

'Tad' by Benji Davies

Ages 5-7

Published by: HarperCollins Children's Books

What's it all about?

Tad is the smallest, and cleverest, almost-frog in the whole wide pond. All her tadbrothers and tadsisters are faster than her and everyone around her is changing and growing.

Tad is warned about Big Blub, a terrifying creature who stalks the murky depths of the pond and is 'as old as mud'. Is Big Gulp responsible for the disappearance of all her tadbrothers and tadsisters?

A beautiful, engaging picture book about feeling small and left out and accepting that everyone is different and that we should never compare ourselves to them. Benji Davies creates a shimmering, immersive setting and his use of light and dark to add drama and tension to the story is superb.

Perfect for any classes learning about life cycles too!

You may choose to focus on one type of reading question during a lesson, or a variety of VIPERS or you may even wish to use this guide as a starting point and then allow the children to come up with their own ideas and opinions and lines of enquiry!

Because the novel study guide is to be used to aid discussion between the adult and children, we feel there isn't a necessity for an answer booklet.

The guide provides questions and spaces for the children to record their ideas and answers but is not intended to be used as a test.

As there are many lovely pictures in this book it is important to invite the children to examine them carefully. You could encourage the children to use a magnifying glass or photocopy and enlarge a certain part of an image. Throughout the book, encourage the children to investigate:

- Page layout
- How the illustrations are framed
- The use of colour
- How the text is written – some words are in capitals and some are written at an angle, across the page
- The facial expressions of Tad and the other characters

Before reading...

R: What is the name of the author and illustrator?

R: Which characters can you see on the front cover?

P: What do you think the story will be about?

I: Why might the story be called Tad?

Introduction

Spend some time exploring the life cycle of a frog and looking at pictures of frogs and ponds, describing their habitat. If you have a school wildlife area and pond you can visit, you may wish to take the children there to further explore this environment.

Before reading the first double page spread, spend some time looking at the endpapers and exploring the setting.

Pages 1 and 2

E: What kind of creature is Tad?

E: Why is Tad 'almost a frog'?

V: Can you describe Tad in three words?

I: Where do you think Tad lives? Why?

Pages 3 and 4

E: Why do you think Benji Davies has repeated the word 'smaller'?

V: What does it mean to wiggle? Can you think of a synonym for the verb 'wiggle'?

E: How does Benji Davies show that Tad is slower and smaller than the other tadpoles?

E: What do you notice about Tad's eye? Why might this be?

I: How do you think Tad feels about being smaller than her tadbrothers and tadsisters?

I: Who or what do you think Big Blub is?

Maths opportunity: Can you estimate how many tadpoles there are on these pages? Now count them!

Pages 5 and 6

I: Look at, 'Big Blub **they** said...' Who do you think 'they' refers to?

E: Why do you think 'great, big, nasty, fish' is set out like this? What effect does it have when you read it aloud?

R: What colours can you see on these pages?

E: What does 'old as the mud' mean?

V: What is the name of the punctuation on page 6? How should this be read?

E: Can you think of another story where there is a character everyone talks about but no one has ever seen?

Pages 7 and 8

V: Why is 'GULP' written like this? How should it be read?

R: Why does Tad keep to the sunny parts of the pond?

I: Why are Tad's eyes closed on page 7? Can you describe her facial expression and body language and what she might be thinking and feeling?

V: What does the word 'camouflage' mean? How does Tad camouflage herself?

P: Predict if Big Blub will find Tad.

Science opportunity: Can you find out about other animals that camouflage themselves to hide from predators?

Pages 9 and 10

S: Order these events from 1-5. One had been done for you.

	The tadpoles grow front legs.
	Their legs grow stronger.
	Their tails get smaller until they have no tails.
1	The tadpoles grow back legs.
	They grow webbed feet.

V: Replace these words in bold with synonyms: They **rushed** into the shallow water **quickly**.

I: What does the verb 'cheered' tell us about how the tadpoles are feeling about losing their tails?

I: What might Tad be thinking and feeling?

E: Have you ever been left out of something? What happened? How did you feel?

