



**2020-21**  
PERFORMANCE  
GUIDEBOOK

# Season for Young People



DAVID GONZALEZ OF RAINART PRODUCTIONS  
**THE FROG BRIDE**

Presented by  
 **REGIONS®**



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Season for Young People  
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*Thank you!*



## *Dear Teachers,*

Love, heroic quests, enchanted ladies, Kings, witches, and frogs - this adaptation from Russian folklore has it all! *The Frog Bride* is the quintessential fairy tale tied up in an engaging multimedia package, including a master storyteller and live musicians, weaving the story into projected images and musical pieces.

Combining music composed by Sergei Prokofiev (*Five Melodies for Violin and Piano*) and original tunes by Daniel Kelly and Christian Howes, there are times that the music is the story all on its own.

Storyteller, David Gonzalez, creates magic as he interacts with the projected images, including several paintings by Wassily Kandinsky (*Blue Mountain*, 1908–09, *Sketch for Composition II*, *Small Pleasures*, *Several Circles*, *Dominant Curve*; All owned by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum).

Prepare for a truly enchanting escape into a fairy tale world, with David Gonzalez in *The Frog Bride*.

Sincerely,

*Your Friends at TPAC*

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Written and compiled by Cassie LaFavor.  
Edited by Susan Sanders.

# About *the* FROG Bride

When a frog talks, listen. It's a voice from the wet, murky swamp – half land, half water - where anything can happen.

I first heard *The Frog Bride* story from poet Robert Bly, then I read several versions of it in collections of Russian fairy tales. In this yarn the qualities of innocence, wonder, loss and discovery are clothed in the characters of princes, frogs, witches, and one very enchanted young lady. Yes, he marries a frog, but that is just the beginning of the adventure. *The Frog Bride* has everything I love in stories; great characters and settings, a truly troublesome problem, a quest, and the unearthing of wisdom.

Prokofiev's "Five Melodies for Violin and Piano" was chosen for its beauty, its emotional power and complexity, and because the movements are just the right length.

Kandinsky's paintings were selected from the Guggenheim Museum's collection for their sheer lyrical beauty but also to reflect the artist's evolution as one of the founders of abstract art.

Enjoy!

David Gonzalez



## About David Gonzalez - (Writer/Performer/Producer)

With speech, sound, mime, dance and inspired imagination, nationally acclaimed master storyteller/performer David Gonzalez is keeping the ancient art of storytelling alive. From London's Royal National Theater to Broadway to hundreds of schools across North America, Gonzalez has performed to more than 5,000 audiences worldwide. Gonzalez is a cultural ambassador for the U.S. State Department, and is the proud recipient of the International Performing Arts for Youth "Lifetime Achievement Award for Sustained Excellence." Gonzalez is applauded for his kinetic magnetism and street-style hip humor which have been entertaining and inspiring children for years - hundreds of thousands of happy kids.

Gonzalez has been featured at *Lincoln Center's Out of Doors Festival*, Bill Moyers' documentary *Fooling with Words* on PBS, and *All Things Considered* on NPR, as well as Proctor & Gamble, JP Morgan/Chase, and other corporations. He was one of the featured performers at the *2008 National Storytelling Festival*, Lincoln Center's *2008 Imagination Conversation* symposium, and the *2008 Alliance for a New Humanity* conference alongside Deepak Chopra at the World Trade Center in Barcelona, Spain. He was the host of *New York Kids* on WNYC for eight seasons and is a contributor to NPR's *Studio 360*. *The Frog Bride* was nominated for a 2006 *Drama Desk Award* for "Unique Theatrical Experience."



Photo Credit: © Stephanie Berger

Gonzalez received his doctorate in Music Therapy from NYU's School of Education, where he later taught for 10 years. [www.davidgonzalez.com](http://www.davidgonzalez.com).



# Interview with David Gonzalez

Excerpted from the *Frog Bride* Creative Questions and Program Notes, as well as the Lincoln Center Institute interview "David Gonzalez's Amazing Voyage" conducted by Christopher St. Clair and April Armstrong.

## What makes a good story?

A difficult situation inhabited by great characters, a bucket-full of colorful details, and a brilliant resolution.

