

The Rain Came Down

by Kathryn Renner

illustrated by Andrew Burdan

This text is levelled at Red 1.



Overview

The children have planted seeds in their classroom planter box, and now the rain is coming down. At last, the children see the new plants come up.

Students will make connections to their experiences of rainy days and what they know about planting seeds, in particular the time it takes for the plant to be seen. (10–15 days for peas)

This text supports the development of a self-improving reading process. It requires students to “make meaning of text by applying their increasing ability to attend to

the print detail and their growing knowledge of sentence structures and also by using their expanding reading vocabulary and the illustrations” (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 10).

There is an audio version of the text as an MP3 file at www.readytoread@tki.org.nz

Cross-curriculum links

Science (Living World) – Levels 1 and 2 – Life processes: Recognise that all living things have certain requirements so they can stay alive.

Text characteristics

The students are working towards the standard for after one year at school. Many characteristics of Green texts are also in texts at earlier levels but in simpler forms. These characteristics are shown in the boxes with a solid outline. Other boxes indicate additional characteristics.

The familiar setting at school

Most content explicitly stated but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make simple inferences, for example, about why there is a picture of a planter box on the title page, what will happen to the seeds, and what the people will do to try and keep dry



The rain came down and the umbrellas went up.



The rain came down and the hoods went up.

The context of growing plants, which may be unfamiliar to some children

Illustrations that support and extend the meaning but may not exactly match the words, for example, the illustrations of the planter box and labelled seed packet



The rain came down and the worms came up.



The rain came down ...

Specific challenges that require students to monitor their reading, for example, attending closely to print in order to notice the changes in wording (“came down”, “went up”, “came up”)

The plural nouns “hoods”, “plants”, “seeds”, “umbrellas”, “worms”

Sentences that run over more than one line but do not split phrases, supporting phrased reading and return sweep

Opportunities for the students to think critically, for example, to infer that many days have passed between the beginning and end of the story

A range of punctuation, including full stops, an exclamation mark, and an ellipsis, to support phrasing, intonation, and meaning

To support word recognition:

- several repeated high-frequency words, for example, “and”, “down”, “The”, “the”, “up”, “We”, “went”

To support word solving:

- interest words that are likely to be in a reader’s oral vocabulary and are strongly supported by the context or illustrations, for example, “hoods”, “planted”, “plants”, “Rain”, “rain”, “seeds”, “umbrellas”, “worms”, “Yay”
- the irregular verb “came”, which may not be in students’ oral vocabulary and may require support.

A suggested reading purpose

We are reading this text to find out what happened when the rain came down.

Setting a learning goal

(What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically” about texts?)

To meet the reading purpose, students need to draw on a range of processing and comprehension strategies, often simultaneously. The strategies, knowledge, and skills below link to *The Literacy Learning Progressions*.

Select and adapt them to set your specific learning goal. Be guided by your students’ particular needs and experiences – their culture, language, and identity. (*Reading and Writing Standards for Years 1–8*, Knowledge of the learner, page 6).

The purpose of the goals below is to guide you in your lesson planning and your monitoring and support of students. Simplify the wording when sharing them with students.

This text provides opportunities for students to:

- make connections to their prior knowledge of rainy days and of seeds and plants to form and test hypotheses about what will happen when the rain comes down
- draw on sources of information, for example, grapho-phonetic information, known words, sentence structure, punctuation, context, and/or illustrations to make meaning
- notice some errors in their reading and attempt, possibly with teacher prompting, to correct them
- build their bank of high-frequency words.

Introducing the text

Discuss the cover illustration. *What can we see?* If necessary, introduce the term “planter box” and clarify that the illustration shows a seed packet and that it tells us what the seeds will grow into. Show and discuss a seed packet, seeds, peas in a pod, and peas.

Read the title together.

