

A Teacher's Guide to



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This guide is intended for students in Kindergarten and First Grade
(or students in Reception through Year 2).
It can also be adapted for pre-school students.



It's Raining Bats & Frogs

Delia has been looking forward all year to flying in the annual Halloween Parade. But parade day brings heavy rain. So, Delia takes action. Using her best magic, Delia changes the rain to cats and dogs. But that doesn't work too well! Then hats and clogs. That doesn't work either! Each new type of rain brings a new set of problems. How can Delia save the day?

About Rebecca Colby

Rebecca loves rain. When she was a child growing up in New Hampshire, one of her favorite things to do was walk in the rain and search for red-spotted newts.

Before writing for children, Rebecca worked for a Russian comedian, taught English in Taiwan, traveled the world as a tour director, worked as a librarian, and taught school as a primary teacher. Although born in America, she now lives in England. You can learn more about Rebecca at www.rebeccacolbybooks.com



About Steven Henry



Steven Henry (né Steve D'Amico) is the illustrator of several children's picture books, including the beloved *Ella the Elephant* series. He lives in Seattle, Washington, where it often rains cats and dogs.

To learn more about Steven, visit his website at: <http://www.stevenhenry.net>

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English Language Arts (ELA)

Whatever the Weather (pre-reading activity)

Students will sit in a circle. Ask them to take turns discussing their favorite types of weather, and what they enjoy doing in various types of weather.

- What is your favorite type of weather? Why?
- What is your least favorite type of weather? Why?
- What do you like to do when it's rainy? Snowy? Sunny? Windy? Etc.

Book Walk

Explore the book's cover.

- What is the title of this book?
- Who wrote the book? What is this person called?
- Who drew the pictures? What is this person called?
- Tell me more about the illustrations. Are they photographs? What do you think the illustrator used? Crayons? Colored pencils? Paint?
- Who or what is the main character?



Read the back cover of the book.

- Why do you think it's raining bats and frogs?
- How can a witch change the rain?
- What other things might a witch change the rain into?
- If you could change the rain, what would you change it to?

Now read the book and answer the following questions.

- Why did Delia change the rain?
- What did she change the rain into?
- Did the witches like any of the new types of rain?
- Why did Delia decide to change the weather back to real rain?
- Tell me about the ending of the book. Is that what you expected to happen?

Witch Word Order

Students will alphabetize the following words from the book:

parade
bat
frog

witch
cat
dog

cauldron
hat
clog

rain
wand
broomstick

Magic Rhyming Spells

Delia's spells in *It's Raining Bats & Frogs* are written in rhyme. Share some of the following spells with your students. Ask them to identify the words that rhyme.

- Hubble, bubble, toil and trouble.
- Hocus pocus, magic crocus.

Students will create rhyming spells of their own by filling in the blanks below.

- Zero, one, two, I'll wave my wand at _____.
- One, two, three, turn into a _____.
- Eight nine, ten, turn into a _____.

Working in pairs, students will create rhyming spells using the following starting lines. Ask students to create rhymes that are not used in the book. **Extension activity:** Students can create spells on their own without benefit of starting lines.

- Stir the brew in the vat, . . .
- Eye of newt, tongue of snake, . . .
- Wave your wand over the box, . . .
- One more wave, here I go, . . .

A Spell of Sequencing

Teach or review the sequence words *first, next, then, after that, finally*, etc. Ask students to recall what happened in the book. As a class, retell the book using sequence words. Then give each child the "A Spell of Sequencing" resource sheet (page 14) and instruct them to cut out the sentences and glue them to a new sheet of paper in the correct sequential order.

The sentences and correct sequence are as follows:

- At the start, it rained on the Witch Parade.
- First Delia changed the rain to cats and dogs.
- Then she changed the rain to hats and clogs.
- Next she changed the rain to bats and frogs.
- After that she changed the weather back to real rain.
- Finally the parade moved.
- In the end, the witches were happy.



Math

Magic Math Word Problems

1. Delia caught 1 bat. Then she caught 6 more bats. How many bats did she catch in total?
2. The witches put 5 frogs in the cauldron. Then they put 4 more frogs in the cauldron. How many frogs did the witches put in the cauldron all together?
3. The witches put 10 bats in the cauldron but 4 bats flew away. How many bats are left?
4. There are 7 witches flying on broomsticks but 2 fall off. How many witches are still flying?

