

Rain, Rain

by Joy Cowley

illustrated by Nina Price

Overview

This is a clearly sequenced, poetic narrative about a family tramping through the bush in wet weather and then setting up camp. Despite the rain, the children are clearly having a great time. This is a particularly appropriate text to read after “*Smile!*” *said Dad*. Children delight in finding that the sentence “‘Too bad,’ said Dad” is common to both texts. This text is very useful for monitoring children’s use of reading strategies at the end of the Red level. If you intend to use this text for that purpose, it would be advisable not to share the text first.

Curriculum links: social studies, science, health and physical education

Text features

(Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the high-frequency words “and”, “said”, “the”, “up”, “went”
- the initial consonant blends “str” and “tr”
- the rime “ack” in “track”
- the rhyming words “bad” and “Dad”
- the words ending in “ed” – “cooked”, “paddled”
- the use of speech marks
- the ellipsis on page 6
- the repetitive refrain “and the rain came down”
- the clear sequence of events
- the poetic sentence structure on page 6.

Setting the scene

Talk with the children about tramping in the bush and setting up camp. *Have you ever been on a bush walk? What would you need to take with you if you were going to stay the night? What would you do if it were raining?*

Bring a pack into the classroom, perhaps with a sleeping bag in it, to help engage the children in the discussion. Let the children try the pack on.

The words “track” or “stream” may be unfamiliar to some children, so try to include these words in the discussion.

The first reading

Discuss the illustration on the cover and ask the children to read the cover and the title page. Read the names of the author and the illustrator.

Page 2 – *What are the people wearing?* Draw the children’s attention to the packs under the raincoats and relate this to the previous discussion. *Where are they going?*

Listen to the children read the text themselves. Note which children are independently cross-checking using visual cues, for example, reading “track” rather than “path”. Note, also, that some children may notice “tr” but may not be able to complete the word.

Work through the text page by page, discussing the illustrations before the children read the text themselves.

Page 4 – *What is Dad doing?* If the children have difficulty decoding the word “meal”, write it on the whiteboard. Ask them to identify the initial sound. *Can you see a word you know (me) inside this word? Can you say the end sound?* Help the children to put all the sounds together and pronounce the word. Check that they understand what “meal” means.

Page 5 – *What is Mum doing?* Note that she is lying on her sleeping bag in the tent. *Where is she looking?*

Page 6 – *What are the children doing?* Focus attention on the first word “Off” to assist with the poetic structure.

The children may read “played” for “paddled”. Use the whiteboard to help them decode the word. The word “stream” may also be new to some children.

Help the children to think beyond the text. *What will the children do if it keeps raining? What other things could they do that are fun?*

Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to the children reread the text, noting instances of expressive reading, fluent rhythmic reading, self-monitoring, and cross-checking.

Locate the word “track” in the text. Make a list of words that start with the consonant blend “tr” or that include the rime “ack”.

Discuss the initial letter cluster “str” for “stream”. Make a list of other words that start with “str”.

Locate the words in the text that end with “ed”. Using the whiteboard or magnetic letters, show the children how they can make the words “cook”, “cooks”, and “cooking” from “cooked” by changing the word endings.

Use magnetic letters or the whiteboard to generate a list of words using the rime “ad”. See if anyone notices that “ad” is in the word “paddled”.

Look closely at the illustrations and talk about the feelings of the characters. *What do you think the children might be saying on page 7?*

Focus on the word “stream”. Talk about other words the author could have used.

Suggestions for further activities

Make a flow chart of the story, putting the events in sequence.

Innovate on the poetic structure used on page 6:

Off came our jackets.

Off came our sweatshirts.

We played in the park...

and the sun came out.

Enlarge and photocopy page 5. Study the speech marks. Write the appropriate speech balloon for each parent and attach the balloons to the page in the correct place.

Reread "*Smile!*" said Dad.

Write about a time when it rained during an outing.