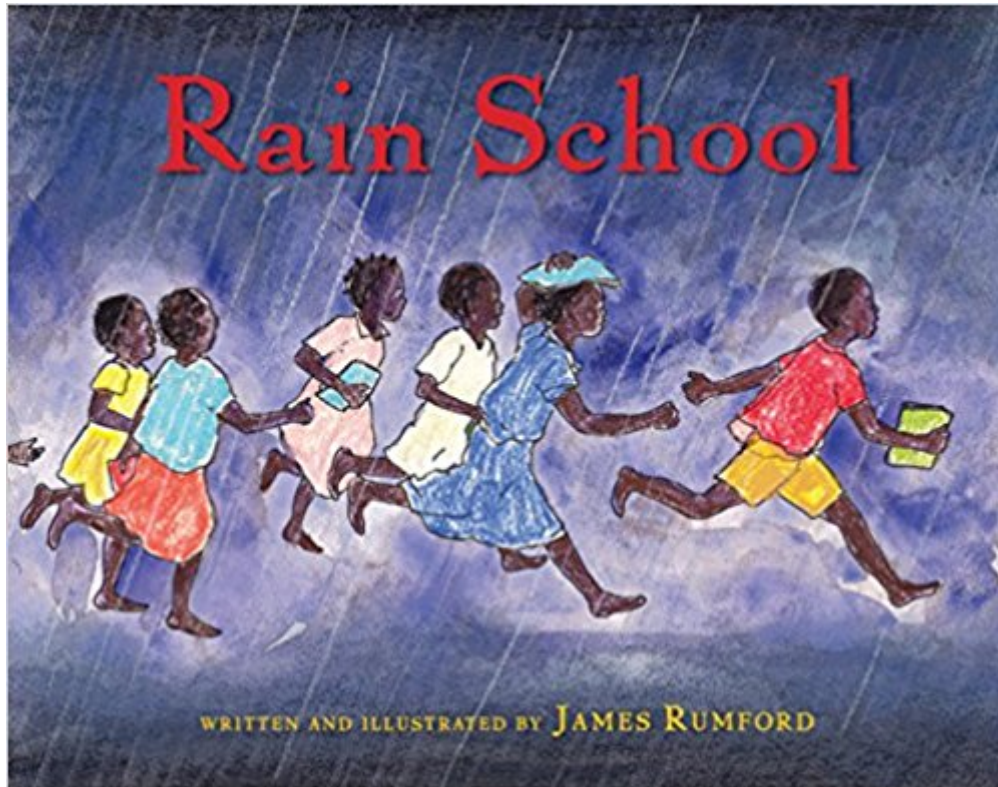




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Rain School



Synopsis

It is the first day of school in Chad, Africa. Children are filling the road. "Will they give us a notebook?" Thomas asks. "Will they give us a pencil?" "Will I learn to read?" But when he and the other children arrive at the schoolyard, they find no classroom, no desks. Just a teacher. "We will build our school," she says. "This is our first lesson." James Rumford, who lived in Chad as a Peace Corps volunteer, fills these pages with vibrant ink-and-pastel colors of Africa and the spare words of a poet to show how important learning is in a country where only a few children are able to go to school.

Customer Reviews

James Rumford on Rain School Rain School is a book that comes directly from my experiences as a Peace Corps volunteer in the African country of Chad. I remember one particular evening now long ago. School was out. The summer rains had come, and in the coolness of the evening, my wife and I decided to take a walk around the town of Kâfâlo, where we were teachers at the local middle school. Not far from our house, we happened upon the rain-washed ruins of an elementary school. The roof had fallen in. The dirt walls had collapsed, but the mud desks still had some shape to them. Here and there students had bored holes in the sides of their desks for pens or pencils or rulers. Suddenly we realized that come September these ruins would come to life again. Teacher and students would repair the roof and the walls, give the desks a new coat of mud, and, in no time, school would be underway.

K-Gr 3 "In the country of Chad, it is the first day of school. The dry dirt road is filling up with children. Big brothers and sisters are leading the way. Thomas and the other younger children follow behind their older siblings, bombarding them with eager questions. "Will they give us a notebook? Will they give us a pencil? Will I learn to read like you?" When the children arrive at the schoolyard, they find only their teacher. Working under her direction, they build a school, using a wood frame, a few bricks, and a thatch roof and walls. With that completed, they have their classes. Nine months go by and rain clouds begin to gather. School is over until next year. Along with the rain comes the wind, and over time, the building disappears—washed away. Come September, the process will begin again. The final illustration features a smiling confident Thomas at the forefront, with eager, younger children following behind. The yellow, brown, and burnt orange shades dominate each of the spreads, both as background color and as part the dry, sandy, and hot landscape. The message of the story is

clear. While the school structure may be temporary, education is permanent. This book also gives young children a glimpse into the school life of children in another part of the world. Mary N. Oluonye, Shaker Heights Public Library, OH © Copyright 2010. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

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