

READERS THEATER SCRIPT

Readers Theater Script
based on the book

WHEN RAIN FALLS

Written by Melissa Stewart
Illustrated by Constance R. Bergum

ISBN: 978-1-56145-438-9 / HC / \$16.95
Ages 4–8 / Nonfiction / Nature

Book Level Score:
AR • F&P
GRL L; Gr 2



ABOUT THE BOOK

We go inside when the rain comes down, but where do animals go? That depends on the kind of animal and where it lives. Bees hide in hives and ants stay safe in underground nests. Squirrels pull their long bushy tails over their heads like umbrellas. Caterpillars crawl under leaves. Using clear, simple language, *When Rain Falls* offers young readers a lyrical look at how animals living in forests, fields, wetlands, and deserts behave during a rainstorm.

GETTING STARTED

Many readers theater scripts have just ten or twelve parts, but this script has a role for every student in an average-size class. The script also includes four separate choruses (one for each habitat) and two lines read by everyone.

As written, the script includes twenty-four animal parts and a narrator role. The animal parts vary in difficulty, to accommodate children at a variety of reading levels. The narrator text is the most challenging. It can be read by an adult or by an advanced young reader.

If you are working with fewer than twenty-four children, some students can perform two roles. If you have a larger group, some children can share a role or you can divide the narrator role into four parts, one for each habitat (forest, field, wetland, desert).

After you have matched students with parts, ask the class to read through the script a few times. As the children practice, provide as much support and advice as needed.

PLANNING THE PERFORMANCE

When the children feel confident about their roles, you may want to set out a variety of art supplies and ask them to make identification tags or animal hats to wear during the performance. Children acting as narrators may want to carry umbrellas, or they can make any kind of hat they like.

During the final reading, the students can stand in four separate groups (one for each habitat) or the script can be performed as four separate acts, so that there is always an audience.

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Chorus 1: When rain falls in a forest...

Narrator: A scurrying squirrel suddenly stops.

Squirrel: *Tsst! Tsst! Tsst!* I pull my tail over my head. It makes a great umbrella.

Narrator: Higher up, there's a hawk.

Hawk: I puff out my feathers to stay warm and dry. *Ker-ree, ker-ree.*

Narrator: What does a chickadee do?

Chickadee: *Dee-dee, dee-dee.* I hide inside my tree hole home.

Narrator: A deer takes cover under a leafy tree canopy.

Deer: All the leaves and branches block the rain.

Narrator: Foxes nestle together inside a warm, cozy den.

Fox 1: I could use a nap.

Fox 2: Me too. [Big yawn.]

Chorus 2: When rain falls on a field...

Narrator: A plump little caterpillar crawls under a leaf.

Caterpillar: Time for a snack! *Munch, munch, munch.*

Narrator: An adult butterfly dangles from a nearby flower head.

Butterfly: I don't mind hanging upside down.

Narrator: A raindrop knocks a ladybug off a slippery stem. It bounces into the air and tumbles to the ground.

Ladybug: Don't worry about me. I have a hard exoskeleton.

Narrator: A spider watches and waits as the rain beats down.

Spider: Looks like I'll have to rebuild my web!

Narrator: A little mouse crouches under a fallen leaf.

Mouse: *Squeak, squeak.* I don't like the rain.

Narrator: What about bees and ants?
Bee: I hide in my hive and stay bzzzz-y helping my friends make honey.
Ant: I stay safe in my underground nest. There's always lots of work to do.

Chorus 3: When rain falls on a wetland...

Narrator: A turtle tucks in its tiny head and doesn't move an inch.

Turtle: I listen to the raindrops crashing down on my shell.

Everyone: *Plop! Plop! Drip! Drop!*

Narrator: A dragonfly swoops past the turtles and lands on a cattail.

Dragonfly: I rest below the cattail's fluffy, brown top.

Narrator: A whirligig beetle swims in circles on the water's surface.

Beetle: Yikes! Those crashing raindrops make it hard to stay afloat.

Narrator: Where are the birds?

Sparrow: *Clink, clink.* Here I am—hiding inside a thick bush.

Duck: *Quack, quack.* Not me! I keep on swimming—rain or shine.
Raindrops slide right off my oily feathers.

Chorus 4: When rain falls in a desert...

Narrator: A rattlesnake squeezes into a rocky crevice.

Snake: I curl up tight and fall as-s-s-s-s-s-s-sleep.

Narrator: Where does a tarantula go?

Tarantula: I crawl into a hole and hide.

Narrator: Bats fly off to a hillside cave.

Bat 1: *Teet! Teet! Teet! Teet!*

Bat 2: We just hang around until the rain stops.

Narrator: A tiny elf owl peeks out of a hole in a cactus.

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- Elf owl: *Da-da-da-da-dat-dat.* I like to watch the rain fall.
- Narrator: A spadefoot toad only comes out in the rain. It digs to the surface, finds a mate, and lay its eggs.
- Toad: Then I dig back into the sand. [Wave] See you the next time it rains!
- Everyone: When the rain stops, animals living in fields and forests, wetlands and deserts return to their daily routines.**
- All Animals: [Jump forward and make your animal sounds.]

THE END



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Melissa Stewart is the award-winning author of more than 150 books for children. She holds degrees in biology and science journalism and serves on the board of advisors for the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. Melissa

speaks frequently at conferences for educators and is available for school visits. www.melissa-stewart.com
(Intended audience for school presentations: Grades K–6.)



ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Constance R. Bergum has illustrated a number of children's books, including *When Rain Falls*, *Under the Snow*, *Beneath the Sun*, and *Daniel and His Walking Stick*. She holds an MFA in illustration from Marywood

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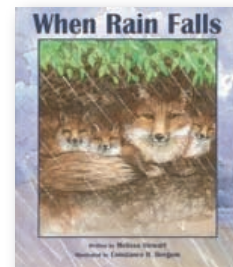
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A Place for Bats
A Place for Birds
A Place for Butterflies
A Place for Fish
A Place for Frogs
A Place for Turtles



Peachtree Readers Theater Script for
WHEN RAIN FALLS

prepared by Melissa Stewart

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updated 3/19/14