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FENELLA:

Okay - I promise

### **To think about.....**

Filbert promises that he will help and always be a friend to the princess.

The Princess agrees that she will let the Filbert stay at the Palace.

Filbert points out that you can't force someone to promise. You also can't force someone to keep a promise - you have to trust that they will keep it - but there are no guarantees. He also points out that you can't force someone to keep a secret.

What examples can you think of when promises or secrets shouldn't be kept?

## Story Comprehension Activities

### Activity 1: Constructing Images

Draw a map quest or journey based on details from the story. Map the events in a story. Children recall and retell the story using the map. Children can work collaboratively to map other stories and make comparisons between them. The maps can be circular or linear from A to B.

### Activity 2: Freeze Frame

Children work in groups to create a still photograph or drama freeze frame of part of the story. Take a photograph with a digital camera and upload it to the computer. On the Interactive White Board or individual computers children can add bubbles to each character and write in their thoughts or speech.

### Activity 3: Hot Seating

Take on the role of a character from the story and sit in the "hot seat". Children create questions of the character and you give answers "in role". Encourage children to ask more deep and probing questions.

### Activity 4: Word Banks

Make a list of any new words. Use a thesaurus to extend these words with others of similar meaning. Encourage children to use the wider vocabulary in their oral retelling.

### Activity 5: Feeling Maps

Encourage children to think how a character might be feeling. Can they identify with the character, i.e. how Filbert felt when Princess Fenella wouldn't let him play with her toys? Draw a feelings map or graph to show how emotions change throughout the story.

### Activity 6: Drawing Characters

Draw a character from the story. Surround the character with words and phrases to describe them. Draw thought bubbles to write down their feelings.

### Activity 7: Summarising

Write a blurb for the story. Can you write in only 15 words? Can you write it using only two sentences? Which parts of the story are pivotal, which can be left out of the summary?

### Activity 8: Problem Solving

Stop telling the story at the point where a character faces a problem and has a decision to make. Make a list of possible solutions to the dilemma with ideas from

the children. Consider if some ideas could be sequenced in the story. Try out some suggestions.

- Who are the main characters?
- Where is the story set at the beginning?
- What is the title of the story?
- What happens at the beginning?
- What choices do the main characters make?
- What are the dreams and wishes of main character?
- What happens at the end?
- Name other settings in the story

### Activity 9: Recapping

Story Bag - recapping the story after the children have seen the play.

Create a story bag using these pictures or words. Alternatively children could cut these out themselves and tell their own story to a partner. There are few things here that aren't in the story. Ask the children to work out what they are.

Princess

Frog

Seagull

Crown

Palace

Golden Ball

King

Fountain

Prince

Television/ TV

Ring

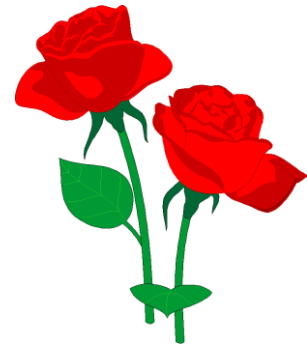
Popcorn

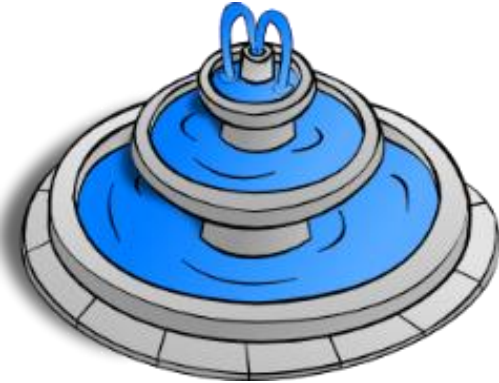
Football

Enchantress / Witch

Well

Flowers





## Limited Story Plots in the World

It has been said that there are only a certain number of basic plots in all of literature, and that any story is really just a variation on these plots. Depending on how detailed they want to make a "basic" plot, writers have used them all around the world and for centuries. Some people say that there are only seven variations.

As a class brainstorm all the stories you know and write them on card or Post-it notes. Now decide how you might group some of them together as having a similar basic plot. Use headings from the children e.g.:

### **Trickery**

King Lion and the Monkey Farm  
The Three Little Pigs  
Red Riding Hood  
Anansi Stories  
Baba Yaga Bony Legs  
Stone Soup  
Hansel and Gretel

### **Transformation**

Cinderella  
The Princess and the Frog  
Beauty and the Beast  
Ugly Duckling

### **Adventure**

Wind in the Willows  
Alice in Wonderland

### **Knowledge**

Rumpelstiltskin

### **Learning about yourself**

The Three Wishes  
Magic Porridge Pot  
The Awongalema Tree  
Tikki Tikki Tembo  
The Hare and the Tortoise

