KERSPLASH! • TEACHING GUIDE

ABOUT THE BOOK

This fun informational picture book expertly pairs poetry and science to explain how a cloud experiences the water cycle.

Here's an innovative story about the water cycle — told by a cloud! The cloud describes the process in lyrical prose, complemented by side commentary from a clever bird who fills in the science facts.

With its inventive combination of poetic and explanatory language, this compelling book is ideal for reading aloud and interaction. The accessible text by Jessica Kulekjian and appealing, simple art by Pulitzer Prize–nominated cartoonist and illustrator Zoe Si effortlessly teach young children about how clouds form, explaining what water vapor is and how it moves from the air to the ground and back again. It's a perfect pick for science lessons on weather and the water cycle, and a great companion book to *Kaboom! A Volcano Erupts*.

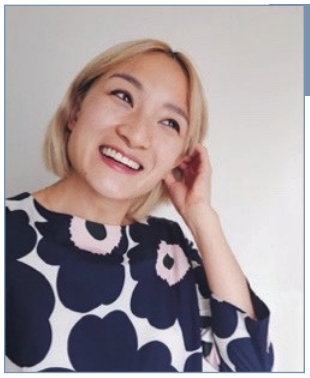


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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JESSICA KULEKJIAN is an elementary teacher and writer. Her passion for nature, free play and interest-led learning inspires all her stories. She is the author of several books for children, including *Before We Stood Tall*, an NCTE Notable Book in Poetry; *First Notes of Spring*; *Hiders Seekers Finders Keepers*, joint winner of Bank Street College's Best Children's Books of the Year and shortlisted as a Delaware Diamond selection for K–2; and *Kaboom!*, a Jr. Library Guild selection and recognized on multiple state lists. Her newest books are *Yay!* (Bloomsbury 2025), *Kersplash!* (Kids Can Press, 2025) and more on the way! Jessica lives in California. Learn more about her work at **www.jessicakulekjian.com** and on Instagram **@jessicakulekjian**



ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

ZOE SI is a cartoonist, illustrator and writer with a lifelong passion for laughing at her own jokes. She believes in the power of words, but also that wherever words fail, a cartoon can usually succeed. Zoe practiced law for a number of years, and now spends her days contributing cartoons and articles to *The New Yorker*, working on a graphic novel and making children's books. In 2022, she was selected as a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Illustrated Reporting and Commentary for editorial cartoons published in *The New Yorker*. Zoe lives in Vancouver, British Columbia, with her husband and a large, fluffy dog. In her spare time, she enjoys running around outside and petting other people's dogs.

REVIEWS FOR THE FORCES OF NATURE SERIES

"This is a book that begs to be read out loud ... a fun and effective introduction to volcanology that should perk up elementary STEAM collections."

— *Booklist*
(Praise for *Kaboom! A Volcano Erupts*)



ABOUT THE GUIDE

This guide was created by Kari Allen, an educator with twenty years of education and classroom experience. All activities can and should be modified to best fit student needs. A sampling of Common Core standards are listed for each activity. The standard connections are a sampling, and most activities can meet more than one grade level's needs. Visit Kari's website **www.kariallenwrites.com** for more information about her guides. This guide is for use in classrooms and for educational purposes only.

Text Excerpts © Jessica Kulekjian
Illustrations © Zoe Si

Kids Can Press

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

BEFORE READING

- What do you know about rainstorms? Brainstorm a list of facts, vocabulary you think you might encounter when reading and questions you have about rainstorm.
  2.RI.3 Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text.
- Discuss the title: How would you read the title? Why do you think the title starts with a sound? What genre do you think this book is? How come? Support your answer with examples from the text.
  1.RL.5 Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information, drawing on a wide reading of a range of text types.
- What feelings do you get just by looking at the cover?

WHILE READING

- Who is narrating this book? How do you know?
- How does the writer share facts and information about clouds?
  1.RI.8 Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.
- Have you ever felt like a rainstorm? How come and when?
  1.SL.4 Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
- What role does the bird play in telling the story? What do you think about the information the bird shares?
- Look at the following page spread when the rainstorm is at its peak. The illustrations go across the gutter of the book and fill the page spread. What effect does that have on the story and your emotions while reading?
  K.RL.7 With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts)



- How does the author play with rhythm with her words?
- How does the author make the text feel like rainstorm?
  2.RL.4 Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.

CRAFT MOVES



- Talk about perspective and point of view. This book is told in the first person. What would change if the book was told through second person or third person? Who else could tell this story? How would the language change if the bird told the story?
  2.RL.6 Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.
- Examine how the author wrote from the perspective a rainstorm, then try it out yourself! (See printable) Pick a natural object and write as if you were that object. What would it be like to be a tree? Or a river? Or a rock?
- Where do you hear alliteration in the text? Alliteration is when words near or next to each other have the same beginning sounds. Try out alliteration in your own writing!
  2.RL.4 Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.
- Let's talk about back matter and sidebar information! Back matter comes at the end of the book and gives us more information. The sidebars are when the bird talks to the reader. How are the back matter and sidebars different from the rest of the text? Is the tone different? Is the style or voice different? How so? Why do you think the author chose to include different styles in the book?
  1.RI.5 Know and use various text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text.

