

Excerpt terms and conditions



This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

Dramatic Publishing

Colorized covers are for web display only. Most covers printed in black and white.

Too Many Frogs!



**Comedy by
Sandra Fenichel Asher**

"A fun story that celebrates reading
and standing up for oneself."

—School Library Journal

Too Many Frogs!

Comedy. By Sandra Fenichel Asher. Based on the book by the author, writing as Sandy Asher. Cast: 2m., 2m. or w. who play 17 + additional characters, some as puppets. (Additional characters may be assigned to other actors for a larger cast, if desired.) Rabbit lives alone. He cooks for himself, cleans up after himself, and reads himself a nightly bedtime story. It's a pleasant life, and Rabbit likes it. Then along comes Froggie—wet from a rainstorm, fixing snacks, and fluffing pillows to make story time more cozy. Too much fuss! Too much clutter! But Froggie listens as Rabbit reads old favorites: *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, *The Elves and the Shoemaker* and *The Ugly Duckling*—all magically brought to life for the audience on a puppet stage above Rabbit's bookshelves while Rabbit reads. But when Froggie invites dozens and dozens of his frog cousins in for a story, Rabbit's patience runs out: Too Many Frogs! Or is it? Rabbit sends Froggie and his family away, then slowly comes to realize that sharing stories with enthusiastic listeners is a different kind of life—and he likes it! The delightful picture book on which this play is based has been honored with state book awards in Texas and North Dakota and is nominated for many more. *One set, with puppet stage. Optional music CD available (underscoring and transition music).* Approximate running time: 50 minutes. Code: TH1.

Cover art: (Rabbit) © The United Educators, Inc., Lake Bluff, Illinois
Cover art: (Frogs) © istock. Cover design: Susan Carle



13 ISBN: 978-1-58342-404-9
10 ISBN: 1-58342-404-0



Printed on Recycled Paper

www.DramaticPublishing.com

TOO MANY FROGS!

By

SANDRA FENICHEL ASHER

Based on the book by the author,
writing as Sandy Asher



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our Web site: www.dramaticpublishing.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, 311 Washington St., Woodstock IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

©MMVII by

SANDRA FENICHEL ASHER

Based on the book by the author, writing as Sandy Asher

Printed in the United States of America

All Rights Reserved
(TOO MANY FROGS!)

ISBN: 978-1-58342-404-9

For Wendy Schmalz,
with thanks for your kindness
to Rabbit and Froggie and me.

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play *must* give credit to the author of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent (50%) the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois.”

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Too Many Frogs! was given its premier production by Pollyanna Theatre Company in Austin, Texas, on June 23-27, 2006. It was directed by Judy Matetzschk-Campbell and featured the following cast and staff:

RABBIT Alex Garza
FROGGIE Skip Johnson
GOLDBLOCKS, SHOEMAKER and DUCKLING
Jason Marlett
BABY BEAR, ELF 1, MOTHER DUCK and others
Kathleen Fletcher
MOTHER BEAR, FATHER BEAR, ELF 2, PRETTY
DUCKLINGS and others Wesley Evans

Stage Manager Christine Gardner
Lighting Designer Don Day
Sound Designer Peter Blackwell
Production Designer Ia Layadi
Graphic Designer John Howrey of Chonny Design

The playwright is very grateful to Judy Matetzschk-Campbell and all involved in that first production, and also to Jennifer Akridge and all involved in the second production by Stageworks at Mesa Art Center, Mesa, Ariz., on February 23-March 11, 2007. The cast and staff were as follows:

FROGGIE Adrian Hernandez
RABBIT Michael Shuey
PUPPETEER Chris Bowler
PUPPETEER Heather Cowell

Producer and Director June M. Valk
Assistant Producer Cory Simms
Stage Manager Stephen John
Technical Director Jonathan Odom
Scenic Designer Paul Sanderuud
Master Carpenter Doug Bancroft
Costume Designer Gail Wolfenden-Steib
Lighting and Sound Designer Randy Levine
Set Construction Landon Jones, Steeyle Levine
Techniks . . . Addison Burnside, Jessica Jones, Maria Korte,
Natalie McLaughlin

TOO MANY FROGS!