### **Chase**

Gingerbread Man  
Teeny-Tiny and the Witch-Woman  
Runaway Pancake

### **Co-operation**

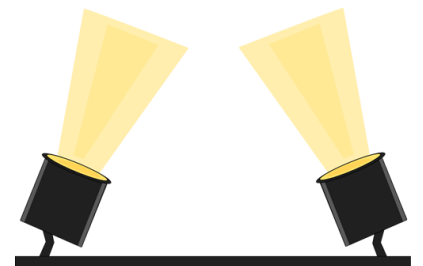
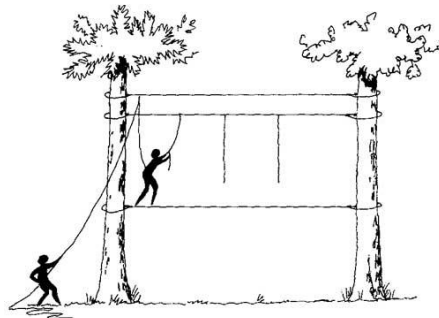
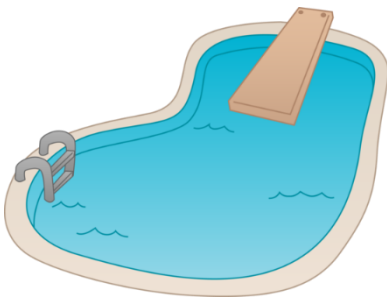
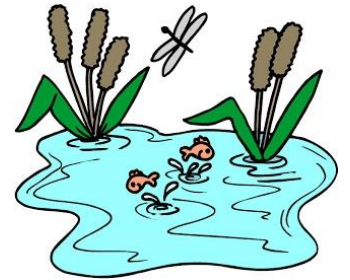
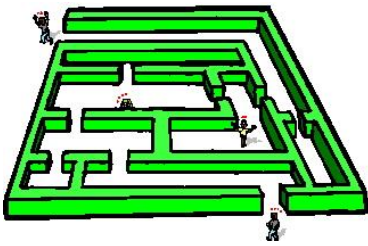
The Enormous Turnip

Some stories may fall into more than one category. Where would the children place these?

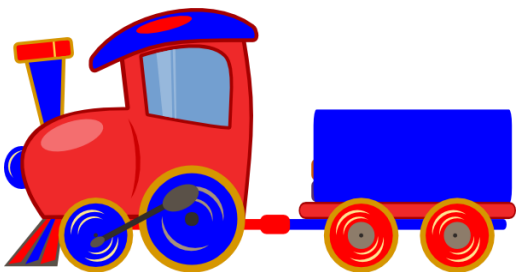
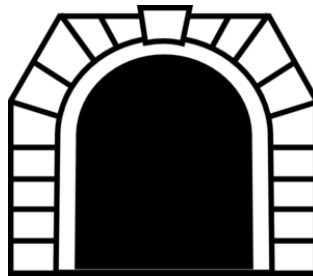
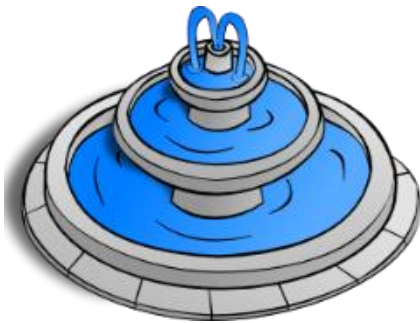
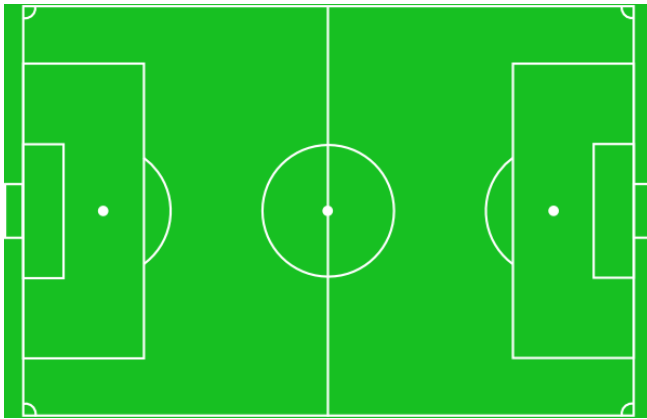
You could also group stories by country or continent. The stories children know could be plotted on a world map. They could find stories from the countries that are not highlighted on the map. Why are stories from some countries hard to find? Maybe they have a story telling culture, passes down from mouth to mouth rather than a written culture.