WRITING PROMPTS

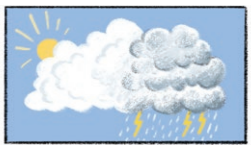
I feel like a rainstorm when ...
I explode like thunder when ...
I feel like a cloud when ...

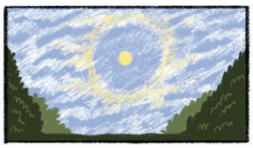
1.W.5 With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.

2.W.8 Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

1.W.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of "how-to" books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions).

ACTIVITIES



CLOUD OBSERVATIONS

Go outside and observe the clouds! What do you notice? How would you describe them? Write about and draw your observations using the printable. Use the back matter to help you identify the types of clouds you see in the sky!

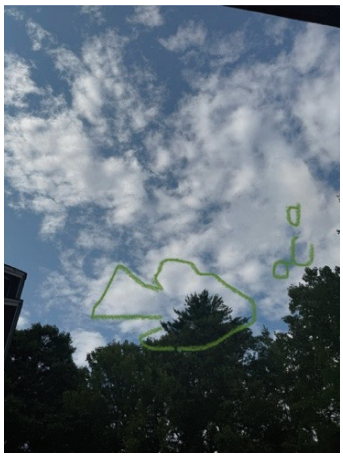
CLOUD SHAPES HIDE-AND-SEEK:

Take photos of the clouds. Print out the photos and look for images in the clouds. What do you see? Outline the image you see. Glue the photo onto the observation sheet and complete the sentence starter to go with your image. It's not a cloud, it's a … _____



It's not a cloud, it's a … heart!

It's not a cloud, it's a … fish!



MAKE A RAINSTORM

As a group, make a rainstorm: Start by rubbing your hands together. Then pat your legs. Next, snap your fingers and clap your hands. Then stomp your feet. This is the height of the rainstorm! Then go in reverse: Snap and clap, pat your legs, rub your hands and finally, silence. How did it go? See if you can do it with one person leading the rainstorm and everyone else following.



CLOUD ART

Put shaving cream in a tray. Add food coloring. Use a fork to swirl around the color. Place paper over the cream. Scrape off the extra shaving cream. Enjoy your marbleized paper when it's dry.

WATER CYCLE



MATERIALS:

- ziplock bag
- permanent marker
- water
- tape

Draw a nature scene with a body of water and the sun and clouds on your bag. Put water in your bag (not too much!) and close it up. Tape the bag to a window (be sure to pick a window that gets sun). Observe your bag for several days. What do you see? Can you observe the condensation on the bag? What happens to the water as it rises? What questions do you have?

MS-ESS2-1 Develop a model to describe the cycling of Earth's materials and the flow of energy that drives this process.

LET'S BE A RAINSTORM

Act out the rainstorm cycle with your body. Can you make up a dance or movements to go with the book?

LET'S BRAINSTORM

Brainstorm alternative titles for the book. How else could you describe the water cycle? Make a list of synonyms for the word *kersplash*.

SEL CONNECTION

RAINSTORM BREATH EXERCISE

Breathe in as you reach up, pretending all the water around you is evaporating and filling your cloud overhead. Then, as you breathe out, dance your hands down like a gentle sprinkle of rain (or a wild thunderstorm). Think about how you feel before and after doing the breath exercise.

VOCABULARY

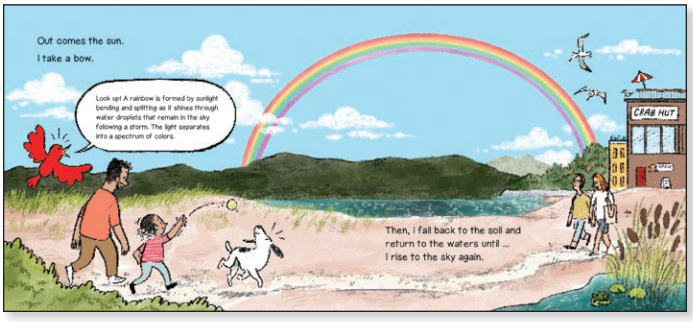
- calm
- thirst
- vapors
- soggy
- bulge
- gallops
- swirling
- grumbling

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY

See printable vocabulary cards. These can be used to explore word patterns, parts of speech, and etymology. Take a look at all the verbs used in the text. What do you notice? How did the author use verbs to move the story forward?

K.RL.4 Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.

1.RI.4 Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.



Name: _____ Date: _____

I feel like a rainstorm when ...

Name: _____ Date: _____

I explode like thunder when ...

Name: _____ Date: _____

I feel like a cloud when ...