CHARACTERS:

RABBIT, m, soft-spoken, tidy, a loner, loves to read

FROGGIE, m, cheerful, boisterous, tends to overdo, loves to listen

PUPPETEERS (2 or more, m or f) doublecast in any combination of puppets and human “talking heads” to play all of the following:

GOLDILOCKS

PAPA BEAR

MAMA BEAR

BABY BEAR

SHOEMAKER

FIRST ELF

SECOND ELF

SHOEMAKER’S WIFE

CUSTOMERS ONE, TWO AND THREE

MAMA DUCK

FIRST YELLOW DUCKLING

SECOND YELLOW DUCKLING

UGLY DUCKLING

HEN

SWAN

FROGGIE’S FAMILY– should seem like dozens and dozens

TIME: Storytime.

PLACE: Rabbit's home in the hollow of a tree and imagined places. UC, a well-stocked bookshelf with a large, framed mirror or picture above it. This framed area opens and becomes the stage where Rabbit's stories are performed by puppets as he reads them. To the right of this is a large-faced wall clock. Below it stands Rabbit's small dining table and chair. Downstage and to the right of this is Rabbit's oversized reading chair with a small table beside it, and perhaps a lamp. UL is the door to Rabbit's unseen bedroom, with a clothes tree on which hangs Rabbit's umbrella. At its base sits his gardening basket, with a trowel and a cloth inside. An imaginary door, DL, leads to Rabbit's garden and the path to his house, which runs along the apron of the stage. On the ground "outside," are a large doormat and signs marking the rows of a vegetable garden: CARROTS, LETTUCE, CARROTS, CABBAGE, CARROTS, SPINACH, CARROTS. There is an imaginary window in the fourth wall, which looks out on the garden and the path.

NOTE: Just as the picture-book story on which it's based is a marriage of visual and verbal components, performances of this play should be a blend of movement and language. It's very important that the actors be comfortable expressing themselves through dance, mime and puppetry and that the dramatic and humorous potential of these elements be fully explored and developed.

MUSIC/SOUND: You are welcome to create your own music and sound design for this play, or use the CD of music/sound created for the original production by Peter Blackwell (CD available from Dramatic Publishing). If you create your own music, please follow the music cues in the script. If you use the CD, forgo the cues in the script and follow the cues on the cue sheet provided with the CD.

TOO MANY FROGS!

Scene 1

AT RISE: *MUSIC* appropriate to Rabbit's pleasant, orderly way of life. *LIGHTS* come up on RABBIT's home. After a moment, RABBIT marches in from his "bedroom," toting a feather duster like a gun on his shoulder. He mimes the opening and precise closing of that "door," and, humming contentedly to himself, dusts everything in sight, tidies up a few things that really don't need tidying, pauses thoughtfully, checks the clock, and discovers it is dinnertime. *MUSIC* fades.

RABBIT (*patting his tummy*). Ah! Time for dinner!

(*MUSIC*. He crosses to the clothes tree, hangs up duster, picks up the basket and trowel, starts for the "front door," thinks better of it, puts down basket, goes to imaginary "window," opens it, checks outside, notes that it may rain, closes the window, gets his umbrella, tucks it under his arm, picks up the basket, opens the "front door," and puts out a paw to check for raindrops. Satisfied that it hasn't started raining yet, he steps "outside," examines the sky suspiciously, shrugs to indicate all is well for now, turns his attention to the rows of vegetables. All are growing nicely. *MUSIC* fades.)