## How does Sergei Prokofiev's music support the story?

Sometimes I like to think that the story actually supports the music. Prokofiev's score is so profoundly beautiful that there are times within the show where all else stops and the music carries on functioning to extend the language I am speaking onstage and leading us into a further dimension. These quiet interludes are moments when the music takes hold and reveals itself. The various movements of *Cinq Melodies pour Violon et Piano* propel the story. Prokofiev's genius for knowing, and making available in gorgeous sound, the full range of human feeling lends *The Frog Bride* emotional depth, honesty and passion. Violinist Christian Howes and pianist Daniel Kelly have incorporated motifs from the Prokofiev into their new compositions on modern electric instruments, giving new sonorities and character to the classical music.

## So, at times, there is just the music, no text?

I made a clear decision that no text should be spoken when the Prokofiev music plays. I do shadow-play in silence, when we're using the video piece, but the music really speaks. The Prokofiev piece is scored for acoustic piano and violin, while the incidental music is for the electric keyboard. One of the hard things about this project was getting permission from Prokofiev's estate to use the piece because they wanted the five movements to be played in the original sequence, with nothing in between: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. What I wanted to do was to separate those movements and juggle the order according to the mood or tenor of the piece at the time. It took almost nine months of negotiating back and forth with the estate, but finally, when I told them that the piece would play to young people all over the country, they gave us permission.



David Gonzalez in *The Frog Bride* (original Summer Session version).  
Photo: Jane Hoffer. © 2008 Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.

## Why did you choose the abstract art of Wassily Kandinsky in the piece?

Many years ago I saw a retrospective show of Kandinsky's paintings at Centre Pompidou in Paris. The exhibit began with his early paintings where trees were trees, people were people, and landscapes were landscapes. Gradually, as I moved from painting to painting, and as Kandinsky's work moved toward abstraction, my mind opened to the freedom, beauty and power of modern art. I think I spent five hours there. Since that day I've been a huge fan.

I knew that I wasn't going to speak over Prokofiev's music and that I wanted a visual experience to complement it and add to the mood of the story. Kandinsky, a fellow Russian master, with his strangely beautiful and evocative paintings was the obvious choice. For a long time I have been fascinated by the juxtaposition of music and painting. This "collaboration" of Prokofiev and Kandinsky brings a certain intensity and intelligence to the work, and, since there is no specific spoken narrative along with the paintings, the audience is free to make any associations they wish – the imaginative journey of the piece becomes more individual, more personal. The Guggenheim Museum's Archive department was extremely generous in granting me permission to use digital copies of their extensive collection of Kandinsky's paintings.



Once upon a time a King summons his three sons, telling them it is time to find their brides. According to tradition in the Old Book, each prince must shoot an arrow into the air, and whoever returns the arrow to the prince will become his bride. The eldest brother shot his arrow high in the air, and the banker's daughter returned it. The middle brother shot his arrow, and the general's daughter returned it. The youngest son, Ivon (ee-von) used a crooked little twig for his arrow, which landed in a swamp and was returned to him by...a frog.



The kingdom celebrated the three weddings, but only one prince could become king. According to the Old Book, the only way to decide which prince would reign was to test their brides. The bride who could sew the best shirt would be named Queen, and her husband, King. Ivon, realizing frogs can't sew, became rather upset. He'd never become king with a frog bride.

That night, the frog hopped back to the swamp, where three old and magical women appeared with a beautiful shirt for her. The next morning, the King tried on each bride's shirt. The first two were a mess, but the shirt presented by Ivon's bride was made of white silk with gold buttons and dragons embroidered on the sides. The King, unable to admit a frog made the best shirt, decided that he must have made a mistake when reading the Old Book. He told his sons that it was not a shirt, but a loaf of bread that the brides were meant to make.

Later that night, the frog bride made a beautiful loaf of bread with cinnamon and nuts and raisins. The next morning, the King was astonished. Unwilling to admit that a frog could be Queen, he insisted that he had made another mistake. He declared that the brides should compete in a dance at the ball.

Upon hearing the latest challenge, Ivon began to feel angry and sad. Ivon went to his room and scooped his frog bride into his hand, sarcastically saying, "So frog face, what are you going to wear?" The frog turned, looked at her husband and said, "Ivon, you go to the ball, I'll meet you there in half an hour." Ivon was shocked! A talking frog! Unable to respond, he set out for the ball.