Name: _____ Date: _____

Cloud Shapes Hide-and-Seek

Take a photo of the clouds. Print it out. Look for objects in the photos. Do you see an animal? Or a shape? Outline the image you see onto the photo so that it stands out to someone else. Then finish the sentence starter, “It’s not a cloud, it’s a …”

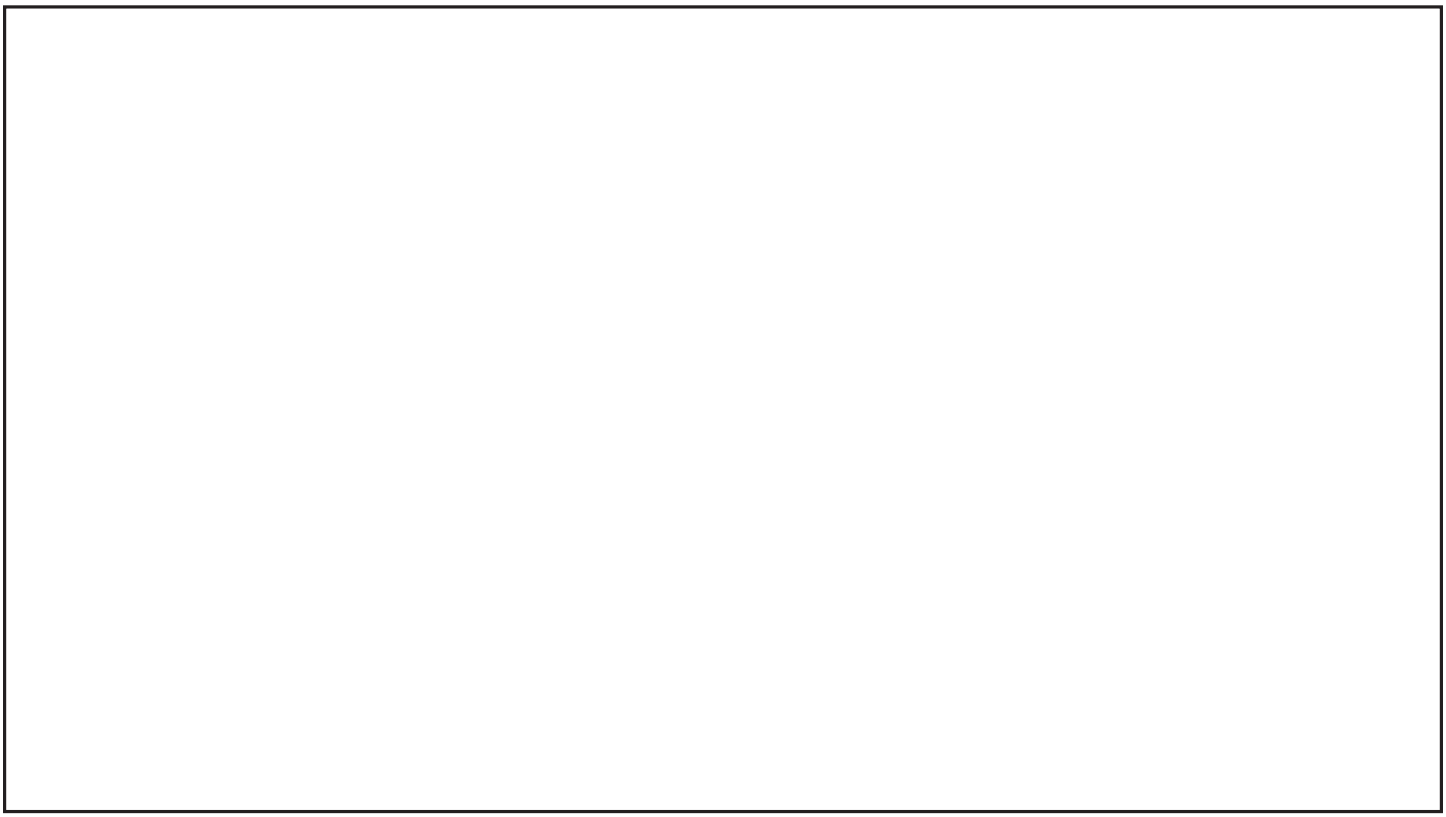
(Glue your cloud photo here)

It’s not a cloud, it’s a …

Name: _____ Date: _____

Cloud Observations

Draw what you notice about clouds. Use *Kersplash!* to write about clouds.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Point of View

Take on the voice of a natural object.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Water Cycle Observation — Day One

Observe your water cycle bag.
Record what you notice, using pictures and words.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Water Cycle Observation — Day Two

Observe your water cycle bag.
Record what you notice, using pictures and words.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Water Cycle Observation — Day Three

Observe your water cycle bag.
Record what you notice, using pictures and words.

calm	bulge
thirst	swirling
vapors	gallops
soggy	grumbling