Carrots, lettuce, carrots, cabbage, carrots, spinach and... carrots. Lovely! (*But wait! He spots a weed.*) Oh, no! A weed! In my garden! (*He puts down his basket and umbrella, gets out his trowel and makes short work of the weed.*) Weeds are not welcome here! Out! Out! Out-out-OUT! (*He steps back to admire his work.*) Ah, that's better! (*Then he remembers it's time for dinner, pats his tummy again, and ponders his selection—with an obvious preference for carrots.*) Very well, then. What shall I have for dinner? Hmmmmm... (*A brief inner debate, then he tries a game of eeny-meeny-miney-mo, pointing at each of the rows in turn—*) One-a-carrot, two-a-carrot, three-a-carrot, four! Five-a-carrot, six-a-carrot, seven-a-carrot, more. This is it and I am through and you are out and I choose YOU! (*His finger is pointing at something other than CARROTS. That's disappointing.*) Hmmmmm. (*He begins the chant again, starting from a different veggie.*) One-a-carrot, two-a-carrot, three-a-carrot, four! Five-a-carrot, six-a-carrot, seven-a-carrot, more. This is it and I am through and you are out and I choose YOU! (*Oops. Still doesn't turn out as he'd hoped.*) HMMMMMM! (*Another, more determined, try, starting elsewhere—*) One-a-carrot, two-a-carrot, three-a-carrot, four! Five-a-carrot, six-a-carrot, seven-a-carrot, more. This is it and I am through and you are out and I choose YOU! (*This time, he's pointing at a carrot row. He feigns surprise—*) A carrot? A carrot for my dinner? Oh, very well, if you insist!

(*MUSIC. He uses his trowel to “dig up” a carrot, admires it, imagines how delicious it will be. Then he takes the cloth, unfolds it, dusts off the carrot and the trowel,*

and places them in the basket. He refolds the cloth and puts it back in the basket. MUSIC fades. Another suspicious look at the sky, and then—)

I believe I felt a raindrop! Or two! Or three or four or five! (*A flash of lightning, followed by thunder.*) Uh-oh! There's a storm on its way!

(MUSIC. RABBIT opens his umbrella, picks up his basket, opens the "door," scrapes the dirt off his feet on the doormat, shakes out his umbrella, steps "inside," closes the door, hangs his umbrella on the clothes tree, and sets the basket beneath it. Eagerly, but with restrained, unhurried moves, he moves his dining table and chair forward and arranges a plate and napkin. He then adds a flower in a vase taken from the bookcase. Satisfied with the appearance of his dinner table, he takes the carrot out of the basket and arranges it artistically on the plate. Then he sits at the table and, with a combination of gusto and refinement, he noisily chomps the carrot, savoring each and every bite. When he's finished, he dabs his lips with the napkin. MUSIC fades.)

There is nothing quite like a fresh carrot for dinner!

(MUSIC plays. RABBIT stands up, gets his duster, dusts the flower and vase as he returns them to the bookcase, dusts the remains of his carrot as he disposes of it in his gardening basket, dusts his napkin, plate, table and chair as he replaces them upstage. This done, he dusts a few more things, admires the result, and hangs up his duster, sighing with satisfaction. MUSIC fades.)

What a pleasant life I lead...no fuss, no clutter...with a garden to keep me busy and my books to keep me company. I like it! *(He checks the clock.)* Ah! It's nearly time for bed. I'd better choose a story to read! Let me see... *(He crosses to bookcase, ponders books.)* Hmm, no. Hmmmm, maybe. Ah! *Goldilocks and the Three Bears.* Yes! *(Beat, as he admires the book and its pictures.)* One of my favorites. *(He settles into his chair and reads aloud.)* Once upon a time...

(As he reads, MUSIC and LIGHTS indicate a change in mood as the framed area above the bookcase comes to life with the story. RABBIT does not look at this area, but his facial expressions indicate he is imagining what we are seeing as he reads. MUSIC fades.)

...there was a little girl named Goldilocks.

(GOLDILOCKS appears on puppet stage.)

GOLDILOCKS. I'm a little girl and my name is Goldilocks!

RABBIT. One day, she decided to take a walk in the forest.

GOLDILOCKS. I think I'll take a walk in the forest.

(She crosses puppet stage humming to herself. Suddenly, there's a flash of lightning outside RABBIT's house, followed by a roll of thunder and the sound of heavy rainfall. RABBIT puts down his book. As he does so, GOLDILOCKS puppet sinks out of sight and LIGHTS fade on puppet stage.)

RABBIT (*goes to window and looks outside*). Quite a storm blowing up out there. (*Mimes pulling curtains closed.*) It's good to be at home, all warm and dry! (*Sits in his chair and picks up book.*) Now, then, where was I?