- Support the students to think about the link between the title and the cover illustration. *What do you think this story is going to be about?*

- Ask the students to share their experiences of planting seeds, for example, what plants need to grow and how long it takes. If possible, make a link to a school garden or associated activity. You could have some gardening implements and packets of seeds to refer to. If possible, provide opportunities for students who have a first language other than English to explore the topic orally in this language.
- Record some key ideas and vocabulary from the discussion on a chart. Add to the chart during and after reading.
- Use real items and pictures to support English language learners to understand the key vocabulary.
- Read the names of the author and the illustrator.
- Discuss the title page. *What can you see?*

Share the reading purpose and learning goals.

Reading the text

Below are the sorts of behaviours you want students to demonstrate on the first or subsequent readings. These behaviours are closely linked and will support each other. Each example is accompanied by instructional strategies you can use to scaffold students’ learning. **Select from and adapt** the suggestions, according to your students’ needs and experiences.

The students make connections to their prior knowledge of rainy days and of seeds to make predictions about what will happen (to the people and the seeds) when the rain comes down.

They make meaning by drawing on more than one source of information, for example, they confirm the words “umbrellas” and “hoods” by using grapho-phonetic information (in particular, initial letters) and by using the illustrations and their prior knowledge of rainy days.

- **Title page** – *What do you see here?* (Have some packets of seeds for children to look at.) Discuss how small seeds are. Discuss what kind of seeds are being planted in this story.
- **Page 2** – Discuss the illustration to support the students with the interest words. *What are they doing?*
- Listen to the students read the text to themselves. If necessary, prompt them to use the known word “see” to work out “seeds”.

- **Page 3** – *What happened after they planted the seeds?* If the students read “comed” or “comes” for “came”, model the correct usage.
- **Page 4** – Discuss the illustration. *What happened when they went outside?* Notice how the students manage the return sweep and the word “umbrellas”. Do they glance at the illustration? Do they articulate the initial syllable? You may want to check if they maintain their one-to-one word matching across this multi-syllabic word. *Is anything happening in the planter box?* Begin a chart to record “what came down” and “what went up”. Add to this on subsequent pages.

what came down	what went up
rain	umbrellas

- **Page 5** – Focus the students on the hoods by asking *What are the children doing to keep their heads dry?* The students may be more familiar with the word “hoodie”, so clarify that “hood” is the word for the part of a jacket that covers the head. *What’s happening with the seeds? What’s different from the picture on page 4? What is it showing us?* (time passing shown by different clothes)
- **Page 6** – Discuss the illustration before reading. *What are these? Why are they in the garden?* Draw out the idea that worms live in soil. *The children look happy. Would you be happy to see worms in your garden? Why?* If the students read “came down” or “went up” instead of “came up”, say *Does rain come up?* and prompt them to reread. You could also say *Have a closer look at that word. Say the beginning sound. Does it start like “down”? or “went”? Does “went up” sound right? Read that again.*
- **Page 7** – Spend some time discussing the illustration before reading. *What has changed?* (clothing and plants) *Why is the boy looking surprised?* Support students to infer that time has passed and the seeds have grown into plants. Have the students read the page. Draw attention to the ellipsis. *The sentence hasn’t finished. There is more to come ...*
- **Page 8** – Look at the illustration. *What do you think has happened? Why are they smiling? What did they say?* Listen to the students read. If they have difficulty reading “Yay!” it may help to make a connection to words they know, for example, “day” and “say”. Draw attention to the exclamation mark. *How does this help you read this word?*
- Review the ideas in the text. *What happened when the rain came down?* Talk about the idea that the rain helped the plants to grow. *What did the people do when the rain came down?*

- Refer to the chart created before the reading. *We know that the seeds need the rain. What else helps seeds to grow?* Draw out the idea that seeds also need sunshine and soil. *Did the plants get any sun?* Clarify that the book covers many days and that there would have been sunny days as well. (The students may notice on page 8 that the sun has come out.)

Monitoring during the reading

The students notice some errors in their reading and attempt, possibly with some teacher prompting, to correct them, for example, by attending closely to grapho-phonetic information and cross-checking with the illustration.