Not long after Ivon arrived, the door to the ballroom opened and a graceful woman entered. The woman walked over to Ivon and revealed that her name was Elena. Ivon looked into her eyes and recognized something familiar and somewhat frog-like - Elena was his Frog Bride! Ivon proudly presented his wife to the court and took her to the dance floor.

Elena, the bride who made the best shirt, baked the best bread and performed the best dance, was pronounced Queen. Ivon was delighted, but a sour thought began to creep into his head...the frog skin. Elena had discarded it for the night, not forever. Ivon excused himself from the ball and ran to his chamber, throwing Elena's frog skin into the fireplace. Elena went to the chamber worried about Ivon. When she arrived, she realized what he had done.

Elena cried, "In ten more days, I would have been free of my frog skin and my awful curse forever! But you burned it, Ivon. You burned my frog skin, and now I must leave." Elena began to disappear in front of Ivon's eyes and she said, "If you want to find me, I will be in the Land of Three Times Nine." Ivon realized what he had done and set out to find the Land of Three Times Nine and his bride.

For years Ivon roamed the land, wandering from village to village, always in search of Elena. One day, Ivon came upon the hut of an old witch. Ivon told the witch of his journey and of his beloved, and she told him Elena lived deep in the forest. Finally, finding his bride and freeing her from the witch's spell, Ivon pledged his undying love for Elena. Elena sees that his heart has truly changed and forgives him. They leave together on a magical flying carpet, returning home at last. Ivon and Elena are married once again, this time as man and woman. And of course....

*They lived happily ever after!*



## Russian Folklore

A folktale is a story or legend handed down from generation to generation, usually through oral retelling. Because of this, there are usually many versions of the same or similar story. For example, the story of *The Frog Bride* is also similar to *Princess Frog*, *The Frog Princess*, *The Tsarevna Frog*, *Ivan the Fool*, and *Vasilisa the Wise*.

- Read the summary of *The Frog Bride* on the previous page as a class or individually and ask students to identify the following elements of a folk tale in *The Frog Bride* - Story beginning, Magic elements, Royalty, Wicked character(s), Good character(s), Goodness rewarded, Numbers used in the story, and Story ending.

## Baba Yaga

In Russian folklore there are many stories of Baba Yaga, the fearsome witch. In some stories she has two older sisters, who are also called Baba Yaga, just to confuse you!

Baba Yaga lives in a hut deep in the forest. Her hut seems to have a personality of its own and can move about on its extra-large chicken legs. Usually the hut is either spinning around as it moves through the forest or stands at rest with its back to the visitor. When the hut stops, it turns to face the visitor and lowers itself down on its chicken legs, throwing open the door with a loud crash.

Thankfully, Baba Yaga appears to have no power over the pure of heart, and those who are 'blessed' (protected by the power of love, virtue, or a mother's blessing).

Although she is mostly portrayed as a terrifying old crone, Baba Yaga can also play the role of a helper and wise woman. In her guise as wise hag, she sometimes gives advice and magical gifts to heroes and the pure of heart. The hero or heroine of the story often enters Baba Yaga's domain searching for wisdom, knowledge and truth. She is all-knowing, all seeing and all-revealing to those who would dare to ask.



## Similar Titles

Students may be familiar with other stories, such as *The Frog Prince*, or the *Princess and the Frog* which sound similar but are actually very different from *The Frog Bride*.

- Compare and Contrast these stories as a class using a Venn Diagram template.



## Common Features of Fairy Tales

- \* The story starts with "Once upon a time..." or something similar.
- \* Magic events, characters, and objects are part of the story - wishes are granted, magic objects are found, etc. Often this is what characterizes a story as a "fairy tale" sub-category of the folk tale genre.
- \* At least one character is good and at least one character is wicked.
- \* At least one character is someone of royalty.
- \* Goodness is rewarded.
- \* Certain numbers (such as three and seven) are part of the story.
- \* Setting is described easily and briefly (humble cottage, magic kingdom) and fits the typical geography of the culture, or it is not mentioned but assumed.
- \* Time is in the past (usually long-ago) and imbedded within the history of the culture, or a fantasy time - any time or any place, timeless or placeless, or "long, long ago."
- \* Extraordinary animals, monsters, or other animated things are often in the story.
- \* One or more of the characters usually learns a lesson.
- \* The story ends with "...they lived happily ever after" or something similar.

