

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Rhythm, Rhymes, and Word Choice

Read the short story and answer each question.



The Drum That Called the Rain

Long ago, in a quiet village where the ground cracked from thirst, lived a boy named Ayo. Every day, the sun shouted, the sky stayed dry, and the wind whispered only dust.

The elders gathered. "No rain means no crops," they sighed. "We must wait."

But Ayo didn't want to wait. He found an old drum carved with swirls and stars. His grandmother said, "That drum has rhythm enough to reach the sky."

So Ayo played.

Boom—ba, boom—ba, boom!

"Come, Rain, come," he called in time.

Boom—ba, boom—ba, boom!

"Fall, Rain, fall, and end this climb!"

Day after day, he played.

Birds began to dance. Trees swayed in time.

Children clapped. Elders hummed.

Still—no rain.

But Ayo kept drumming.

Until one night—

Boom—ba, boom—ba—drip.

A drop.

Boom—ba—splash.

Then more.

Boom—ba—whoosh!

Rain, at last, dancing with the beat.

The people cheered, soaked and smiling.

"The boy with the beat brought the clouds to their feet."

And from that day on, whenever the land grew dry,
the village would drum beneath the sky.



Name: _____

Morning in Maribel's World

1. What kind of words and phrases does the author repeat in this story?

- A. Drum sounds and rhythmic lines
- B. Cooking instructions
- C. Names of crops
- D. Animal noises

2. What does the line "The boy with the beat brought the clouds to their feet" mean?

- A. Ayo made music for the clouds to walk on
- B. The rhythm of the drum helped bring rain
- C. Ayo gave clouds shoes
- D. The clouds were very tired

3. Fill in the blank:

Ayo played the _____ to call the rain to the village.

4. Why do you think the author used repeated drum sounds in the story? How did they affect the mood or meaning?

5. What is the message or lesson behind Ayo's actions? How did rhythm help tell this story?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: M

Lexile Level: 425L-575L

Grade Level: 2nd Grade, End of the Year

Introducing the Text

“This poetic folktale tells the story of a boy named Ayo who plays a drum to call the rain. As we read, we’ll listen for repeated lines, rhythm, and figurative language that help create meaning and emotion. Think about how the rhythm of the drum helps move the story forward and connect us to the characters’ hopes.”

Vocabulary: folktale, rhythm, drought, beat, whisper

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you know about folktales? What kind of language do they often use?
 2. Have you ever heard or played a drum? What does a steady beat feel like?
 3. What do people do when they hope for something big to happen?
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During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What phrases or drum sounds are repeated in the story?
 2. How do the people react to Ayo’s drumming?
 3. What words or phrases help you feel the beat of the drum?
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After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What does the drum symbolize in this story?
 2. How did rhythm help tell the story and make the rain feel magical?
 3. Could this story be told without the repeated beat? Why or why not?
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Activity Idea

Give each student a paper plate “drum” and rhythm stick (or pencil), then reread the story aloud together. Have students tap the rhythm of **“Boom—ba, boom—ba, boom!”** during the repeated lines. Then, invite students to write their own short folktale-style chant or poem with a rhythm that could “call” something helpful—like kindness, courage, or laughter—and present it with a drumbeat to the class.

