

Monsoon

by Uma Krishnaswami



Introduce *Monsoon*

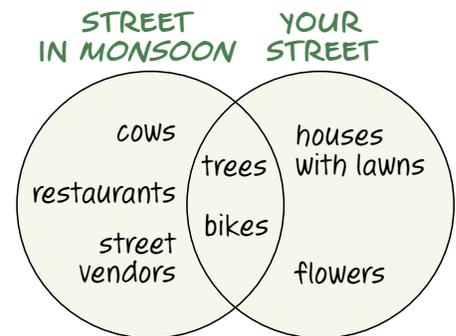
The young girl in this story lives in India and is eager for the monsoon rains to start. “What if they never come, those monsoon rains?” she wonders. Her Mummy, Papa, Nani, and brother work and play, watch, and wait for the rains.

Get kids curious about *Monsoon*. Show them India on a world map or globe. Ask *What do you know about India?*

Discuss *Monsoon*

After reading *Monsoon* aloud, ask kids whether they liked the book and why. Help them understand the plot and connect with the characters by asking:

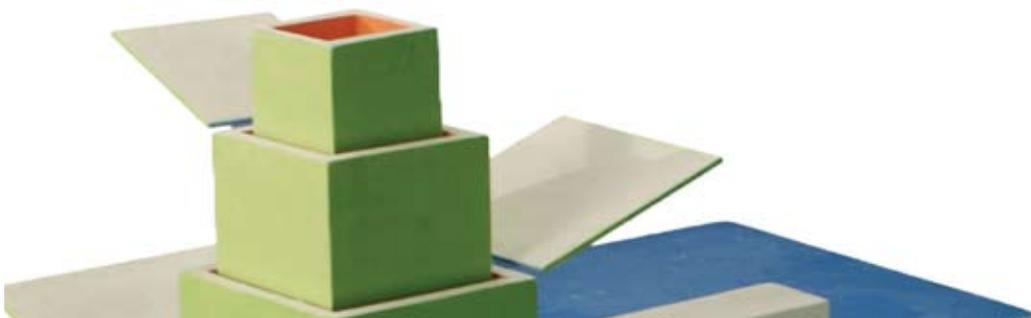
1. Why were the girl and her family happy when it finally rained? When, if ever, do you wish for rain? When it rains, what do you do? Have you ever danced in the rain like the girl and her brother?
2. Have you ever had to wait a long time for something you really wanted? What was it? How long did you have to wait for it?
3. Point to specific pictures. Does the girl live in the city or the country? Do the streets look the same or different where you live? Compare your street and the one in the book. You may want to record kids’ responses on a Venn diagram.
4. How did the clouds in the story look before it rained? Did they look the same as clouds you have seen before it rains? Have you heard thunder or seen lightning before? Was it scary or exciting?
5. What is the weather like where we live? What seasons do we have? Which season is your favorite?
6. Do you have relatives or friends who live far away? Where? What kind of weather do they have?



Activities

Doing a hands-on activity that connects to the story makes the experience more personal and memorable for kids. Choose one (or more) of the activities below, or make up one of your own.

1. **Have kids draw or paint different kinds of clouds.** (For descriptions and pictures of cloud types [*cumulus*, *cirrus*, *nimbus*, *stratus*], go to eo.ucar.edu/webweather/cloud3.html). Discuss the characteristics of each type of cloud. Distribute cotton balls and glue so kids can add texture to their artwork. Have them label their clouds. You may want to create a cloud display.



- Forecast the weather.** Bring in newspapers that have weather forecasts and maps. Review any new terms, such as forecast, predict, and degrees. Show kids the different types of symbols used to represent the weather, such as a sun and clouds with or without rain, different colors to represent temperature, and the symbol for degrees (°). Have them prepare a mock weather forecast for each day of the coming week (see sample chart). Invite them to present their forecast like a TV weatherperson. Have them take their forecasts home to see if their predictions come true!
- Compare weather.** On a world map or a globe, help kids locate where they live. Use the World Meteorological Organization's Web site at www.worldweather.org/ to find the temperature in your state. Then have each kid pick a city in another state or country (including India), locate it on the map, and use the Web site to find the weather forecast. Make a chart listing the various temperatures. Compare the forecasts. Ask kids, *What is the temperature in the location you chose? How does it compare to where we live? How does it compare to (choose another location)?*
- Go on a walk on a cloudy day** and have kids pay attention to what they see and hear. During the walk, ask them to describe the sky and the clouds. When they are back inside, have them draw what they noticed.

SUNDAY	MONDAY
High 73°  Some sunshine with clouds	

OUR TEMPERATURE	OTHER PLACES
38°	India 76°

Web Explorations

Visit one or more of these sites to further explore the themes and topics from the book.

pbskids.org/dragonflytv/show/forecasting.html

Before satellites, computers, and radar, people used folklore, such as "Cows lie down when it's going to rain," to forecast the weather. Have the children watch the video **Forecasting by Mari and Lindsey**.

In this short video, the girls devise ways to test if the folklore is true. Do your kids know any similar folktales? Have them make up their own funny folklore about predicting the weather. Ask *How would you test it?*

pbskids.org/africa/myworld/cannon.html

Read the **My World** photo album of kids from the Cannon Kituri School in Wundayi, Kenya. Learn about the kids' lives as well as the weather in Kenya.

pbskids.org/arthur/games/connectworld/connectworld.html

Connect the World. Play bingo with Buster™. Match the cards that contain information on cultures around the world.

Get Involved

A great way for kids to learn about other people and countries is to **be a pen pal**. Weather is a good way to start the conversations. It affects how people live, what they wear, what they eat, and what they do. Use a trusted site you know or visit the Kids' Space Connection Web site at ks-connection.org/home.cfm to sign up for pen pals from around the world. Your kids can sign up as individuals or as a group.

(Note: This award-winning site is fully monitored and messages do not post automatically.)

More Suggested Books

Big Rain Coming by Katrina Germein

Come on, Rain! by Karen Hesse

The Rainstick: A Fable by Sandra Chisholm Robinson