- You may have noticed students doing some self-monitoring during the first reading. Monitor the students closely as they reread the text quietly to themselves or to a partner. Note their ability to self-monitor and to use the punctuation, especially the ellipsis and the exclamation mark, to support phrasing and expression.
- Provide opportunities to practise reading aloud using punctuation to support expression and oral fluency.
- When students make an error, wait till the end of the sentence or page before intervening unless they stop reading. Waiting gives them the opportunity to notice the error and fix it themselves.
- Give feedback (without overly disrupting the flow of the reading) when the student self-monitors. For example, *You said “The rain came down and the hoods came up”, and then you changed it. Why did you do that? What made you change your mind? How did you know the word was “went”?*
- If students are making errors without noticing a problem, use prompts to draw their attention to the error. For example:

Text in book	Student reads	Teacher prompt
The rain came down and the hoods went up.	The rain came down and the hoods went on.	<i>You said “the hoods went on”. Have another look at the last word.</i>
and the plants came up. Yay!	and the seeds came up. Yay!	<i>The seeds came up? Are they seeds now? Check the first letter. What would you expect to see at the start of “seeds”? Does that start like “seeds”?</i>

- Other prompts you can use if the students are not self-monitoring include *Are you sure? Did your finger match the words? Think about what would make sense. Does that look or sound right to you? Try that again.*

- Remember to base these prompts on what you know about the students' prior knowledge. For example, asking an English language learner if a word sounds right will not be useful if they are not familiar with English phonemes and vocabulary. In this case, an explanation and further examples will be more effective.
- For further suggestions about ways to support students to self-monitor (to cross-check, confirm, and self-correct), see *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4*, page 130.

After reading: practice and reinforcement

After-reading tasks should arise from monitoring the students' needs and should provide purposeful practice and reinforcement. The suggestions below relate to this text and, where possible, links should be made to other aspects of the literacy programme (for example, to other reading texts, the students' own writing, oral language, handwriting, and word games and activities) and other curriculum areas.

Select from and adapt these suggestions, according to the needs of your students.

- The students can build their comprehension and fluency by rereading the text while listening to the audio version on the MP3 files. Audio versions also provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, and expression.
- Use the ideas on the chart to create a writing frame that the children can use to write two sentences about plants. For example:
We plant seeds in the _____. Seeds need ____ and _____.
- Have the students draw a plant and add labels of the things it needs (sun, rain).
- Have the students create a speech bubble for the child in the page 7 illustration. *What might he say to the other children?*
- Provide an opportunity for the children to plant seeds. Use this as a basis for language experience through writing.
- Enjoy rhymes and finger plays about peas or other plants, for example, "Five fat peas in a pea pod pressed" (available online) and the Ready to Read poem card *My Flower*.
- Create a group book or wall story, innovating on the text pattern: *The rain came down and the boots went on. The snow came down and the gloves went on.*
- Have word games and activities available that reinforce automatic recognition of high-frequency words, for example, matching games and making words with magnetic letters.
- Ask individual students to locate high-frequency words on any double-spread. *Can you find the word "The"? Can you find another one?*
- Write the plural nouns on the board and show how each item becomes singular when the "s" is removed. Use pictures of singular and plural items to show the meaning of the "s".
- Have the students use magnetic letters to generate new words by substituting initial letters or consonant blends in "yay".
- If the students had difficulty with the irregular verb "came", practise creating oral sentences together: *I came to school early today. The birds came down to get the scraps.* Read other texts that use "came", for example, *Rain, Rain* and the poem card *My Flower*.

Related texts

- Texts about the rain: *Rain, Rain* (Red)
- Texts about worms and growing things that could be shared: *My Flower* (Ready to Read poem card); *My Worm House* (Red); "Our Recycled Worm Farm" (JJ 40); "Make a Mini Worm Farm" (JJ 39, Purple); *Extraordinary Earthworms* (RTR, Gold); *Growing Pumpkins* (RTR, Orange)
- Texts that feature the words "down", "went", or "up": *Bubbles* (shared); *Rain, Rain* (Red); *The Race* (Red).

The Rain Came Down