



What Made Tiddalik Laugh

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Long, long ago in the Dreamtime in Australia, there lived a Giant Frog called Tiddalik. Tiddalik had been sleeping for many nights and many days. When he woke up he yawned, stretched and said, "I'm thirsty. I need a drink."

Now Tiddalik was not just a little bit thirsty. He was enormously thirsty. When he thought about it, he realised that he was absolutely parched. "I'm so thirsty that I could drink a lake." he said.

And that is exactly what he did.

He sat by the edge of a lake and drank it up, every drop. (*slurp*)

He moved on to a stream and drank that up, too. Every drop. (*slurp*)

He found a water hole and drained that, too. Every drop. (*slurp*)

As he drank, Tiddalik swelled and swelled, (*can you show him getting bigger?*) but he was still thirsty, and all through the day he searched for water. All through the day, slurping and gurgling, he drank every drop of water he found. With each drop of water inside him he swelled more and more until at last he was no longer thirsty.

Darkness fell and Tiddalik rested. He was completely full. "Now I can sleep." He said. And he did. (*can you sleep, too?*)

The next morning, the sun rose. It was hot and strong. In its bright light it was clear that there was not one drop of water left anywhere. Where there had been lakes, there was no water. Where rivers had once flowed, there were empty river beds. The streams and the water holes, even the puddles, were completely dry.

All through the day the flowers and the grass withered. All through the day the leaves of the trees turned brown and began to fall.

Everywhere the birds and the animals were searching for water. In desperation they gathered together.

"Tiddalik has drunk all the water, every last drop ." they said "Whatever shall we do? We will die without water."

Different animals had different suggestions, but only the wise wombat had the answer.

"We must make Tiddalik laugh," he said. "When he laughs he must open his mouth and, when he does that, all the water will pour out. Every drop."