Pages 11 and 12

R: When do the events on page 11 take place?

R: What does Tad begin to notice?

E: Why are Tad's eyes open?

I: What might Tad be thinking and feeling on page 12?

I: Where do you think the tadpoles have gone?

English and music opportunity: Adapt 'Ten Green Bottles' to describe what is happening to the tadpoles.

Pages 13 and 14

V: Try reading out loud Tad's words on these pages. How can you show her feelings through your expression?

P: Predict what will happen to Tad's last tadbrother.

Art opportunity: Draw a frog in the style of Benji Davies.

Pages 15 and 16

R: Describe the colours you can see on these pages.

E: How do these pages make you feel?

E: Why is Tad clever?

P: Predict what will happen next.

Pages 17 and 18

V: Why is 'Oh no! Big Blub!' written like this? How should it be read?

R: What kind of creature is Big Blub?

I: What might Tad be thinking and feeling as she swims away?

P: Do you think Big Blub will catch Tad?

Maths opportunity: Estimate how many times bigger Bib Blub is than Tad.

Pages 19 and 20

E: Why is the text set out like this? What effect does it have?

R: How is Tad changing?

P: Where do you think Tad will go?

P: Predict if Big Blub will return.

Pages 21 to end

S: What happens to Tad at the end of the book?

V: Which words and phrases tell us that Tad is excited?

E: Tad is a coward. Do you agree? Why? Why not?

E: Was the storyline in this book what you expected?

E: Do you have a favourite page or illustration in this book? Why is it your favourite?

E: Does anyone know anything about Benji Davies and his other books?

E: do you think Big Blub is a good name for this character? Why? Why not?

P: What do you think Tad is doing right now?

Student Activity Book: Tad



Pages 1 and 2

What kind of creature is Tad?



Why is Tad 'almost a frog'?



Can you describe Tad in three words?



Where do you think Tad lives? Why?



Pages 3 and 4

Why do you think Benji Davies has repeated the word 'smaller'?



Can you think of a synonym for the verb 'wiggle'?



How does Benji Davies show that Tad is slower and smaller than the other tadpoles?



What do you notice about Tad's eyes? Why might this be?



How do you think Tad feels about being smaller than her tadbrothers and tadsisters?



Who or what do you think Big Blub is? Draw a picture!

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Maths opportunity: Can you estimate how many tadpoles there are on these pages? Now count them!



Pages 5 and 6

Look at, 'Big Blub **they** said...' Who do you think 'they' refers to?



What colours can you see on these pages?



What does 'old as the mud' mean?



Can you think of another story where there is a character everyone talks about but no one has ever seen?



Pages 7 and 8

Why does Tad keep to the sunny parts of the pond?

Why are Tad's eyes closed on page 7? Can you describe her facial expression and body language and what she might be thinking and feeling?



What might Tad be thinking and feeling?

A large, hand-drawn style thought bubble with a scalloped border. Inside the bubble are six horizontal lines for writing. Three smaller circles of decreasing size trail off from the bottom left of the main bubble.

Pages 11 and 12



When do the events on page 11 take place?



What does Tad begin to notice?



Why is Tad's eye open?

What might Tad be thinking and feeling on page 12?