# Lesson - You've Got Character!

## Objectives:

- The student will examine common elements and characters of fairy tales.
- The student will apply storytelling techniques to express emotion and enhance the telling of a story in a performance.
- The student will create their own fairy tale story for performance.

**Materials needed:** prepared index cards in bags (or an online random assignment website like Flippity's Randomizer option)

**Teacher Note:** Before class, the teacher will need to prepare the cards for this activity as described below:

- Write several characters on separate index cards and place the cards in a bag.
  - Some suggestions – Princess, Prince, Wizard, Talking Dog, King, Queen, Dragon, Jester, Magical Animal, Fairy, Talking Tree, Mermaid, Wise Sage
- Write settings on separate index cards and place in another bag.
  - Some suggestions – A forest, On a beach, In a magical treehouse, A castle on a cloud, In the Great Hall of a castle, In a field of flowers, A small cottage in the woods, In the shadow of a mountain, A dragon's lair
- Write a problem or conflict on separate index cards and place in a third bag.
  - Some suggestions – A wizard loses his magic, A dragon terrorizes the kingdom, The jester isn't funny, The forest comes to life, The Wise Sage is missing, The King turns into a talking animal
- For more advanced students, consider adding a unique character trait on separate index cards and place in a fourth bag.
  - Some suggestions – Sneezy, Scared of everything, Short-term memory, Talks in rhymes, Clumsy, Begins every sentence with the letter M

## Warm-Up:

- As a class, brainstorm fairy tale titles that students are familiar with and create a list on the board. Discuss the common elements in the fairy tales. For example – castles, royalty, forests, witches, magic, etc. Then, guide students to think of character types that are similar in the stories they listed. Ask students to brainstorm as many fairy tale characters as they can, and write them on the board as well (Wolf, King, Dragon, Old Person, Frog, Princess, Ogre, etc.).
- Ask students to stand in a circle and close their eyes. The teacher will call out a type of character (from the brainstormed list or added ones from the teacher's list), one at a time, and without leaving their spot, students should adjust their bodies to represent that character and freeze like a statue. After each frozen statue is created, have students open their eyes while remaining frozen as their character and look around at their classmates in their frozen positions. Ask them to notice the posture, faces, arm and leg positions, etc. of their classmates. What do they see in common? Repeat this activity several times, using different characters.
- Introduce students to the idea of a 1-person performance, like a storyteller would present. In the *Frog Bride*, students will see the storyteller David Gonzalez use his body and voice for every character in the story. How can one person portray several characters? What elements can the performer add to make each character unique?



David Gonzalez with Daniel Kelly (keyboard) and Christian Howes (violin) in *The Frog Bride* (original Summer Session version). Photo: Jane Hoffer. © 2008 Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.



**Instructional Procedures:**

- Show students the bags of index cards. Each student will draw two character cards, one card from the conflict bag, and one from the setting bag and write down the information. They should return the cards to the bag. Shake up the bags before allowing the next student to select their cards. (Need an easy no-touch option? Try an online tool such as <https://flippity.net/Randomizer.htm> to create lists and assign items randomly to students!)
- Using the information from the cards (setting, conflict and 2 characters), students will write a short fairy tale based on those elements.
- Finally, students should prepare to share their stories with the class as a performance. Students should practice being expressive with their voice, body and movement so that each of their two characters is interesting and unique. They should consider how the characters walk, their posture, gestures, expressions, voice, etc. Allow them time to rehearse with partners or in small groups to get feedback and before their final performance.

**Closing Discussion:**

- What was the biggest challenge for you in playing more than one character?
- What things did you feel worked the best in your performance?
- What elements do you think David Gonzalez will use in *The Frog Bride* to make his characters distinct?

# Lesson : Fairytale-ing

A lesson by Rising Moon Bishop.

## Objectives:

- The student will classify elements and language of fairy tales.
- The student will construct a fairy tale version of an introduction using language common to fairy tales.

**Materials needed:** none

## Discuss:

- Lead students in a discussion of what makes a story a *fairytale*. Is it the characters, setting, or events? Is there a particular kind of language one expects in a fairytale?
- Generate a list of examples of some fairytale elements and language. The list might include things such as magical items, a hero/heroine, a villain, a happy ending, “and they all lived happily ever after,” etc. (A listing of common elements is included on page 4.)