## Design a Palace garden and a new home for Filbert

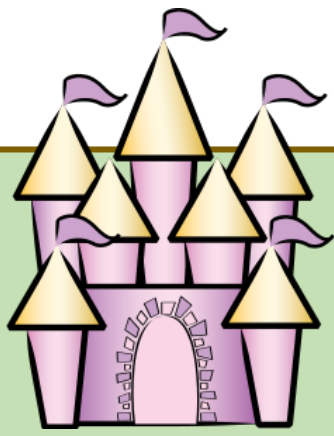
Can you design the Palace grounds? What things would you put in there? Here are some suggested items. Can you draw some more? You can use our garden structure or draw your own. We have taken most of our images from clipart. Maybe you could find some more?







Princess Fenella wants a new home for Filbert built in the palace grounds. Can you design a new home for him? Where in the Palace grounds should it go?



## High frequency word Bingo

All the words below are used in *The Princess and the Frog*. Twenty are high frequency words. The other ten are regular words in the play. There is a full list of the words used that can be cut out alongside bingo cards.

the	that	not	look	all	go
can	little	back	I	of	time
I'm	what	get	there	dad	like
people	make	well	bed	ball	Friend
promise	Royal	King	palace	frog	Princess

the	that	not
can	little	back
promise	Royal	King

look	all	go
I	of	time
palace	frog	Princess

I'm	what	get
people	make	well
bed	ball	friend

there	dad	like
bed	ball	friend
little	well	I

can	little	back
I'm	ball	get
people	frog	well

there	dad	like
look	all	go
palace	frog	Princess

the	that	not
King	frog	I'm
Princess	what	get

what	get	there
make	well	bed
little	King	palace

I	of	not
frog	dad	like
bed	ball	well

the	go	not
can	frog	back
dad	bed	get

friend	ball	bed
palace	frog	I
can	little	back

the	that	not
can	little	back
Royal	what	get
people	make	well
promise	I'm	King
look	all	go
Princess	of	time
there	dad	like
friend	ball	bed
palace	frog	I

There are more than 6000 species of frog

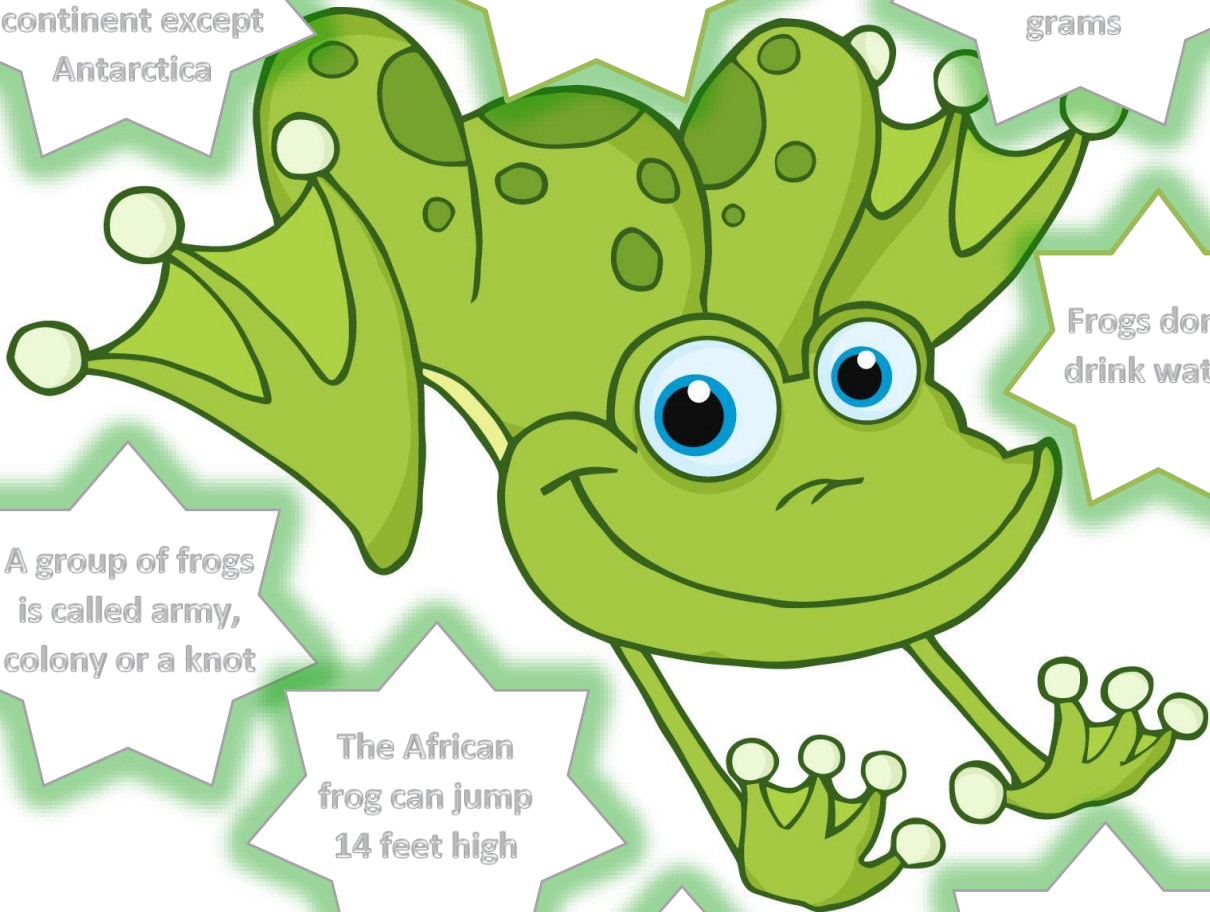
Some frogs have poisonous skin to protect them from predators