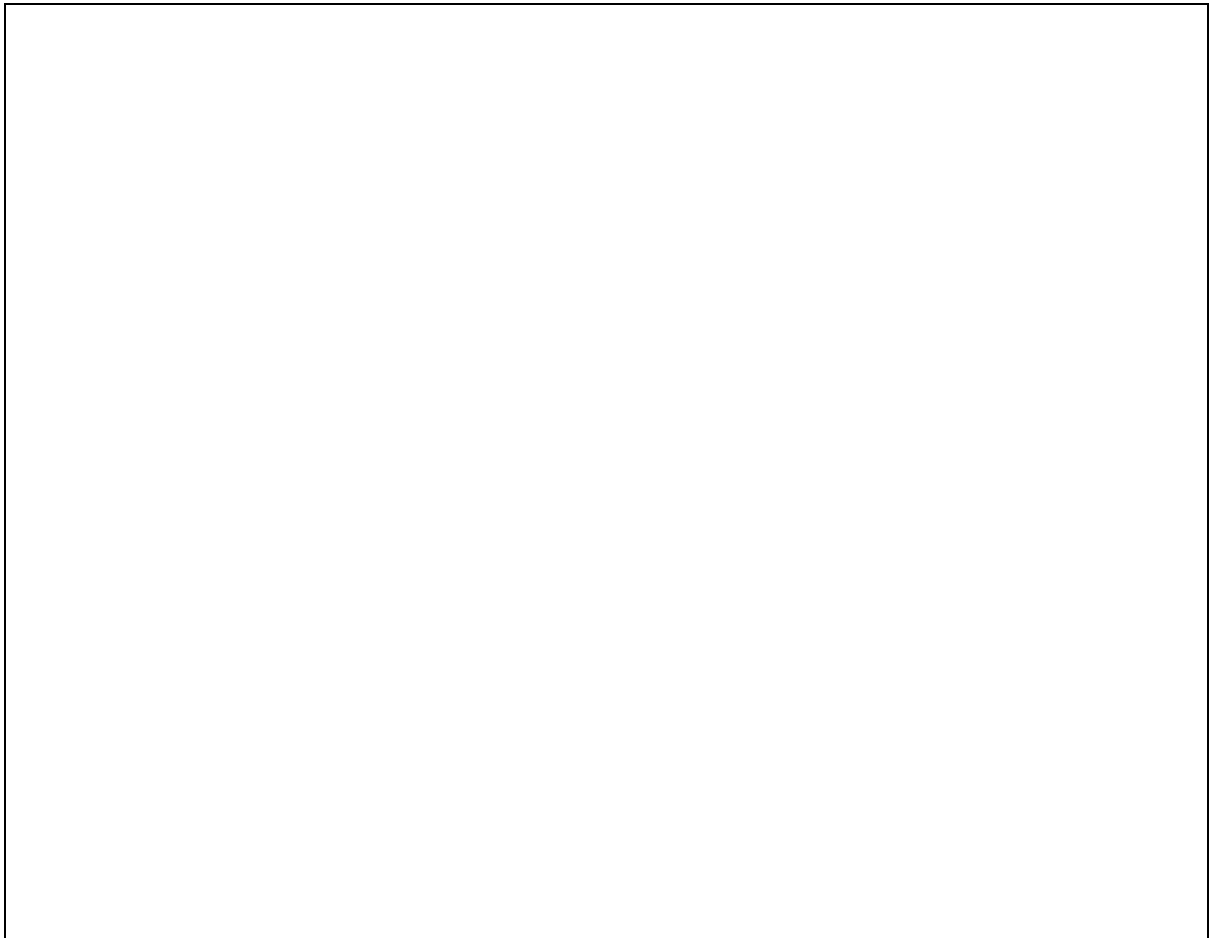


Where do you think the tadpoles have gone?



Pages 13 and 14

Predict what will happen to Tad's last tadbrother. Draw a picture!



Art opportunity: Draw a frog playing in the style of Benji Davies.





Pages 15 and 16

Describe the colours you can see on these pages.



How do these pages make you feel?



Why is Tad clever?



Predict what will happen next. Draw a picture!

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Pages 17 and 18



What kind of creature is Big Blub?



What might Tad be thinking and feeling as she swims away?



Do you think Big Blub will catch Tad? Yes, no or maybe?

Maths opportunity: Estimate how many times bigger Bib Blub is than Tad.



Pages 19 and 20

Why is the text set out like this? What effect does it have?



How is Tad changing?



Where do you think Tad will go? Draw a picture!

--



Predict if Big Blub will return.



Pages 21 to end

What happens to Tad at the end of the book?



Which words and phrases tell us Tad is excited?



Tad is a coward. Do you agree? Why? Why not?



Was the storyline in this book what you expected?



Do you have a favourite page or illustration in this book? Why is it your favourite? Draw a picture of it!



What do you think Tad is doing right now? Draw a picture