

Lesson 45: Nature Study — The Garden Toad**PLL PART TWO****Nature Observation**

Did you ever see a toad? I had one in my yard, and what do you think he liked to eat? Bread? Oh, no. Milk? No, he liked spiders. If I put a spider near him, out came the toad's tongue, and into his mouth went the spider. You and I do not like spiders, but my toad would eat forty or fifty for his dinner.

Scientific Focus: Natural history observation • Toad's sticky tongue • Expressive questions & answers • Garden insect control.

1 NATURE INVESTIGATION & TEXT FACTS

Read the observation text carefully. Answer the questions on the lines below.

- 1. Habitat:** Where did the writer find the toad living? In the _____
- 2. Diet:** What favorite food did the toad feast upon? _____
- 3. Appetite:** How many spiders could the hungry toad eat for dinner? _____
- 4. Capture Tool:** What special organ quickly flicked out to catch prey? The _____

2 SCIENCE DETECTIVE & PUNCTUATION

Investigate how a toad's tongue works and study expressive sentence types.

A. Nature Science Fact: Why can an insect not escape when touched by a toad's tongue?

Because the toad's tongue is covered with a _____ substance that holds it fast.

B. Question vs. Statement: Add the correct ending punctuation mark (? or .):

Did you ever see a toad _____ The toad eats spiders in the yard _____

C. Possessive Apostrophe: Write the possessive form:

The tongue of the toad → the _____ tongue

3 WRITING THE STORY OF THE TOAD

Write three connected sentences telling the story of a garden toad. Tell where he lives, how he catches his dinner, and why he is helpful.

- 1. Habitat:** _____
- 2. Hunting:** _____
- 3. Helper:** _____

4 A GARDENER'S BEST FRIEND

Why is a quiet toad such a welcome friend in a vegetable garden? Write one complete sentence.

My Thought: _____

1 ORAL CONVERSATION & NATURAL HISTORY STUDY

Serl's Original Teacher Note: Conduct an oral conversation before writing. Discuss: (1) Where toads are found (damp, shaded places under stones, logs, or leaves); (2) What they do there (remain hidden by day, hunt insects by twilight); (3) Food (insects, beetles, spiders, slugs); (4) How they catch prey: the toad's tongue is attached at the *front* of the lower jaw and covered with a sticky secretion, allowing it to flip outward with remarkable speed and snare insects instantly.

Standards Addressed: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.1 (Key Details in Scientific Text), L.2.2.C (Apostrophes in possessives), L.2.1 (Sentence types & end punctuation), W.2.2 (Informative/Explanatory writing).

✓ COMPLETE ANSWER KEY

Section 1: Nature Investigation & Text Facts

1. Habitat: *yard* (or *garden*).
2. Diet: *spiders* (accept: *bugs* or *insects*).
3. Appetite: *forty* or *fifty* (40 or 50).
4. Capture Tool: *toad's tongue* (or *sticky tongue*).

Section 2: Science Detective & Punctuation

- A. Science Fact: *sticky* (or *gluey* / *adhesive*).
- B. End Marks: *Did you ever see a toad?* | *The toad eats spiders in the yard.*
- C. Possessive Apostrophe: *toad's tongue* (apostrophe before the 's').

Section 3: Writing the Story of the Toad (Sample Response)

1. Habitat: *A quiet toad lives under the cool, damp stones in the garden.*
2. Hunting: *When a spider creeps past, out shoots his long, sticky tongue to catch it.*
3. Helper: *He eats forty or fifty insects every evening to keep the garden safe.*

Section 4: A Gardener's Best Friend (Sample Answers)

- *The toad helps the gardener by eating harmful pests that eat the vegetables.*
- *He is a gentle, quiet helper that protects our flowers and plants naturally.*

! DIAGNOSTIC GUIDE & CONVERSATION PROMPTS

- **Frogs vs. Toads:** Explain that frogs have smooth, wet skin and live near water, whereas toads have drier, bumpy skin and dwell in gardens and woods. Both are amphibians.
- **The Mechanics of the Tongue:** Human tongues are rooted at the back of the mouth; a toad's tongue is rooted at the front and flips out like a party blower.
- **Apostrophe Check:** Ensure students write *toad's tongue* with an apostrophe to indicate possession.

★ SCORING RUBRIC (20 POINTS TOTAL)

Evaluation Metric	Exemplary (5 Pts)	Proficient (3-4 Pts)	Developing (1-2 Pts)
Scientific Comprehension	Demonstrates complete understanding of habitat, diet, and tongue mechanism.	Answers all text fact questions correctly; understands sticky tongue concept.	Confuses diet or habitat; answers incomplete or inaccurate.
Mechanics & Punctuation	Flawlessly uses question mark, period, and possessive apostrophe in <i>toad's</i> .	Places punctuation marks correctly; minor slip with possessive apostrophe.	Omits question mark; confuses possessive with plural noun.
Narrative Composition	Composes 3 vivid, coherent sentences covering habitat, hunting, and utility.	Writes 3 clear sentences describing the toad's life and hunting.	Writes fewer than 3 sentences; thoughts are fragmented or disjointed.
Ecological Reflection	Expresses a mature appreciation of the toad as a natural pest controller.	Explains why gardeners appreciate toads in a complete sentence.	Reflection is brief, off-topic, or missing complete sentence structure.