

GET CAUGHT AS A FROG

Imagine being changed into a frog—the very problem Princess Imogene faces in the hopping tale *FROGGED* by Vivian Vande Velde. With the help of the author, who is very good at translating “Frog,” learn more from Princess Imogene about the challenges of life as a frog.

Vivian Vande Velde: How did this ever happen to you?

Princess Imogene: (sigh) There was this frog who asked me for help. He said he was a prince. But he called me, “Hey, Princess!” and when I asked where his kingdom was, he said “North of here. Well, sort of north-ish. By way of east-northwest.”

So I should have been suspicious about what he said, and I should have been suspicious about what he didn't say.

What he didn't say was that by kissing him, I would turn into a frog, and the only way to get back to my human shape is to pass the curse on to someone else. That hardly seems fair.

I'm still working on finding a better solution.

What exactly does “ribitt” mean to most frogs?

Oh, your People accent when you say that is so cute!

What you called “ribitt” means a variety of things, depending on how a frog says it, including the tone, the loudness or softness of how it's said, whether one stresses the “ri-” or the “-bitt,” and how quickly or slowly you say it.

What you just said translates roughly to: “Your tadpole tail is shrinking nicely.”

Actually, Frog language has fewer words than People languages do, which is why I find my interviews with frog reporters, just a little bit unsatisfying. We always end up talking, as frogs so often do, mostly about food: the finding of food, the goodness of having food, the not-so-goodness of not



having food, and the definitely-no-goodness-at-all of becoming food for someone else.

Speaking of food, have you developed a taste for flies yet—and do they buzz when you swallow them?

I've learned more about flies since becoming a frog than I ever knew when I was a princess. But their taste is hard to describe. A good fly is like a good french fry: a combination of crisp and soft—and catsup wouldn't hurt. When a fly buzzes while going down, that's fizzy, like a soft drink.

Are there any advantages to being a frog instead of a princess?

Certainly. Frogs are not given chores or homework. Frogs are never told their hair is a mess. Frogs don't have to clean their rooms or go to the dentist. And nobody expects a frog to sit through boring state dinners without fidgeting.

To learn if Princess Imogene is destined to stay a frog forever, get caught reading *FROGGED*.

Vivian Vande Velde

Vivian writes books for kids of all ages, including *8 Class Pets + 1 Squirrel / 1 Dog = Chaos*, *Cloaked in Red*, *Heir Apparent*, *Deadly Pink*, and *Stolen*.

Check out her latest novel, *Frogged*.

Listen to Vivian read *Troll Teacher* in Read-to-Me Corner at 1:40pm.

Festival-to-Go

Festival-to-Go brings authors and illustrators into Rochester City Schools to speak to students who might otherwise not have the opportunity to meet a “real live” writer or illustrator.

As author Vivian Vande Velde, who organizes Festival-to-Go, notes, “we recognize that these are the formative years when children are trying to settle for themselves whether reading is something fun to do, or simply something grown-ups inflict on them.”

Festival-to-Go volunteers visit one or two city schools and speak to all the students in grades 1-6. The volunteers share their enthusiasm for books in a variety of lively ways and encourage children to read.

Altrusa International sponsors this program by donating books to participating schools' libraries so the impact of Festival-to-Go keeps right on going!

* Librarians or School Administrators: If you are interested in having Festival-to-Go come to your Rochester City School next year, please contact Lucy Giglio, lucy.giglio@live.com.