Bat Symmetry

Note: This activity can be done in conjunction with the “Magic Mirror” ICT activity on page 9.

- Model objects that are symmetrical and those that are not.
- Explain to students that an object is symmetrical if a line can be drawn through it so that what is on either side of the line looks exactly the same.
- Explain that this line is called the line of symmetry.
- Ask children if a frog is symmetrical. Why or why not?
- Explain that a frog can be symmetrical depending on where the line of symmetry is drawn.
- Ask students if a bat is symmetrical. Why or why not?
- Students will understand that the property of symmetry depends on where the line of symmetry is drawn.
- Give children the “Bat Symmetry” resource sheet (page 15). Ask them to draw and color in the reflection of what they see on the sheet.

Compare and Order Frogs

- Demonstrate to students how to compare and order objects according to size.
- Give each child a “Compare and Order the Frogs” resource sheet (page 16).
- Instruct the students to cut out the frogs and order them by size from smallest to largest.
- Students will then glue the frogs to a separate sheet of paper.



Science

The Life Cycle of a Frog



Discuss and display pictures of the life cycle of a frog. The life cycle of a frog consists of three stages: egg, tadpole, and frog. A tadpole hatches from an egg. It then grows into a frog. Later, female frogs lay eggs and the life cycle starts again.

Show children a video of the frog's life cycle from YouTube or TeacherTube. If possible, hatch frog eggs in the classroom.

Fun Frog Facts:

- Female frogs lay over 100 eggs at a time.
- The eggs are called frogspawn.
- The jelly-like substance around the frogspawn makes it difficult for other animals to eat it.
- After hatching, a tadpole doesn't need to eat for several days.
- A tadpole starts to grow legs when it is approximately eight weeks (or two months) old.
- A tadpole is a herbivore. This means it eats plants.
- A frog is a carnivore. This means it eats meat, like insects and small pond animals.

How Do Bats 'See'?

Explain that bats do not use the sense of sight to find food. Ask students if they know what sense a bat does use. Explain that bats are nocturnal animals and search for food at night using the sense of sound. Further explain the concept of *echolocation*, which is a sonar-like system also used by dolphins. The bat emits a high-pitched sound, and if there is anything in front of the bat, the sound waves strike it and bounce back. The bat can then determine how far away the object is and its location, based on how long it takes the sound to echo back and the direction it comes from.

Play "Bat and Moth" to demonstrate *echolocation*.

- Children will stand in a circle.
- Choose one child to be the bat and another child to be the moth.
- The remaining children are trees.
- Put a blindfold on the bat.

Explain the rules of the game.

- The bat and the moth must travel on their hands and knees.
- The bat will try to catch the moth.
- When the bat claps or calls out “bat”, the moth must clap back or call out “moth”.
- The trees should remain quiet unless the bat gets too close to them, at which point they may call out “trees”.
- The game ends when the bat tags the moth. In this way, the bat in the game must rely on his sense of hearing to find the moth, just as a real bat would in nature.

Measuring Rainfall

- Explain that different amounts of rain fall on different days.
- Use a watering can or other plastic container to demonstrate how a rain gauge collects rain as it falls.
- Create a class rain gauge and place it outside where it won't get tipped over.
- Make a class chart to record the rainfall each day.
- Students can mark on the outside of the container each day with a different color felt-tip pen to indicate the level of rainfall for that day.
- **Extension activity:** Students will measure the rainfall with a ruler.

Geography

Cloudy with a Chance of Rain

Students will create a water cycle project.

Supplies

- Cotton balls
- Bowls or other shallow containers
- Water

Instructions

- Pour approximately one half inch of water into each container.
- Give each child a cotton ball.
- Explain that the cotton ball represents a cloud. Ask the children how their clouds feel. Are they light and fluffy?
- Discuss evaporation and how tiny droplets of water travel up into the air.
- Ask the children to place their “clouds” over the water, just barely touching it. Can they see the water travelling up into their “clouds”?
- Ask them how their “clouds” feel now. The children should begin to see water drip from the cotton balls as they lift them up.
- Discuss condensation.
- Further explain that once the clouds empty of water, the process will begin again.



Physical Education

Witch's Broomstick Obstacle Race

- Divide the students into 3 or 4 teams.
- Each team will be given a broom.
- Instruct the students to “sweep” a ball or bean bag around a trail of objects. These may be cones or chairs or other objects that the students must maneuver around.
- Each child in the team will take a turn at the obstacle race.
- The first team to finish wins.