(*As RABBIT flips through pages of his book, FROGGIE enters DL, traveling the path to RABBIT's house in broad, deep-kneed hops, dodging raindrops.*)

FROGGIE. Uh-oh! This will never do! Too much rain—and lightning, too!

(*Finding himself at RABBIT's "front door," he picks up the doormat, holds it over his head as a makeshift umbrella, and huddles under it, DR.*)

RABBIT (*finding his page*). Oh, here we are.

(*He begins to read again. MUSIC and LIGHTS again bring puppet stage to life. GOLDBLOCKS and a small house rise into sight. MUSIC fades. GOLDBLOCKS approaches the house, humming. At the same time, there is another roll of thunder outside. FROGGIE decides he'd better seek shelter.*)

RABBIT. Soon Goldilocks came upon a little house.

GOLDBLOCKS. Oh, look, I've come upon a little house. I wonder who lives here.

FROGGIE (*approaching RABBIT's "front door"*). Oh, look, I've come upon a little house. I wonder who lives here.

RABBIT. Goldilocks knocked on the door.

GOLDBLOCKS & FROGGIE (*as GOLDBLOCKS knocks on the little house door and FROGGIE mimes knocking on RABBIT's "door"*). Knock-knockety-knock.

RABBIT (*cocks his head one way and the other. Is he hearing a real knocking? He shakes off that thought and continues reading*). No one answered. Goldilocks tried again.

GOLDBLOCKS & FROGGIE (*as before*). Knock-knockety-knock-knock.

RABBIT (*rubs one ear, cocks his head side to side, still confused, but shakes his head and reads on*). Still no answer. Goldilocks tried a third time.

GOLDBLOCKS & FROGGIE (*as before, but more insistent*). Knock-knockety-knock-knock-knock. (*RABBIT pauses, confused.*) KNOCK-KNOCKETY-KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK!

(*RABBIT puts down book. LIGHTS fade on puppet stage. GOLDBLOCKS and puppet house sink out of sight.*)

RABBIT. Oh, my! There really *is* someone at my door! In this awful storm! (*He hurries to open "front door."*) Who is it? Who's there?

(*He mimes opening door just as FROGGIE winds up for a really big knock. FROGGIE sails into RABBIT's house with the force of his undeliverable blow.*)

FROGGIE. I-i-i-i-i-i-i-t's Froggie! (*He lands on the floor clear across the room with a thump.*)

RABBIT. Oh, dear!

FROGGIE (*picks himself up*). Don't care for this storm!
(*Hands RABBIT the doormat.*) Had to borrow this doormat to stay dry.

RABBIT (*takes wet mat by a corner, gingerly, and puts it outside door*). Oh. Thank you.

FROGGIE (*bows grandly*). Oh, no. Thank you! (*Straightens up and extends a hand.*) My name is Froggie.

RABBIT (*shakes hands, less enthusiastically*). How do you do, Froggie? My name is Rabbit.

FROGGIE (*as they finish shaking*). Pleased to meet you, Rabbit. (*FROGGIE stands there, smiling at RABBIT, expecting hospitality.*)

RABBIT (*quite overwhelmed by this strange presence, indicates book and chair*). I...was reading myself a story...it's what I do...at bedtime...

FROGGIE (*not at all shy, hops over to inspect book*). A story! Love to listen! (*Happily sits down in RABBIT's chair and pats the space beside him invitingly.*) Don't mind, do you?

RABBIT (*sits beside FROGGIE gingerly*). I...suppose not. (*They jostle for position a bit. RABBIT tries not to notice that FROGGIE is rather wet. FROGGIE laughs a croaking chuckle of delight and shivers with eagerness for the story to begin.*) Are you ready?

FROGGIE. I'm ready!

RABBIT (*not nearly so enthusiastic*). I'm...so glad.

(*RABBIT picks up book, looks at FROGGIE tentatively. FROGGIE laughs again and nods vigorous encouragement. RABBIT draws a deep breath, takes a moment to find his page, clears his throat and begins reading. MU-*

SIC and LIGHTS bring puppet stage to life. Three bowls of porridge rise into sight. Neither FROGGIE nor RABBIT look at puppet stage, but they respond to the story as they imagine the images we see. MUSIC fades.)