The largest frog is the Goliath frog which weighs 6.6 pounds

Frogs are found on every continent except Antarctica

## FROG FUN FACTS

The smallest frog is the gold frog which weighs 200 grams



Frogs don't drink water

A group of frogs is called army, colony or a knot

The African frog can jump 14 feet high

Frogs are cold-blooded

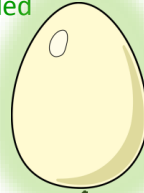
The word "amphibian" comes from a Greek word that means "both lives." because frogs start their lives in the water and then live on land

Frogs are amphibians



# The Life Cycle of a Frog

Frogs lay their eggs in water to let the egg develop. A group of frog eggs is called frog spawn.



11 weeks after the egg was laid, a frog emerges from the water and begins its life on the land, now with fully formed legs and lungs.



When that frog is an Adult, it can lay eggs.

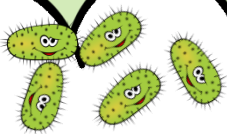
After 5 weeks the tadpole begins to grow legs and lungs so that it can walk and breathe in its life as a frog on the land.



After 21 days the embryo leaves its shell and attaches itself to a weed in the water. This is now the tadpole (baby frog).



The cell in the egg splits into two. Those cells then split into four and so on, until there are many cells.



The cells then turn into an embryo. The Embryo begins to form organs and gills.



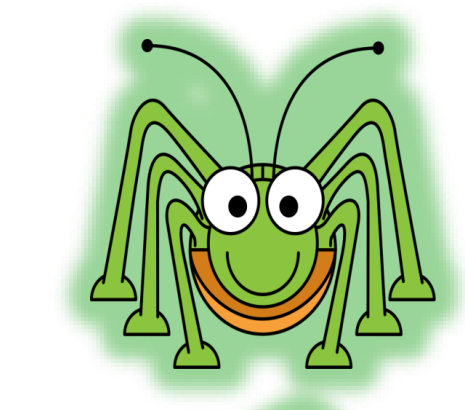
## Where Do Frogs Like To Live?



Frogs like to live near water.

Why?

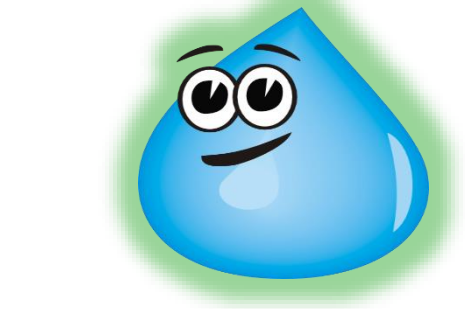
This is where baby tadpoles grow into adult frogs.



Frogs like to live near lots of bugs and insects.

Why?

Frogs eat these creatures. They use their sticky tongue to catch them.



Frogs like to live in areas that are damp.

Why?

This helps frogs to keep their skin moist. This is important as they have glands on their skin that help them breathe. The moist skin allows them to absorb oxygen from the air.



Frogs like to live around lots of trees and bushes.

Why?

During the winter some frogs need to hibernate. They do this by hiding under leaves or burying themselves in deep mud for the winter.

Underneath each of these pictures, label them 'GOOD' if you think a frog would like to live here, or 'BAD' if you think a frog would be unhappy in this home.

1.



---

2.



---

3.



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4.



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In the Box Below, draw a picture of a great home for a frog!



## Answers

### Good or bad?

1. Good
2. Bad
3. Good
4. Bad

### Key things to look for in the picture.

- Water
- Bugs
- Trees and bushes
- Damp

We hope you have enjoyed both the production of *The Princess and the Frog* and that the Insight pack has been useful.

If you would like this pack as a Microsoft word resource please email Laura Ritty, the Participation Administrator, and she will send you a copy. Email [laurar@nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk](mailto:laurar@nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk)

With best wishes,

The Princess and the Frog team.

January 2017

