

Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs

Synopsis In this tall tale, the people in the town of Chewandswallow have their meals provided by the varied menu that falls from the sky three times a day. The weather report reveals the menu for the following day. But one day, inclement weather comes and does not leave.

Introduction: Explore Tall Tales

Explain to students that this is a special genre of fiction known as a tall tale. Say, *In some types of fiction, the characters act and seem like real people even though the stories are made-up. In a tall tale, the story is exaggerated. We, as readers, aren't expected to believe it, just to enjoy it. I sometimes remember what a tall tale is by thinking of the stories as "bigger than life."*

Write the town name *Chewandswallow* for all to see. *This tall tale takes place in the town of Chewandswallow. What do you notice about the name of the town? As you read, take the time to enjoy the illustrations and think about what makes this a tall tale.*

Vocabulary

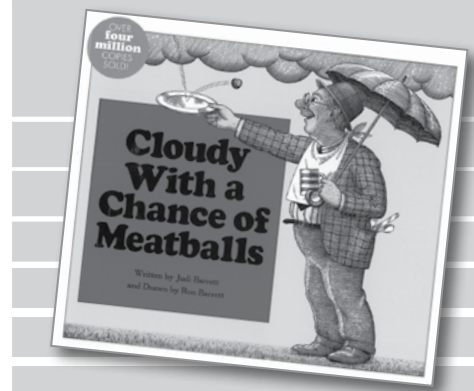
Tier Two: backyards, bedtime, downpour, meatballs, stomachache, supermarket, themselves

Tier Three: incident, necessities

Word Work

Introduce vocabulary in context as it appears within the book before or during reading. Write a simple sentence about one of the students. Then cross out the student's name and replace it with the correct pronoun. Explain that *pronouns* are words that can take the place of nouns. Then write the word *themselves* and define it as a type of pronoun called a *reflexive pronoun*. Reflexive pronouns refer back to the subject of a sentence or clause and always end in *-self* or *-selves*. Write the sentence *The boys cleaned the room themselves*. Read the sentence aloud and explain that *themselves* refers back to *the boys*. Then write the reflexive pronouns *myself*, *yourself*, *herself*, *himself*, *ourselves*, and *yourselves* on the board. Ask students to use these words in sentences.

Write the text words *bedtime*, *backyards*, *downpour*, *stomachache*, *meatballs*, and *supermarket* on the chalkboard. Explain that these are *compound words*, or words made up of two individual words. Ask volunteers to point out the individual words in each. Discuss the meaning of each compound word and whether the meanings of the individual words are reflected.



Author: Jodi Barrett

Genre: Fiction/Tall Tale

Guided Reading Level: M

English Language Support

Offer realia, gestures, or photos to support the introduction of the new vocabulary. Explain that an *incident* is an event or occurrence. Discuss various kinds of incidences and hold up illustrations of common events or happenings to illustrate, such as photos of classroom events or other school events with which students are familiar. Then discuss the meaning of *necessities* by contrasting needs and wants. Explain that necessities are things we can not live without—food and water are necessities. Contrast this with soda and video games.

Understanding the Text

Literal: *Why does the town of Chewandswallow not have supermarkets? (It doesn't need a supermarket because all the food falls from the sky.)*

Interpretive: *Why does Ralph's Roofless Restaurant have no roof? Use evidence from the text to support your answers.*

Applied: *If food came down from the sky into your town, would your actions be like the townspeople's actions? Would you carry a plate, fork, spoon, knife, and glass with you? Would you take leftovers home with you? What, if anything, would you do differently from the townspeople? Use evidence from the text to support your answers.*

Phonics and Word Recognition

Write the text words *frequently* and *uneventfully* on the chalkboard. Remind students that *prefixes* are word parts added to the beginnings of words and *suffixes* are added at the end. Read aloud the first word and ask students to identify the suffix. Explain to students that the suffix *-ly* means *like* and changes the word from an adjective to an adverb. Discuss the differences between adjectives and adverbs. Then read aloud the second word. Underline the prefix *un-* and the suffix *-ly*. Discuss how the prefix *un-* changes the word to mean the opposite; i.e., *uneventfully* is the opposite of *eventfully*. Ask volunteers to offer other pairs of words where the prefix *un-* has been added and means "the opposite of." You may want to supply the first word in the pair. (*happy/unhappy, done/undone; answered/unanswered, fit/unfit, lock/unlock, hurt/unhurt, named/unnamed, safe/unsafe, salted/unsalted*)

Fluency

Ask students to find the text page near the back of the book that ends with the sentence "*It was a matter of survival.*" Have students silently reread the page and the following two pages. Then ask students to use context clues on the pages to determine the meaning of the word *abandon*. Discuss the word's meaning and the context clues. Have students repeat the procedure with the word *survival* on the same page.

Reading Literature

Remind students of the definition of a tall tale. Then ask students to share text evidence that supports this book being described as a tall tale. Question students about whether they think the author wrote the book to share a message or a lesson and, if so, what it is.

Writing

Remind students that, in addition to offering information, illustrations also offer meaning. Ask students to again turn to the text page that ends with "*It was a matter of survival*" and study the illustration on the two-page spread to find examples that support those words. Have them write a paragraph with the first sentence, *It was a matter of survival* followed by the evidence revealed in the illustration.