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Come On, Rain!



Synopsis

"Come on, Rain!" Tess pleads to the sky as listless vines and parched plants droop in the endless heat. Then the clouds roll in, and the rain pours. And Tess, her friends, and their Mamas join in a rain dance to celebrate the shower that renews both body and spirit. Through exquisite language and acute observation, Karen Hesse evokes this refreshing experience, and Jon J Muth's lyrical artwork perfectly reflects the spirit of the text.

Book Information

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Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

Customer Reviews

The art work which accompanies this magnificently written, poetic tale is just as remarkable as the carefully chosen delightful words. If you live in the desert, as we do, this is a must-have-book. Over the stifling summer months I read the book time and again with my two year old daughter as we eagerly awaited the arrival of the monsoon rains and each time the simple joy of summer rain leapt out at us from both the pictures and the words. I'm not a writer, so it would take me an eternity to express how very special this book is. Simply put, you will have missed something very special if you never allow yourself the pleasure of soaking up the atmosphere created by this small masterpiece. Invest in a real treasure. If I could give it 10 out of 5 I would. BUY IT.

This is a beautifully written story of a young girl and her mother waiting for rain. It's magical and lyrical and a must read! The illustrations match the text brilliantly and are stunning in their own right. Karen Hesse is not only a wonderful writer of novels for middle-grade readers, she shines as a picture book author as well. Bravo!!

This lyrical ode to the coming rain, accompanied by the soothing wash of lush watercolors, make Hesse's *Come on, Rain!* sure to please young children. In prose that reads like poetry, young Tessie bemoans the heat of summer while waiting with confidence that rain will soon come. Along with her multicultural friends and all their mammas, Tessie dances in gratitude for the refreshing wetness the rain bestows. While the lyrical prose is of such beautiful quality it could stand on its own, the soft watercolor illustrations portray the emotions of the characters in such lovely detail; the two, the prose and illustrations, combine to create a delightful work of art. Even with the vertical lines of rain which one would expect to stop the motion of the story, Muth manages to create a sense of flowing from left to right, page to page, in keeping with the cadence of the text by using achromatic colors for the backgrounds of most pages. Recommended for children ages 4-8. Public librarians may want to share this title in a storytime about rain, along with Bill Martin's *Listen to the Rain*.

"Come on, rain!" are the fervent words of Tess, as she looks toward the sky with a great deal of anticipation and hope. It has not rained in 3 weeks. Therefore, everyone in Tess's neighborhood and city was hoping for rain to bring relief from the scorching heat. Well, the best part of this story is that it seems her fervent words finally reached the clouds; for "over rooftops, past chimneys, into the way off distance . . . clouds came rolling in." As soon as Tess realizes that her wish for rain was on the way, she quickly gathers her close friends together (and their mothers too) to run, dance and play in the wonderful rain showers that fall upon the city. The watercolor illustrations of Jon Muth do an excellent job of enhancing the movement of Ms. Hesse's story. The opening illustrations of bright yellow and gold give readers a sense of how hot and oppressive the heat was for Tess's neighborhood and city. Gradually as the rain clouds moves in, hues of soft grays, brown, and greens are used to depict the moments just before rain falls from the sky. By the time rain actually comes, the illustrations are filled with splashes of pink, violet and blues, which represent the renewal of spirit and feelings of relief for all in the city. You know, this is more than just another weather story! It is a story that shows how rain, a powerful element of nature, has the ability to invigorate all of life!

I have noticed that many African American books, such as this one, have the feature of using broken English in their writings. As an African American mother and teacher I have a problem with this. While this may be the talk SOME African American children hear at home it does not speak to everyone nor it is a feature of our culture. This book did however meet one of my hopes for black literature, it was a story with African Americans that did not speak of racial pride or nappy hair. I would like to see more books with normal themes (family, weather, good behavior etc) because being black does not stop at or only include broken English, black pride, dark skin and nappy hair.

This book is short and simple, but wonderful and imaginative. I can't exactly tell if it is set in the 50s, 60s, or 70's, but it does not seem like a modern-day story. There is a great innocence and magic about it that isn't readily apparent in a 1990s tale. Jon Muth again proves himself to be a master watercolorist. He opts for a somewhat cartoony style for the main characters, fitting for the subject matter and age group of this story. The story itself brings alive the wonder of a simple rainstorm in the hot summer days of the City. There is no racial issue, there is no crime, there is no anything to keep the children (and adults) from being filled with the joy of a summer shower. I bought this book simply to sample Mr. Muth's marvelous watercolors, but it is a real treat for those with youngsters as well.

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