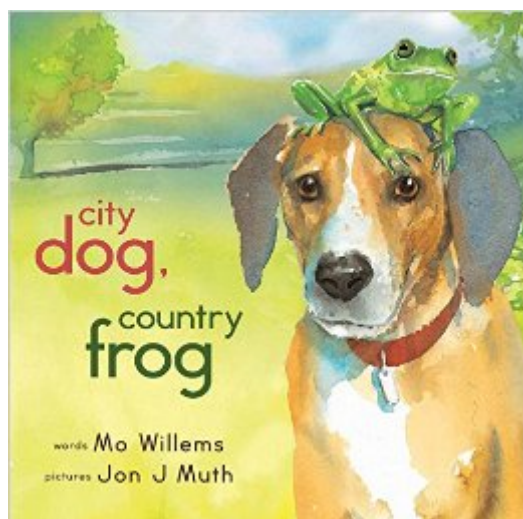


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# City Dog, Country Frog



## Synopsis

In spring, when City Dog runs free in the country for the first time, he spots Country Frog sitting on a rock, waiting for a friend. "You'll do," Frog says, and together they play Country Frog games. In summer, they meet again and play City Dog games. Through the seasons, whenever City Dog visits the country he runs straight for Country Frog's rock. In winter, things change for City Dog and Country Frog. Come spring, friendship blooms again, a little different this time. Mo Willems' spare, poignant text and Jon J. Muth's expressive watercolors team up to tell a story that will resonate with readers of all ages.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 490L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 64 pages

Publisher: Disney-Hyperion; First Edition edition (June 8, 2010)

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ISBN-10: 1423103009

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Product Dimensions: 10.2 x 0.5 x 10.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (118 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #59,654 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #59 in [Books > Children's Books > Animals > Frogs & Toads](#) #62 in [Books > Children's Books > Animals > Reptiles & Amphibians](#) #468 in [Books > Children's Books > Animals > Dogs](#)

Age Range: 3 - 6 years

Grade Level: Preschool - Kindergarten

## Customer Reviews

I chose this book to review for a graduate course in Children's Literature, and I found myself unable to stop crying as I turned the pages. At first, the story reminded me of the traditional Fox and the Hound tale: unlikely friends from very different backgrounds whose relationship is doomed to change. However, this story goes above and beyond the premise, mostly due to Jon Muth's soft watercolor illustrations and the designer's savvy placing of some of the most symbolic statements ("That was winter.") alone on a page so that the reader can soak up their intensity. I sobbed uncontrollably at one point, both for the loss of one of the characters and for the final, bittersweet message that friends are never really gone if we remember them. Love, love, love this story and its

accompanying art. Recommended age: pre K through first grade, but the adults who read it with the children will cherish it too.

Several months ago when I saw the listing for *City Dog, Country Frog* the first thing I noticed was the teaming of dynamic duo Jon Muth (of *Zen Shorts (Collector's Edition)* (Zen) fame) and Mo Willems (*Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, *There Is a Bird On Your Head!* (An Elephant and Piggie Book), *Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed*, etc.). I immediately pre-ordered it. I knew almost nothing about it - other than it would likely feature a dog and a frog, but seeing how much my two and a half year old son enjoys Muth and Willems, I figured I couldn't go wrong. *City Dog, Country Frog* is a very nice book. I'll be brief... Muth's illustrations are simply incredible. What a delight. The story by Willems isn't quite as smartly original as *Pigeon* or *Naked Mole Rat*; it's a very simple story. But its simplicity is also its charm. And I was surprised by how heartfelt the ending would be. My son wanted to read it again immediately after we first read it, and I imagine it will be a favorite in the reading rotation for some time to come. It is so nice to read children's book that the parents can also enjoy.

This is a wonderful book. I'm a sucker for the emotional richness of Muth's artwork, and it gives the simple story the breadth that it needs to allow children (and parents) to discover a wealth of ripples there. Among the themes present (which not all reviewers seem to have given credence): 1. Very different people can be friends. 2. In the process of being friends, they teach each other about their different worlds, and maybe even create a new one together. 3. People that we love sometimes leave us (and it's nice here that we don't overtly know whether the frog died, hibernated, or moved on, because loved ones leave in a wide variety of ways that may have nothing to do with us). It's also nice that they do the remembering part in the fall, as this will resonate with how many young people interact with their elderly relatives. 4. We miss the people who we've lost, but they leave their imprint on us (that froggy grin). 5. Life goes on. I totally disagree with those who think that this means that the message is "friends are disposable" -- quite the opposite, dog spends a whole season in mourning, and is still sad when spring arrives. But then he takes what he learned from frog and applies it to the trip back to point 1, making a new friend with the possibility of new discoveries. Anyway, none of this stuff hits you over the head, but all the sensations are there in the delicate lighting of the watercolors. My 2.5-year-old and I have enjoyed reading it very much, and I expect that we will enjoy it in ever-changing ways as she gets older. That's a rarity. This feels like a collaboration of two great artists, like when Yoyo Ma does albums with Indian tabla players and the

like -- they each recognized the power of what the other was doing, and imagined that a combination might allow good things to happen. I have no idea whether that's actually how this book came to be, but I hope so -- it certainly worked!!

City Dog ran like the wind across the field in front of the old farmhouse until he saw something very unusual sitting on a rock. Very soon he had met the acquaintance of Country Frog perched on a rock. He sat right down next to him on a rock peering into his big googly eyes. His tail was wagging when he asked what Country Frog was up to. "Waiting for a friend." There wasn't anyone in sight, but the smiling frog replied, "But you'll do." Spring had begun and they played games and cavorted around. Of course Country Frog's games were things like "jumping and splashing and croaking." City Dog even let Country Frog sit on his head as he dog paddled through the water. Summer arrived and they played new games, games that City Dog knew how to play like fetch. He taught Country Frog how to sniff and bark too. They played and played and played until fall arrived. The leaves had changed color and began to drift to the ground with their splash of color. Frog was getting tired and wanted to play "remember-ing games." Frog sat on his snout as they began to remember. Later City Dog and Country Frog sat on the rock and remembered how much fun they had. Winter arrived, but when City Dog raced through the snow to see his friend at their rock he was nowhere to be found. Where had he gone? Perhaps he would see him when spring rolled around again. This beautiful, heartwarming story about friendship will charm both children and adults alike. Every child eventually creates a friendship with someone special in their life and this unlikely, but joyful friendship, will bring a smile to those who have created them. The gorgeous watercolors create that special aura of the excitement and special moments that only close friends share. There also, unfortunately, is sadness of the loss of a friend, but the possibility of a new one. This is a very special book that city folk, country folk, and all kind of friends will be able to embrace and relate to!

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