

Lessons from Frogs: Adaptability

Quarter 7 • Lesson 6

Focus on Character Development

- 1. Connecting:** Play a game to learn about adapting.
- 2. Teaching:** Learn about ways to adapt to different situations (Philippians 4:12–13).
- 3. Responding:** Choose how you can adapt.

SUPPLIES

- Bible
- Tear-out page
- Optional Supplies:*
- Memory Verse Poster
- Student Pages
- Crayons

Teacher Devotion

*I know what it's like not to have what I need.
I also know what it's like to have more than I need.
I have learned the secret of being content no matter what happens.
I am content whether I am well fed or hungry.
I am content whether I have more than enough or not enough.
Philippians 4:12*

Some people are more adaptable than others. Some of us struggle to adapt to changes in our lives. Others welcome change and find it exciting. Whether the apostle Paul was one of those adaptable people or not, he learned to adapt when Jesus Himself came and transformed his life.

How adaptable are you? Is it easy for you to change your plans? Or do you find yourself worried, stressed, or even frightened by change? Consider for a moment Paul's words. How might your faith help you to adapt to changes you experience? It is okay if you are uncomfortable with change, but you do not need to feel alone in your struggle. There is someone who can help you! His name is Jesus, and He is always there with you to help you walk through changes in your life. He can help you adjust and be content, regardless of what happens.

Family Connection: Encourage families to talk about times when they have had to adjust to changes in their lives. What helped and what made it more difficult than it could have been?

LESSON TIME

1. Connecting: Play a game to learn about adapting.

Greet the children as they come to class and ask them to tell you 1 thing they remember about bees. Then, ask the children to sit in a circle.

The last time we met, we learned about how bees cooperate. Today, we will talk about something frogs do. Did you know that frogs hatch in the water and spend the first part of their lives there? Frogs change a lot before they are able to hop onto land. That is because they are amphibians. That means that they breathe through lungs when they are on land and through gills when they are in the water. Some frogs prefer water and others prefer land, but most are able to live in both.

- **Raise your hand if you have ever seen a frog. What did the frog look like?**

Allow 2–3 children to respond.

As you talk about the development of a frog, show the children the frog life cycle picture found at the end of this lesson.

There are many different types of frogs, but all frogs grow the same way. Frogs hatch from eggs and become tadpoles. They then grow into froglets, which are small frogs that still have tails. From there, they become adult frogs. As they grow, many types of frogs move from the water to the land because they are able to move and breathe outside of the water. This life cycle makes many frogs able to adapt to living on land or in the water.

Once they are adults, frogs can use their legs to swim and hop. Would you like to pretend to be a frog? Let's play a hopping game to practice hopping like frogs!

To begin our game, we will all stand up and spread out a little in our circle. I will choose 1 person to be the Frog. The Frog will hop from one person to the next as he travels around the circle.

Choose a child to be the Frog. Allow the Frog to hop next to each person in the circle for 30 seconds. Then stop the child and have him join the circle again.

Great hopping! All animals experience times when they need to change something about themselves or what they are doing to stay alive. Frogs need to keep their skin wet. So, no matter where they live, they must find water when their skin begins to dry out. Frogs also need to eat flies and other insects to survive.

For our game, I will choose 1 child to be a Frog, 1 to be a Fly, and 1 to be a Pond. The Frog will hop around the circle trying to gently tag the Fly. When I call out, "Water," the Frog will hop to the Pond person as quickly as possible.

Choose 1 child to be a Frog, 1 to be a Fly, and 1 to be a Pond. Ask the Frog to hop from person to person in the circle. Ask the Fly to start a few people ahead of the Frog and flap his arms as he "flies" from person to person. Ask the Pond to sit in the middle of the circle. Allow the Frog to chase the Fly for about 20 seconds or until the Frog has almost caught up to the Fly. Then call out, "Water." Once the Frog reaches the Pond, allow the Frog to return to the circle to try to catch the Fly. Allow 20 seconds for the Frog to chase the Fly before asking all of the children to sit in the circle.