Musical Lily Pads

- Each child will cut out a lily pad oval from green construction paper.
- Arrange these on the floor in a circle, and turn on some music.
- Ask children to hop around the outside of the circle like frogs until the music stops.
- Then children must try to hop onto a lily pad. There should only be one “frog” on a lily pad at a time.
- In each round, remove one lily pad until there is only one lily pad and one “frog” left. Alternatively, remove one lily pad each round but do not eliminate any children, allowing them to share lily pads until the final round when there will be several frogs wanting to share one lily pad.

ICT

It's Raining Bookmarks!

For this activity, students will create their own book marks.

- Look at the cover for *It's Raining Bats & Frogs* again.
- Ask the students what they notice about the text size and color.



- Using a word processing program, model to children how to change font size and color.
- Demonstrate how to add clip art to a page.
- Bookmarks can be created in Microsoft Word by clicking on the “Insert” tab, followed by the “Shapes” button.
- Choose the rectangle.
- When the cursor changes to a plus sign, children will type text into the box and/or insert pictures.
- Ask students to create bookmarks based on their favorite books.
- Print and laminate the children’s work.

Magic Mirror

- Introduce or review symmetry.
- Explain that it is when one side of a picture is the same as the other side, but reversed. In other words, it is a mirror image.
- Display examples of symmetry: a heart, a butterfly, a ball, or even half a face.
- Using a simple graphics program, students will draw half of a picture on the open document.
- Demonstrate how to copy their image and paste it onto their document.
- They can now select the appropriate tool to reverse or “flip” the image and move it into place to form a complete, symmetrical picture.

Music

Galumph Went the Little Green Frog

Teach students the lyrics to “Galumph Went the Little Green Frog.” Several versions and videos of the song can be found on the Internet. One I enjoyed can be found here: <http://bussongs.com/songs/galumph-went-the-little-green-frog.php> Once students have learned the lyrics, have them create actions to go with the song.

Galumph went the little green frog one day,
galumph went the little green frog,
galumph went the little green frog one day
and we all go galumph, galumph, galumph!

But we all know frogs go la-di-da-di-da,
la-di-da-di-da, la-di-da-di-da.
We all know frogs go la-di-da-di-da.
They don't go galumph, galumph, galumph!

Rain Beat

Note: This activity can be enhanced by making the “Rain Sticks” listed on page 11.

Teach the children simple nursery rhymes about the rain, for example:

- Rain, Rain, Go Away
- It's Raining, It's Pouring
- The Incy-Wincy Spider

Ask children to clap out the beats in the songs. After they have made their “Rain Sticks” in Art and Design class, they can shake their rain sticks to the beat of the music.

Art and Design

Both the Art and Design activities can be done in conjunction with ELA lessons on following and writing instructions. The “Rain Sticks” activity can also be used in conjunction with the music activities.

Paper Plate Witch Craft

Note: The completed craft can be used in an ELA lesson to retell *It's Raining Bats & Frogs*, and to act out the book.

Create a witch's face puppet with paint, paper plates, and construction paper.

Supplies

- Paper plates
- Green paint
- Black, purple, and orange paper
- Glue
- Tape
- Scissors
- Black felt-tip markers
- Popsicle sticks

Instructions

- Paint the paper plate green and leave to dry.
- Trace your hand four times on purple paper.
- Cut out the hands.
- Cut out a large black triangle and a long black rectangle to make the hat.
- Glue the hands and hat to the dried paper plate.
- Cut a shorter orange rectangle and glue to the hat as a hat band.
- Draw a face on the paper plate.
- Tape a popsicle stick to the bottom of the paper plate.



Rain Sticks

Create a “Rain Stick” to play in music class.

Supplies

- Cardboard tubes (empty paper towel rolls)
- Plastic funnels
- Dried beans, lentils, or pasta
- Construction paper
- Tape
- Paint or felt-tip markers

Instructions

- Seal one end of a cardboard tube with construction paper and tape.
- Using a funnel, pour dried beans, lentils, or pasta in the other end.
- Seal the other end of the cardboard tube with paper and tape.
- Decorate the rain stick with paint or felt-tip markers.



Bat Bites

Prepare bat-shaped cheese balls. **Note:** Be aware of food allergies (especially as pesto often contains nuts), and serve poppy seeds in moderation as per the recipe.