## Instructional Procedures:

- Pair students and ask them to introduce themselves to each other by saying their name and two things they did that morning. For example, “I’m Kayla. I ate oatmeal for breakfast and I rode the bus to school.”
- Now, students will prepare to introduce their partner to the class. They will begin with the phrase, “Once upon a time...” and add any elements and language that makes the introduction sound more like a fairytale introduction. These new introductions can be as fanciful as students dare to be. Encourage students to elaborate, using lots of fairytale language. For example, “Once upon a time, there was a young princess named Kayla who was forced to eat gruel for breakfast every single morning. One day a large, yellow chariot came to take her away to a strange castle full of other princes and princesses a lot like her.”
- Allow time for students to practice with their partners. Encourage students to experiment with their facial expressions, tone of voice and language in ways they feel will make the story more engaging to the listeners.
- Invite students to introduce their partner to the class, using their “fairytale-ing” version.

## Closing Discussion:

- How do the final introductions compare to the initial introductions students shared with each other? What are the main differences?
- Can the listeners determine what the initial introduction might have been before “fairytale-ing” it?
- Do these new introductions remind students of any well-known fairytales? Which ones and why?

## Folk Tale or Fairy Tale?

Is *The Frog Bride* a Folk Tale or Fairy Tale?

The answer is...BOTH!  
A Fairy Tale is considered to be a sub-category of the Folk Tale genre.

# Lesson: It's Not Easy Being Green

Throughout history and cultures, people have written stories about frogs. Humans and frogs have a bond that transcends biological connections. What child hasn't followed or been fascinated by a frog? This lesson asks students to consider what it would be like to transform into a frog themselves!

## Objectives:

- The student will hypothesize how transforming into an animal would affect someone.
- The student will research frogs and their habitats for use in their original poems.
- The student will write a poem imagining they are frogs transforming into humans or vice versa.

**Materials needed:** Paper, Pencils, Crayons or markers for illustrating stories

## Warm-Up:

- Ask students to stand up and pretend they are like Elena in *The Frog Bride*, and turned into a frog. How would their body transform from human into frog? Ask students to use their bodies to pantomime the transformation from a human into a frog. Select a few students to share their movement in front of the whole class and discuss what elements everyone notices in the transformation. What stands out about this one – Is the facial expression especially frog-like? Did the movement of the hands and feet make it clear they were becoming webbed? What elements help tell the story?

## Instructional Procedures:

- Read the poem "Magic Words" (right) from Inuit legend to the class. Ask students if they could turn into any animal, which one would they choose and why? Give students a few minutes to journal a response.

## Discuss:

- How are human life and frog life similar and how are they different? What would life be like if students transformed into a frog. What words might a person say to turn into a frog or toad? What would they say to change back?
- Now reverse the situation and consider a frog turning into a person. What is life like now? How might the human world be challenging for your frog person? What would the frog miss from its former life?
- Ask students to write a poem about a frog turning into a human, or a human turning into a frog.

**Closing Discussion:** Share poems. What was each frog character like? What happened to the characters when they transformed?

## "Magic Words"

By Edward Field and recorded by Knute Rasmussen.

In the very earliest time,  
When both people and animals lived on earth,  
A person could become an animal if he wanted to  
And an animal could become a human being.  
Sometimes they were people  
And sometimes animals  
And there was no difference.  
All spoke the same language.  
That was the time when words were like magic.  
The human mind had mysterious powers.  
A word spoken by chance  
Might have strange consequences.  
It would suddenly come alive  
And what people wanted to happen could happen  
All you had to do was say it.  
Nobody could explain this:  
That's the way it was.



David Gonzalez in *The Frog Bride* (original Summer Session version).  
Photo: Jane Hoffer. © 2008 Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.

# Lesson: Painting the Music

A lesson by Rising Moon Bishop.



## Objectives:

- The student will illustrate the shapes and lines they hear in music using their bodies and then paint.
- The student will investigate works of Kandinsky.
- The student will create artwork representing music and critique artwork of others.