After the game, ask the children to sit in their normal places for the lesson.

2. Teaching: Learn about ways to adapt to different situations (Philippians 4:12–13).

In our game, the Frog had to change what it was doing depending on what happened around it. When it needed to wet its skin, it had to stop trying to catch the Fly and find a Pond. When someone changes something about himself or his actions in order to adjust to a new situation or place, he is able to adapt.

Teacher Tip: The ability to adapt to changing situations is an important quality of resilience. Children who learn to adapt to changes are more likely to be confident, hopeful, and happier.

In the Bible, the apostle Paul talks about what he did to adapt to different situations. Listen to what he says.

Read this verse directly from your Bible.

I know what it's like not to have what I need. I also know what it's like to have more than I need. I have learned the secret of being content no matter what happens. I am content whether I am well fed or hungry. I am content whether I have more than enough or not enough.

Philippians 4:12

- **What has Paul experienced in different situations?**

Answers may include: he has been without what he needed, he has had more than he needed, he has been well fed, and he has been hungry.

- **Many of us have experienced difficult times. Raise your hand if you would like to share something difficult that has happened to change your life. If you do not want to share, you do not have to.**

Teacher Tip: Some of the children in your class may want to share about difficult situations they have experienced. If children want to share, you can choose to have the children share in small groups or have 1–2 children share with the whole class. It is okay if children do not show interest in sharing. Allow 3 minutes for children to share.

The verse we just read comes from a letter the apostle Paul wrote to a group of people called the Philippians. Paul taught the Philippians about Jesus. Paul later thanked them for helping him when he first started spreading the news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Paul travelled to many different places as he shared his faith with others. When Paul had been doing this for a while, there were many groups of people who enjoyed his visits. This was not true when he first began his ministry.

In his travels, Paul had to adapt to each new place and each of the challenges he faced. Paul was put in prison. When he was still a prisoner, he was put on a ship that sank. Paul also was hurt by people who did not like hearing about Jesus. Through all of these difficult things, Paul learned that he could be content—happy and at peace—in all situations because he knew God was with him. Paul was happy to serve God!

Just as Paul adapted to the many different places and situations he found himself in, we can also adapt to our situations. When you adapt to something, you change something you are doing, feeling, or thinking in order to help you deal with a new situation.

To better understand what it means to adapt, let's talk about some children who live in different places of the world and what they need to survive in those places. For this activity, you will move around our space to show which answer you think is correct.

Choose 3 volunteers. Have each volunteer stand at least 2 meters away from the other volunteers. Have 1 volunteer hold up 1 finger to show the number 1 answer. Have another volunteer hold up 2 fingers to show the number 2 answer. Have the last volunteer hold up 3 fingers to show the number 3 answer. Explain to all the children that they will move to the person holding up the same number of fingers as the answer they believe is correct for each of the following questions.

Teacher Tip: The answers to the following situations are underlined.

Situation 1: Michael lives in the desert. It is dry and very hot there. If Michael goes for a walk in the desert and only takes 1 thing with him, what do you think he will need most?

1. A warm coat
2. Boots
3. Water

- Why is water the most important thing for Michael to have in the desert?

It is hot, and he needs water so he does not get dehydrated.

Situation 2: It is Nancy's first day of school. She is used to spending every day with her family at home, so she does not know many other children in the community. She is not sure what to expect, and she worries that she will not make any friends. What can Nancy do to adapt to her new school?

1. Talk to some of the children in her class so she can make new friends.
2. Sit quietly at her desk all day so no one will notice her.
3. Call out answers to all of the teacher's questions without raising her hand.

- Why might talking to the children in her class help Nancy to make new friends?

This will help her to get to know the children, and they will get to know her.

Situation 3: Edgar lives in the mountains. He and his mother walk a long way each week to the nearest market to buy food. A heavy rain causes a mudslide that covers the road they usually take to get to the market. What can Edgar and his mother do to adapt and solve their problem?

Teacher Tip: There are 2 possible solutions to the problem in the answers that follow. Encourage the children to choose the best answer, and remind them that the mother and son have to adapt to the situation.

