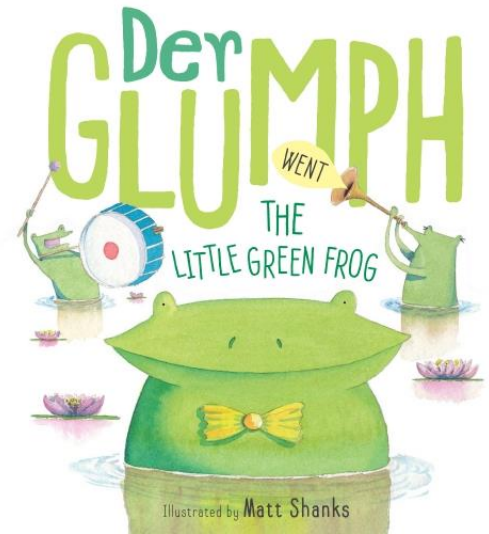


Der Glumph Went the Little Green Frog

Illustrator
Matt Shanks



Synopsis

Like the other books in this series, *Der Glumph* is a fresh new interpretation of a traditional and favourite children's story-rhyme. With a strong Australian theme running through it, our native animals share their adventures within this rhyme bringing new relevance to it for the growing generation of young Australian readers. Everyone has heard of the little green frog, who went *der glumph* even though we all know frogs really go *la-di-da-di-da...* and Matt Shanks now introduces us both to the delightful Australian frogs who sing this song, but also shares with us all the different sounds that many other Australian native animals make when no one is looking. From the *scritch* scratch scratch echidna to the boingy roo, his illustrations take us on a delightful journey where we get to meet not just a little green frog but an exciting collection of noisy and playful Australian creatures.

About the Illustrator

Matt Shanks was born in Sydney, Australia and now resides in Melbourne. Sandwiched between the bush and beach, the inspiration for his short stories comes from a love of his unique country. His early fascination for the combination of words and pictures saw him complete a Bachelor of Design at the University of Sydney in 2003. It took him 10 years while working as a Creative Director at some of Melbourne's best design agencies to realise that this 'watercolour hobby' of his needed to be shared with more than just his wife and cat. Simplicity, humour and the art of the unseen are strong themes in Matt's illustration work. He has now illustrated several books for children, including his popular Australian Nursery Rhyme series.

Themes

Rhyme; onomatopoeia; Australian native animals; sounds and movement; rhythm and verse; the bush; humour.

Illustration Style

Shanks' has chosen to use a soft watercolour palette of **earth and sky tones**, that brings the Australian countryside and its inhabitants to life. Utilising double paged spreads throughout, the illustrations cleverly parallel the text, while seamlessly transitioning from one scene to the next within the same page-spread, and convey the clear impression that the animals are just waiting until there is no one looking to break

into action. The artwork frames the text, with good use of white space for the sky throughout the majority of the story, contrasting with the artwork at the start and finish of the book with its rich-toned skies as a background.

TEACHERS' NOTES

- 1) Before reading the book, as a class look at the cover and title, and discuss what you can find out about the book from this. Some things to include in your discussion are:
 - What is the title of the story?
 - Who already knows the rhyme about the little green frog?
 - What is being shown in the artwork on the cover?
 - What is the frog on the front cover doing?
 - What animals can you see on the back cover, and what are they doing?
 - What do you think might happen in the story, based on just looking at the artwork?
 - Read the back cover and think about whether you want to change your prediction about what might happen in the story now.
- 2) As a class sing *Der Glumph Went the Little Green Frog*. Read each page of the story, and add it to the song as a new verse. Make up hand actions for all the different animal noises and actions in the new verses. Sing your new, longer song at an assembly.
- 3) Learn the key-word signs for *Der Glumph Went the Little Green Frog* and sign the song as you sing. For a challenge learn key-word signs for the other verses as well, and perform the whole extended song with signs at an assembly or for another class.
- 4) Read another of the books in this series (*Incy-Wincy Spider*, *Row Row Row Your Boat*, *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*, and *Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*) After reading both books, as a class discuss any similarities and differences you find between the two books, both in terms of the illustrations and of how they deal with the original rhyme. Some things to consider in your discussion are:
 - What animals are shown in the illustrations of both books?
 - Why do you think that the illustrator chose these animals?
 - How similar is the rhyme to the original version you already knew?
 - What is in the book, that wasn't in the original version and why do you think that it was added?
 - Which book do you like the best, and why?
- 5) What is your favourite short rhyme, song, or action rhyme? Think about how you could turn your rhyme into a book filled with Australian animals for other children to enjoy. Choose a scene from your rhyme and create a cover illustration for a book featuring your favourite rhyme or song. Use the artwork in *Der Glumph Went the Little Green Frog* to help inspire you.
- 6) In pairs or small groups, choose an animal that doesn't appear in the book, and write another verse of the rhyme about your animal. Individually, use watercolour paints to create an artwork that illustrates your rhyme.