And so...Goldilocks went inside the little house.

(GOLDILOCKS enters on puppet stage and approaches table.)

There she found a table set with three bowls of porridge—

GOLDILOCKS. Oh, look! Three bowls of porridge!
MMMMMMMM!

FROGGIE *(to RABBIT, in a stage whisper)*. What's porridge?

RABBIT. Cereal. Like oatmeal.

FROGGIE. Oh! MMMMMMMM!

RABBIT. First, she tried the biggest bowl.

GOLDILOCKS *(with a loud slurp and gulp, she tries porridge)*. Ugh! This porridge is too hot!

FROGGIE. Toooooooo hot!

RABBIT. Next, she tried the middle-sized bowl.

GOLDILOCKS *(another slurp and gulp)*. Yech! This porridge is too cold!

FROGGIE. Toooooooo cold!

RABBIT. And then she tried the itsy-bitsy bowl.

FROGGIE *(relishing the phrase)*. Itsy-bitsy!

GOLDILOCKS *(another slurp and gulp)*. Aaaahhh! This porridge is just right!

RABBIT (*as GOLDBLOCKS slurps and gulps entire bowl*).

And she ate it all up.

FROGGIE. She ate it ALLLLLLLLL up!

(When she's finished slurping, MUSIC plays and GOLDBLOCKS bobs up and down in place as if walking forward while bowls move past her and off and three chairs enter and move toward her. MUSIC fades.)

RABBIT. After she'd finished the bowl of porridge, Goldilocks needed a comfortable place to sit down. She found three chairs.

GOLDBLOCKS. Oh, look, I've found three chairs!

RABBIT. First, she tried the biggest chair.

GOLDBLOCKS. Oooof! This chair is too high!

FROGGIE. Tooooooo high!

RABBIT. Next, she tried the middle-sized chair.

GOLDBLOCKS. Whoa! This chair is too low.

FROGGIE. Tooooooo low!

RABBIT. And then she tried the itsy-bitsy chair.

FROGGIE (*delighted as before*). *Itsy-bitsy!*

GOLDBLOCKS. Aaaaah! This chair is just right!

RABBIT. And she rocked and she rocked and she rocked and she rocked—

GOLDBLOCKS (*rocking faster and faster*). Wheeeeeeeeee!

RABBIT. —until she broke the chair in two.

GOLDBLOCKS (*falling out of chair*). Whoops!

FROGGIE. She broke the chair in two!

RABBIT. Goldilocks was very tired by now, and decided to take a nap.

GOLDBLOCKS. I could use a nap.

RABBIT. So she went upstairs to the bedroom.

(MUSIC. GOLDILOCKS picks herself up and bobs up and down in place again, as the chairs move past her and off and three beds enter and move toward her. MUSIC fades.)

There she found three beds.

GOLDILOCKS. Oh, look, I've found three beds!

RABBIT. First, she tried the biggest bed.

GOLDILOCKS. Ouch! This bed is too hard.

FROGGIE. Toooooo hard!

RABBIT. Next, she tried the middle-sized bed.

GOLDILOCKS. Ooops! This bed is too soft.

FROGGIE. Tooooooo soft!

RABBIT. And then she tried the itsy-bitsy bed.

FROGGIE *(gleefully)*. Itsy-bitsy!

GOLDILOCKS. Aaaaaah! This bed is just right.

RABBIT. So she stretched out and fell fast asleep. *(Loud snoring noises from GOLDILOCKS.)* Just then, the three bears who owned the house came home.

(MUSIC. Beds and GOLDILOCKS move off in one direction while porridge bowls move on from the other. THREE BEARS enter. MUSIC fades.)

BABY BEAR. We're home!

FROGGIE *(beginning to react to growing suspense)*. The bears came home!

RABBIT. Papa Bear looked at the biggest bowl.

PAPA BEAR. Someone has been eating my porridge!

RABBIT. Mama Bear looked at the middle-sized bowl.

MAMA BEAR. Someone has been eating *my* porridge!