

# The Battery

## *Good Frog, Bad Frog*

**Spatial Requirements:** Regular classroom setup; little or no space required

**Activity Type:** Movement/group

**Grades:** 5-12

**Group Size:** 8 or more

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Introduction:** This emotional activity forces students to feel singled out, stupid, or frustrated as they work to understand the difficult pattern of what makes a “good frog” and what makes a “bad frog.” They’ll come to recognize their own responses to emotional situations and identify positive ways to respond in the future.

**Materials:**

- 1 good-sized stuffed frog or other stuffed animal

**Activity:**

Warning: In this activity, students may feel singled out, stupid, or extremely frustrated for a time. This activity creates a lot of emotion and should not be done without careful preparation or first watching a demonstration from a WhyTry trainer.

Your language as a facilitator is EXTREMELY important in this activity. Your language must be precise and careful, limited only to words that are necessary.

The object of this activity is for all participants to be able to tell you the difference in behavior between a “good frog” and a “bad frog.” Tell students that there is a distinctive difference that they should be able to pick out after a while.

Ask students if they are ready to begin. Tell them you will start with a warm-up, doing first a good frog and then a bad frog. Tell them to pay close attention, though it shouldn’t be too hard to notice.

For the **good frog:** Use the word “OK” prior to introducing the good frog each time. (This is the secret of a “good frog.”) For example, “OK, this is a good frog. Watch closely. OK...” Move the frog in a series of random actions for about five seconds. These can be funny, simple, and slow so the actions are very clear.

For the **bad frog:** Make sure you DO NOT use the word “OK” for the bad frog, or students will become confused. Be careful with your language, saying something like, “Watch. This is a bad frog.” Do another series of random actions for about five seconds. They may even be the same as the actions of the good frog.

Continue to do a good frog and a bad frog as students request that you demonstrate each. When a student has figured out the difference, have them come up to you and whisper the solution in your ear. If they are correct, praise them as your “A” student and have them stay by you so that other students can whisper the solution to them while you continue to demonstrate.

The atmosphere will become more emotional as more students recognize the pattern. The students that are left sitting will begin experiencing feelings of inadequacy, and different students will respond in different ways. Some will quit and want to fight back, others will try harder and focus deeper to understand the solution.

When frustration levels are high, gather those who are left sitting and ask how you can help. This time, have them close their eyes as you demonstrate a “good frog” and “bad frog.” Emphasize the word “OK” this time, then have them open their eyes and see if there is a student who can explain to the rest of the group.

**Processing the Experience:**

- How did you feel if you didn’t “get” the solution right away?
- How did you respond to the feelings of frustration or anger?
- How did it feel when you came up with the solution?
- How do we usually respond to anger and frustration in life?
- In life, how can you use anger and frustration in a positive way?