

COME ON, RAIN!

COME ON, RAIN!

by Karen Hesse, illustrated by Jon J. Muth
(Scholastic Press)

Themes: Families, Growth and Change,
Multiculturalism, Nature and Seasons, Neighbors

Grade Level: K-3 (ages 5-8)

Running Time: 8 minutes

SUMMARY

This book recounts the natural drama of a summer rainstorm, beginning with "endless heat," building in suspense as clouds roll in, and exploding in relief when the raindrops finally fall. The story is set in a city neighborhood and is told from the viewpoint of a young African-American girl who can't wait to play in the rain. The words and pictures appeal to all the senses and draw the viewers into the suspense. When the rain finally comes, the children's joy infects the adults as everyone dances to welcome the shower.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to a story about the coming of rain.
- Children will identify words and pictures that describe the senses of touch, sight, sound, hearing, and taste.
- Children will describe the progression of events in a summer rainstorm.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Present the title to the students and ask them to describe occasions on which they have really wanted it to rain. Encourage them to remember details (such as temperature and wind) that preceded a rainstorm. Ask them to keep their own experiences in mind as they view the program.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Discuss the title again, in light of what children saw and heard in the story. Ask them to recall the feelings of the characters at various points in the story and to compare the feelings of the girls and their mothers. Why did they look forward to rain? Why were they so happy when the rain came? How did they feel after the rain passed? Go back over the program, pointing out the words and pictures that expressed the people's feelings.

Continue the "before, during, and after" theme as you connect the story to science. Make a chalkboard list of how the environment changes during the course of the story. Then introduce the water cycle of evaporation, condensation, and precipitation. Have students do simple science experiments that illustrate these principles.

Watercolor painting, which was used to illustrate this story, is a useful way to connect art and science. Have students use watercolor painting to observe the properties of water. Show them how to cover the paper with a wash. Have them add

blue or gray paint almost immediately and observe how the paint spreads on the page. Wait until the paper partially dries and then have them paint again, comparing the results with totally wet painting. Encourage students to experiment with forming clouds, splattering water to "draw" raindrops, and pooling water to create puddles. After their experiments, encourage children to apply the techniques they've learned by making watercolors about weather.

Connect the story to geography and social studies by discussing the rain cycle on a much larger scale. Show students how to consult almanacs to find annual rainfalls in different places around the country and around the world. For example, compare annual precipitation in New York, Hawaii, and Arizona or in Ireland and Afghanistan. Have older students prepare reports on how people live in drier and wetter parts of the world.

Use one or more of the programs listed below to make further connections between science, social studies, and literature.

Other related videos and films available from Weston Woods include:
THE SNOWY DAY, by Ezra Jack Keats
TIME OF WONDER, by Robert McCloskey

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