**Materials needed:** various instrumental music pieces, CD player, paint/crayons/markers

## Warm-Up:

- Instruct students to close their eyes while you play a piece of instrumental music. What do students notice about the music? Invite them to imagine that the music is a painting they are seeing in their minds. What sorts of lines do they imagine the music to have (straight, curvy, diagonal, zigzag, etc.)? What shapes and colors come to mind as they listen?
- Play snippets of a variety of instrumental music and invite students to illustrate the music in the air with their hands. Divide the class in half and allow one half to “perform” while the other half observes.
- What sort of movements do students observe in their classmates’ “air paintings?” What are the qualities of the movements (slow, choppy, swooping, etc.)? Are there similarities in the movements among performers? How do the movements change as the music changes?

## Instructional Procedures:

- Play the same piece again and let students spontaneously express the music on paper using paints, markers or crayons. Encourage them to fill the whole page with color/imagery.
- Compare work. Where are there similarities and differences? Can students identify elements of the music in the paintings others created? What does the “background” represent?
- Repeat this experience but play the music (or series of similar musical pieces) over and over while students paint more slowly and intentionally, consciously focusing on the types of lines, shapes and colors inspired by the music.

## Discuss:

- What was it like for students to paint in response to music? What were the challenges? What do the final compositions have in common with the music? With each other?
- Share an image of one of Wassily Kandinsky’s paintings. Explain that Kandinsky was fascinated by the emotional power of music and by the parallels in music and visual art. He sought to explore the parallels in his artwork.

## Kandinsky – Musical Art

*Wassily Kandinsky was one of the first modern artists who painted abstract shapes to express feelings, rather than creating pictures of objects and people.*

*Kandinsky was fascinated by music’s emotional power. Because music expresses itself through sound and time, it allows the listener a freedom of imagination, interpretation, and emotional response that is not based on the literal or the descriptive, but rather on the abstract quality that painting, still dependent on representing the visible world, could not provide.*

*Kandinsky loved music, especially classical music. Often when he painted, he would listen to music and try to paint what the music made him feel. He compared the different musical notes to the colors of the rainbow. He tried to paint what the notes would look like if they were colors instead of sounds. When Kandinsky painted the music he enjoyed, the result was beautiful images that are still appreciated today.*





- What do students notice first about Kandinsky's paintings? What stands out? What might students be able to guess about the music Kandinsky was painting? Compare his visual "language" to theirs: what are the similarities? Differences?

### Closing:

- Kandinsky and his friends had a group they called "Der Blaue Reiter" (The Blue Riders). These artists helped each other by commenting on each other's paintings and encouraging each other to paint more. Ask students to tell their classmates what their paintings make them feel and how they can see what the artist was feeling when they painted them.

### Variations, Extensions:

- Instruct students to create line drawings of the music, focusing on the rhythm. Invite students to "walk" those lines on the floor or outside while playing the music that inspired the drawings.
- Identify two points in the room and invite younger students to walk from one to the other in a straight line, a curvy line, a zigzag line, etc. Play music and ask them to express the music through the line they make between the two points. Challenge students to use only the imaginary line to express the music, rather than their whole body.

### Suggested Composers:

Sergi Prokofiev, Arnold Schönberg, Aleksander Scriabin, Richard Wagner

### Suggested Wassily Kandinsky paintings:

*Composition VIII, Composition IX, Composition X, Contrasting Sounds, Improvisation 7*

*Kandinsky once said,*

*"Color is the keyboard, the  
eyes are the harmonies, the soul  
is the piano with many strings.  
The artist is the hand that  
plays, touching one key or  
another, to cause vibrations in  
the soul."*

*Kandinsky used color in a highly  
theoretical way, associating tone  
with timbre (the sound's  
character), hue with pitch, and  
saturation with the volume of  
sound. He even claimed that when  
he saw color he heard music.*



# Lesson: The Quest in Literature

## Objectives:

- The student will identify the steps of a heroic quest.
- The student will examine “the quest” in traditional literature and create their own quest story.
- The student will apply the quest as a metaphor to their own lives.

## Steps of a Quest

While there may be minor variations in their descriptions, the basic pattern of the heroic journey or quest is quite similar.

Below are some of the stages that can be found in *The Frog Bride*:

**Birth:** The hero is universal and unique.

**Destiny and/or initiation to quest:** The hero either discovers he has a special calling, or something happens that necessitates his leaving on the quest.

