

# Frogs on Lily Pads

Math, Science, and Technology



**Level:** Preschool

**Cost:** None

**Mess factor:** Little

**Suggested room in the house:** Anywhere



Your child will want to jump right in to this activity! With the help of a little frog and a few pieces of paper, your child will experience colors in a whole new way.

## Your child will experience:

- Making patterns
- Naming colors

## Materials:



- Small square pieces of paper in a variety of colors
- One blue piece of paper that is about 8½ x 11 inches or smaller
- Two small plastic frogs or other animal figures your child may like

## Beginning:

Start by telling children a story about a frog who crossed a pond by jumping on colored lily pads. Use the blue piece of paper for the pond and the small squares for the lily pads. Use a small plastic frog and two colors of paper squares. Arrange the squares by alternating colors in a line across the floor; for example, red-yellow-red-yellow. As you make the frog “jump,” say the color of the square it lands on. Ask children if they notice anything about the way the “lily pads” are arranged.



## Middle:

Give children several paper squares and a frog. Ask children to tell their own story about a frog and lily pads. Watch to see how children arrange the paper squares. It is ok however they arrange the papers. Be sure to comment on what they are doing. Here are some ideas for how to comment:

- “You put all the red lily pads together.”
- “Your frog jumps on yellow then green then yellow then green!”
- “What color are you going to put next?”



Make sure you are using your frog to jump around the pond, too. You can follow children’s lead and jump where they jump, and you can jump around on your own too. As your frog jumps, make sure you identify the color you are jumping to so children will hear the color names.

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**End:**

Bring this activity to a close when you see children's frogs beginning to lose their jump. Let them know your frog is getting tired too and wants to go back to its hiding spot. Take note of how they arranged their lily pads. How did they organize the paper? Was there a pattern? Look for patterns the next time you play Frogs on Lily Pads.

**Cleanup:**

Tell children you will pick up two of the colors of paper and they can pick up the others. Let them find a good hiding place for the frogs until they are ready to hop around again.

**Younger children:**

- Young children may:
  - place the squares randomly around the pond
  - sort all the paper by color
  - line up the squares in a completely random way
- If your child simply likes to hop the frog around while pretending something, then reinforce the colors as the frog moves. You might say something like "Oh, your frog just jumped on another red pad!"
- Play Candy Land, but let children use the frog to jump around the board for a funny twist.
- Pretend to be a frog and jump around the house trying to find different colors.

**Older children:**

- Older children should be able to arrange the squares in a specific pattern.
- Some patterns may be simple like red-blue-red-blue and others will be more complex, like: red-blue-yellow-yellow-red-blue-yellow-yellow.
- Introduce different-colored shapes into the choices. For example, you may have blue circles and blue squares. Using colors and shapes to make a pattern will challenge an older child to organize things based on more than one characteristic.
- Have older children write down their story.

**Hints:**

- Talk about the patterns you see in the world. Put children's stuffed animals in a pattern on the bed or their clothes in a pattern in the closet.
- Point out how children are patterning while eating. For example, you might say, "I saw you just ate some cereal and then drank juice and then ate some more cereal. I wonder what you will do next?"



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## More!

- When children say “I’m going to feed the babies” and line the babies all up in a row, this is the beginning of identifying patterns. Pretty soon they will be lining up things that look different, like rock-stick-rock.
- It is much harder for children to add to the pattern in the middle of a pattern sequence than it is for them to simply add a pattern to the end.



## Special Needs Accommodations:

- **If small items are difficult for your child to hold**, use larger animals. Stuffed animals work great because they can be gripped.
- **If your child is color-blind**, try patterning with other things like shapes, letters and actual items.
- **If your child needs whole-body movement**, let them be the frog and jump around different colored pieces of paper on the floor.

