Standard 9I: Use this to compare to Lesson 4 Fluency Card (blue),

Is That a Frog or Toad?

Adapted: originally by Guy Belleranti

What's the first thing you think of when you see or hear the words frog and toad? Loud "ribbits" or "croaking" calls? Tadpoles swimming in a pond? Long-legged jumpers?

Well, frogs and toads do make loud noises. And most do begin as tadpoles (though there are a few species that give birth to live young). However, only the true frog is a long-legged jumper. True toads have much shorter back legs that work better for walking or tiny hops.

Toads are actually a type of frog but with some important differences. First, however, let's list some of the other ways frogs and toads are the same:

**1.** Both are amphibians. They begin their lives in water, hatching from jelly-like eggs into

tadpoles. Then, while living in the water the tadpoles go through a series of body changes called metamorphosis. The end result is a frog or toad.

**2.** Both are "cold-blooded". This doesn't mean their blood is always cold. It means that their body temperatures are similar to their surroundings.

**3.** Unlike fish and reptiles, neither frogs nor toads have scales. They both have water-tight skin.

**4.** The adult forms of both animals have no tails. Both begin their lives as tadpoles

with tails for swimming, but the tails disappear as they grow into adulthood.

**5.** Both have long sticky tongues that can flick out fast to catch bugs. They also eat other wiggly and juicy things like worms and slugs.

Depending on the size and species they might also eat tiny fish and other small animals. Both usually swallow their food whole. Gulp, gulp.

While both frogs and toads may look similar to the average person, those with animal knowledge and a careful eye for observation can easily spot the differences.

**1.** Adult toads live mostly on land while frogs go back and forth from land to water.

**2.** Toads have much dryer and bumpier skin. Frogs usually have a moist, smooth skin that needs water to keep from drying out.

**3.** Toads usually have plumper bodies than frogs. Frogs tend to be thinner, allowing

them to glide quickly through the water.

**4.** Frogs have webbed feet whereas a toad's foot has separated toes. The frog's

webbed feet, along with their longer legs, make them much better swimmers.

**5.** Frogs usually lay eggs in clusters and toads usually lay eggs in chains.

**6.** Most species of toads do not have teeth. Frogs have tiny teeth in their upper jaws.

**7.** When an enemy attacks a toad, it protects itself by squirting the poison.

A few types of frogs can ooze a poison onto their skin to keep away predators.

Next time you see a four-legged amphibian swimming through the water or hopping across your back yard, take a closer look to determine if it is a frog or a toad.