**The quest:** The hero sets out on a journey that is both a physical movement from one place to another, and an interior journey in which the hero usually grows in wisdom, maturity or insight. On this journey, the hero will encounter temptation, obstacles to overcome, and/or foes to vanquish.

**Wise Old Man/Woman:** The hero is given aid or advice from someone older and wiser.

**Romance:** On the journey, the hero will meet his romantic counterpart, his “ideal” partner, either along the way or as the goal of the quest.

**The goal and the journey home:** The hero achieves his goal and in that process comes to a better understanding of himself. The hero then returns home where his exploits

**Materials needed:** paper, pencils/colored pencils/markers

**Note:** Knowledge of the story *The Frog Bride* will be necessary for this lesson. The story summary is provided on page 3.



## Warm-Up:

- Elicit from students the meaning of the word quest. (A search, a hunt, or the seeking for something; a long trip in search of a particular goal, often entailing challenge.)
- Discuss the meaning of a *Quest Story*, (A quest story is an adventurous journey, usually by the main character or protagonist of a story. The protagonist usually meets with, and overcomes, a series of obstacles returning in the end with the benefits of knowledge and experience.) and the basic components in a quest story (examples listed to the left).
- What quest or quests are evident in *The Frog Bride*? What challenges were involved in these quests? List these together as a class.
- Can students name quests in their own lives that they are willing to share with the class?

## Instructional Procedures:

- Next, ask students to decide on a personal quest they would like to pursue. This can be a realistic goal they are working towards, or a broad topic like humanity’s quest for peace.
- Give students time to create their own quest story. They should begin by creating a basic outline of their story using all the steps of the hero's journey.
- **For younger students, or as an extension:** Students should create a storyboard that represents the quest in *The Frog Bride*. Give each student a basic storyboard frame (blank paper with 6 squares drawn on it will work easily). Remind them of the elements they might want to include and have them draw in the important elements from the quest.

**Closing Discussion:** How are students’ quests in their stories similar to Ivon’s quest in *The Frog Bride*? How are they different? How do their personal quests in real life compare?

## A Few More Ideas

- Are you sure they lived happily ever after? Have you ever wondered whether some fairy tales would have truly ended happily ever after if the story had continued? Read *The Frog Prince Continued* by Jon Scieszka. Compare with *The Frog Bride*. Provide the prompt: "Five years later" and ask students to write their version of *The Frog Bride* as it would be five years after the story ends.
- Invite students to retell well-known fairytales using modern language and elements. What sorts of things would have to change? What are modern-day equivalents to some of the elements (i.e., a chariot vs. a limousine or a magic wand vs. a remote control)?
- Look at several Kandinsky images consider how you would use these images as a backdrop for a story like *The Frog Bride*? Ask students to create a set diorama that uses one of these images as the backdrop, and create the story that goes with it.
- Discuss point of view. How would the story of *The Frog Bride* differ if it was told from another perspective, like one of the other brides, or Ivon's brothers? Ask students to take on the role of reporter and "interview" a character from the story. Then, write an article about the story from that character's perspective.
- In *The Frog Bride*, Elena sheds her frog skin for one night to be with Ivon. What could this be a metaphor for? Give students the writing prompt "What frog skin do you see yourself in?"
- Ivon's quest ultimately took him on a journey to the Land of Three Times Nine. What does the Land of Three Times Nine look like to you? Who lives there? Draw this magical land as you see it, or draw a map that shows Ivon the way.

## Magic Numbers in Folklore

In traditional literature, certain "magical" numbers are often used. One example is in fairy tales in which a fairy, genie, or magical animal gives a human three wishes because the person did something good and is now being rewarded.

In *The Frog Bride* the number three is used in several ways. Ask students to skim the story individually to find examples of the use of the number three.

Discuss lucky and unlucky numbers in different cultures.

- \* An example is the number 13 in the United States. Give the example of Friday the 13th being considered bad luck.
- \* Another example is the number eight in Chinese culture. In Mandarin Chinese, the pronunciation for the number eight is *ba*, which is the same as for the word treasure, so that has a positive connotation.

Ask students to write a folk tale that uses the magical number three in two ways.



*The End*





# Season for Young People

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**QUESTIONS?**

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