

"A Special Species Cycle"

(Who Am I?)

(Tune: "You Are My Sunshine" Lyrics: Lucy Jensen)

Lucy's note: This may be read as poetry or sung. It is intended for 3rd or 4th grade students. Students need a copy due to the length of the saga.

Tailless amphibian, is what I am.
I live in water; sometimes on land.
I am a big frog; I am the largest.
Try to guess my name if you can.

When I was first born, it was in springtime,
From eggs in water, I wriggled out.
A tiny tadpole, one centimeter,
Had no legs, no eyes, and no mouth!

Out of my head grew some gills for breathing,
I soon developed my eyes and mouth.
I nibbled plants with a tiny tooth-beak,
As I started swimming about.

I ate all summer and in the fall.
I hid from beetles and birdies all,
And then I swam to the muddy bottom,
Where I slept all winter long.

When springtime came and I awoke,
I started eating and growing more.
And when the winter brought chilly weather,
I hibernated as before.

Again came springtime, and I was two.
Strange things did happen; hind legs I grew!
My front legs sprouted before I knew it,
And my lungs were growing too.

Now please don't think that this is the ending,
With legs and lungs, as we have sung,
My mouth grew wider, and from inside it,
Grew a great, big, sticky tongue!

And while my mouth grew, I was not eating,
My tadpole tail became so small.
I used it all up to feed my body,
Now I have no tail at all!

I started using my lungs for breathing.
I changed my eating from plants to meat,
And I could sing now, a croaky frog song,
But I was only two inches long.

Again I slept through the long cold winter.
Awoke in springtime when I was three.
I shed my old skin; it was too small,
Kicked it off, then swallowed it all!

Kept growing bigger and shedding skin,
After that first time, three times again!
Kept eating insects and getting fatter,
Then I was ready for my long winter's nap.

And when the spring came and I was four,
Eating fat insects would have to wait.
I puffed my throat out and croaked a frog shout,
I had to find me a pretty froggie mate.

This is the ending to my long story,
My lovely frog mate laid many eggs.
We didn't stay around to be good parents,
We just hopped away on our frog legs.

Some frogs of my kind live thirty years.
You'll hear us croaking in soggy bogs.
My throat is yellow; my voice does bellow,
And my name is Mister BULLFROG!