1. Walk the road anyway and hope they do not get stuck.
 2. Find a new road or path that will take them to the nearest town.
 3. Decide traveling to the market is impossible and complain about the problem.
- **Why is the best response for Edgar and his mother to find a new way to get to the market?**

If they walk the road anyway, they might get stuck. By finding a new way to get to the nearest market, they will still be able to get food without putting themselves in danger. This is also the option that most clearly shows the boy and his mother adapting to the situation.

Ask the children to sit where they are at the end of this activity.

As you saw in our activity, people adapt to places by solving problems. You can also adapt to situations and places by solving problems. Here are a few ways you can do this:

1. Look at the place you are in and decide what you will need to live in that place.
2. Try new things. If Nancy had not talked to the other children, she may not have made new friends. When you try new things, you are more prepared for the next time you feel uncomfortable or unsure about a new situation or problem.
3. Look for possibilities when there is a problem. When the boy and his mother were not able to travel their normal road to get food, they looked for another possible way to get food. You can look for possibilities when a situation causes a problem for you. This will help you adapt to your situation.

Remember what Paul said about how he adapted to new places and situations? Listen again to his words:

*I know what it's like not to have what I need.
I also know what it's like to have more than I need.
I have learned the secret of being content no matter what happens.
I am content whether I am well fed or hungry.
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Philippians 4:12

This verse tells us that Paul has been able to adapt to many different situations, but how does he do it? To answer this question, listen to the next verse:

I can do all this by the power of Christ. He gives me strength.
Philippians 4:13

Paul explains that he is able to adapt and be happy in every situation because of his relationship with Jesus Christ! Jesus gives him the strength he needs to adapt his emotions to every situation.

- **What can you do to adapt your emotions to different situations?**

Answers may include: Talk to Jesus about how I feel. Think about how to be happy. Look for the good in the situation.

Let's play a game to help us decide how to adapt to different situations.

3. Responding: Choose how you can adapt.

Create groups of 3–4 children. They will discuss each of the following situations in their groups before talking about them with the whole class.

Situation 1: You just started school! Now, instead of spending your days with your family, you spend time at school. Instead of being guided by your mother, you are now taught and directed by your teacher. You must adapt to new people, a new place, and a new way of doing things.

- **What emotions might you feel?**
- **What can you do to adapt to your new school?**

Allow 3 minutes for the children to answer the questions in their groups. Then discuss possible answers to each of the questions with the class.

Situation 2: Your father just lost his job. Your family must move in with your aunt and your cousins while your father looks for work. You have 4 brothers and sisters and 3 cousins who live in a very small house.

- **What emotions might you feel?**
- **What can you do to adapt to this new situation?**

Allow 3 minutes for the children to answer the questions in their groups. Then discuss possible answers to each of the questions with the class.

In each of these situations, you were likely to feel some difficult emotions. You may have felt afraid, angry, or sad about the change. When you decided how to adapt, you had to think about what you could do to be happy with your situation.

Both people and animals must adapt to live in different places and with different situations. Our memory verse reminds us that God made animals in ways that can remind us of the amazing ways He made living things.

If you are using the Memory Verse Poster, show it to the students.

But ask the animals what God does. They will teach you.

Or ask the birds in the sky. They will tell you.

Job 12:7

Read the Bible verse again. This time, do the motions that go with each part. Then repeat the verse and the motions 3 times with the children.

But ask the animals—Make a gesture as if you are about to ask a question, such as shrugging.

They will teach you—Indicate the top of your head and pretend to pull something from it.

Or ask the birds in the sky—Look up. Reach your arms out to your sides and flap them up and down.

They will tell you—Put a hand near your ear.

End class by saying this blessing, based on Philippians 4:12, over the class.

Blessing: May you find joy and contentment in every situation. May your joy help you to adapt to new places and situations.

Lead the children in singing this quarter's song, if possible.

Raise a Hallelujah" by Bethel Music https://youtu.be/JvXBf_dEiHU