

once upon a time>

Why frogs stay in water

By Stanley Mbuguah

Long time ago, in the countryside, all animals used to organise sports events every year, where all animals participated in different games. A day before the sports, the Frog sat on a water lily in the middle of the pond where the events would be held, he wrinkled up his nose and thought of how he would win another prize.

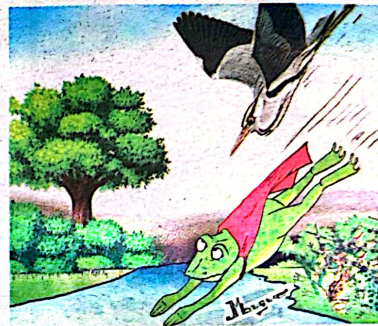
Since the Frog had very long, strong, hind legs, he used to outdo the Heron thus winning the jumping award easily in all years. The Heron felt jealous of this and since then, he withdrew from the sports. Now it was obvious the Frog would win the jumping prize, therefore he decided to participate in a different game.

Among the things he fancied most was singing. During his joyful moments, he would sing until tears stood in his eyes, and the voice went hoarse. Deep down in his broad

chest, he used to wish and longed to be asked to sing with the Croaking Choirboys, who are renown countrywide as the best singers.

The sports day came and the Frog sat on his leaf and watched all the other creatures of the pond practising for the day. The ducks took dives in turns to see who stayed under the water longest. The fish were turning and twisting in readiness for the swimming race. Moreover, the dragonflies were skimming along the top of the water like speedboats and finally a crowd of colourful butterflies were practising their flying relay race.

Singing session came and the Frog confidently put his name down and climbed on the platform with other singers; sun birds, humming birds, geese and flamingoes; there even came a duck who sung a comic song and everybody laughed. Just as the sparrow was about to finish his very sweet song, the Frog turn's came, and he



was clearing his throat ready to start his song, when a giant shadow fell over him.

He looked up only to find an enormous bird swooping straight at him. It was not a flamingo. It was a Heron, and since the Heron lost all matches in the competition, he swore to

revenge by eating frogs for breakfast, lunch and dinner! But before the Heron could gobble him up, the Frog made a long jump into the air, and landed on the ground. Then he jumped again... and again...and again. He kept making great jumps up into the air until the Heron got tired and flew away.

Suddenly, he found himself in a circle of frogs, all clapping and croaking because he had recorded a longer jump and higher than anyone else in the long-distance jumping competition! For another year, he had won a jumping prize! However, he enthusiastically made a special croak song against all herons and that night, he sang it to a crowd of admiring frogs jumping up and down in delight. Since that time, frogs spend most of their time in water criticising the herons in a song, and they don't come out for fear of being attacked by herons.



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