Ingredients

- 4 ounces cream cheese
- 8 ounces soft goat cheese
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese
- ¼ cup green pesto
- 2 tbsp poppy seeds
- 8 pitted black olives, sliced
- 1 red pepper, diced
- 32 corn tortilla chips (blue, if possible)

Instructions

- In a bowl, mix and mash the cream cheese and goat cheese.
- Add the pesto and mix again.
- Add the grated cheese and mix a third time.
- Roll and form the cheese into small balls (approximately the size of a golf ball).
- Roll the balls in the poppy seeds, covering the entire ball.
- Press two olive slices into the balls for eyes. In the centre of the olive slices, place one diced piece of red pepper.
- Push a tortilla chip into each side of the ball for wings.
- Serve and eat.

An interview with Rebecca Colby

How did you get the idea for *It's Raining Bats & Frogs*?

I knew I wanted to write about a witch, but I didn't know where to take my idea from there. So I went for a stroll in the rain to clear my head. The more I walked, the harder it rained. Soon it was pouring that heavy kind of rain when people say "it's raining cats and dogs". Except this book was going to be about a witch, so it had to rain bats and frogs instead. As my idea formed, I thought of another saying, "It's raining on my parade." Bingo! I had the rest of my idea. I decided to write about a witch parade that was being rained on and how the rain made the witches miserable.



Have you always been a writer?

Yes, pretty much. I started 'writing' before I learned my ABCs and would make up songs in my head. Once I could physically write, I began entering writing contests. In middle school, I won a contest and my prize was a flight in a small plane. The pilot flew over my house and later allowed me to steer the plane. If I hadn't been hooked on writing before then, that win would definitely have done the trick!

How long did it take it get published?

Although I've always been a writer, I didn't start writing for publication until after my first child was born. Every night, I would cradle my daughter in my arms and read picture books to her. And every morning, I would get up early to write my own books. That was in 2006. I was convinced I'd be published in no time but it was a long eight years later before I finally cradled my first 'book baby' in my arms and became a published author.

What advice would you give an aspiring young writer?

Read, read, read everything you can get your hands on! Then write, write, write! Don't wait until the moods strikes you because it might never happen. Write anyway.

What is your favorite kind of weather?

Rain, of course! I love mucking about in the rain. I love rain so much that I gave one of my daughters the middle name "Raine". Except her name is spelled with an 'e' at the end, giving it a completely different meaning.

If you could wave a wand and change the rain, what would you change it to and why?

I can't see myself ever wanting to change the rain. But if I did, I'd probably change it to my other big love--books. I'd just need to magic up a very strong umbrella at the same time in order to protect my head.

An interview with Steven Henry

When did you decide to become an illustrator?



I knew I wanted to draw for a living when I was in grade school. I became popular with my classmates drawing dinosaurs and hot rods and thought: “this would be a good job to have.”

What other illustration projects have you worked on?

I've done several children's books, including the *Ella the Elephant* series and *The Hanukkah Hop*. I was also an art director at a creative agency in Seattle and had the privilege of working on many projects for Nick Jr., PBS Kids, and Disney Channel.

What media do you prefer to work in?

It really depends on the project, but I love the simplicity of pencil. All of the line work in *It's Raining Bats & Frogs* was done in pencil and then darkened a bit on the computer to give it more of a pen and ink feel. I usually add all of my color digitally, although I take a lot of care to keep things looking as 'organic' as possible. My favorite digital tools are probably the advanced watercolors tools in Corel Painter.

What advice would you give an aspiring young illustrator?

Draw what you're passionate about, no matter what it is, because that is going to encourage you to practice—and practice is the key. Find friends that are as interested in drawing as you are and learn from them. Maybe they'll learn something from you!

What is your favorite kind of weather?

I think my favorite is when the weather is changing from one thing to another...like when it's been raining for days and the sun finally breaks through. Or at the end of a long, dry hot spell and the first drops of rain come down. That's the best.

If you could wave a wand and change the rain, what would you change it to and why?

Well, if there's one thing I learned from Delia and her friends, it's that I should try to be happy with what I've already got. So I'd probably save my wand for other things. On the other hand, chocolate syrup wouldn't be too bad, would it?

A Spell of Sequencing

Next she changed the rain to bats and frogs.

In the end, the witches were happy.

After that she changed the weather back to real rain.

First Delia changed the rain to cats and dogs.

Finally the parade moved.

At the start, it rained on the Witch Parade.

Then she changed the rain to hats and clogs.

Bat Symmetry



Compare and Order the Frogs