- 7) Visit a local wetlands area. What animals and plants can you see living in your local wetlands? Can you find any frogs? Make a nature journal that showcases pictures and comments about the plants and animals that you see on your trip.
- 8) Do frogs really sound like they are going *der glumph*, or *la-di-da-di-da*? What have the frogs you've heard sounded like? Make a class recording of everyone doing their very best frog noises, and use it as the soundtrack for a class frog-dance you create. You might want to also research online to find recordings of real frogs to help you.
- 9) How many other rhymes, songs, or stories do you know that have frogs in them? As a class, or in small groups, try to think of as many different frog related stories, poems, and songs as you can. Look in the school library for books with frogs in them. Share your list with the class and make a Class List of Fictional Frogs. Individually, illustrate scenes from one or more of the different frog-related fictional pieces on your list, and use the list and illustrations to create a class wall display.
- 10) There are lots of different frogs in the world, and there are lots of different types of frogs that live in Australia. In pairs or small groups research frogs, either online or in the library, and create a poster or slideshow that shares what you find out about them. Some things to include in your research are:
 - How many types of frog are found in Australia?
 - What types of frogs are found in your local area?
 - Are the frogs in your area native or introduced?
 - Are there any endangered species of frogs?
 - What do the frogs in your local area look and sound like?
 - What do frogs eat?
 - What type of habitat do frogs need - what types of places do they like to live?
 - What is the life-cycle of a frog, and how is it different from land animals or from fish?
 - What type of animal is a frog?
- 11) Frogs are very jumpy creatures. Try to create a cardboard frog that can really jump. Experiment with different thicknesses and weights of cardboard, and methods of folding the back legs to see how jumpy you can make your frog. Hint: you will want to have long straight back legs that you fold under the body of your frog, and don't squash the folds too flat! Once you have a design that you like, decorate your frog in bright colours and have a class frog-race with all your different frogs!
- 12) Have a class relay race where you jump like a frog, roll like the echidnas in the book, and boing like the kangaroos.
- 13) Make a model echidna from modelling clay or air-drying clay. Use toothpicks for the spines, and use a spare toothpick to draw its face and sculpt its feet.
- 14) Onomatopoeia is where a word makes the sound it is describing. *Der glumph* is the first example of onomatopoeia in the story, but there is at least one example in every verse! In pairs have an

onomatopoeia hunt through the book, and see how many examples you can find. As a class make a list of at least ten other animals, and try to think of or invent other onomatopoeic words to describe the sounds that they all make.

- 15) Retell the story of *Der Glumph* from the point of view of the little kid in the story who is watching all the animals (and who misses a lot of what they are doing as well!) How surprised do you think they will be at the end, and what do they see and hear as they walk around?
- 16) Visit a local pond, and use a glass jar or plastic container to scoop up some water.
- Look carefully at the water you collect and see if you can find any tadpoles swimming in it. You might want to use a magnifying glass to see more clearly.
 - Record what you see (you can take photos, or sketch pictures of the creatures in the water.) Count how many of each type of creature and record it next to your sketches.
 - After examining your jar of water, carefully tip it back into the pond, making sure that all the creatures in it are released safely.
 - Revisit your pond weekly, each time recording what you find.
 - Look to see if you can find tadpoles that are growing legs and changing.
 - Make a poster about the life you find in the pond. Use your weekly observations to make graphs and charts showing what is happening over time to the creatures that live there. Be sure to mention if there has been a lot of rain or if it is hot and dry and how this affects what you see.
 - If you are really lucky you will see tadpoles, pollywogs, and frogs, and can watch them as they grow!

NOTE: If you are tempted to collect some tadpoles and bring them home, please research how to care for them first, and if it is legal to keep them without a permit in your territory or state. There is a lot of good information on the RSPCA website about keeping tadpoles in Australia.