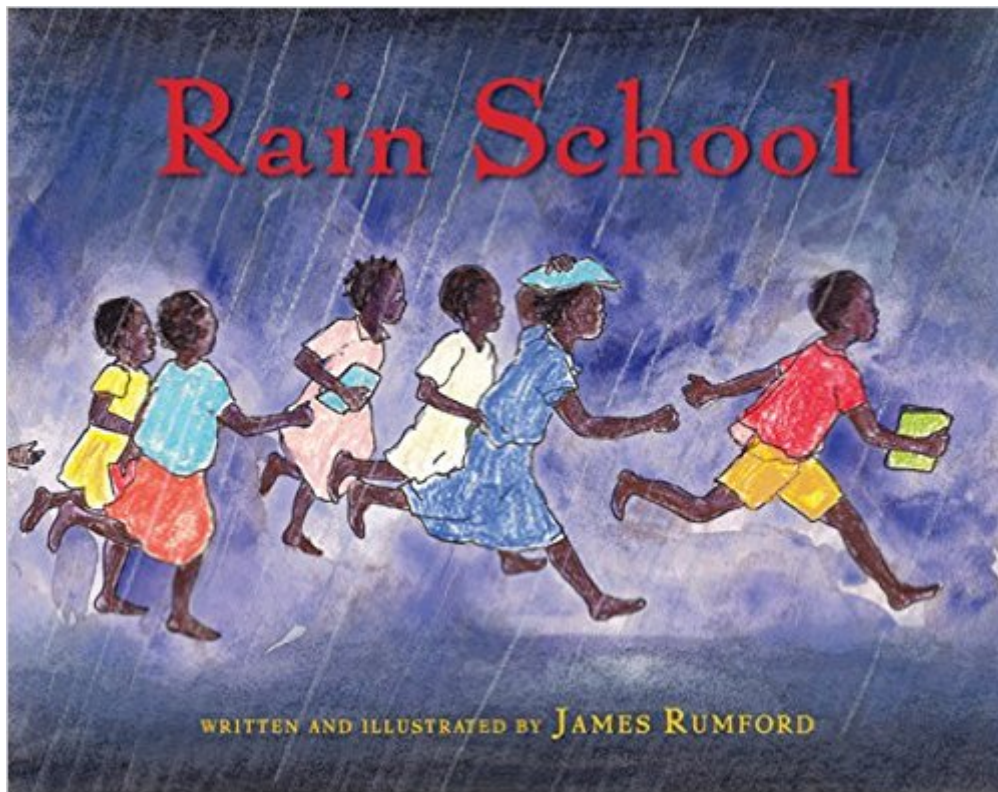


The book was found

# 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.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 420L (What's this?)

Series: AWARDS: Kentucky Bluegrass Awards 2012 Master List Grades K-2

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; 1 edition (October 25, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0547243073

ISBN-13: 978-0547243078

Product Dimensions: 11 x 0.3 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (17 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #27,370 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #14 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Africa](#) #218 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Self-Esteem & Self-Respect](#) #416 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > School](#)

Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

We love this book. It is our current favorite, and as it goes in our house, that means we read it perhaps three times per day. I had a slightly different take than the two previous reviewers. I won't recap the plot, since that's been done well above. It makes me think, not of how little others have (though I recognize this is true in many places) but of how bizarre and sometimes pointless, or at least incomplete, the standard Western education is. How fabulous to learn not only reading and

writing at school, but also carpentry and masonry. I guess I don't think of this as a story about poverty, but about opportunity.

Imagine spending your first days of school helping building the place you will be learning in. Imagine knowing it will all be washed away when the rains come nine months later. This is the reality of the children in the mud school of a village in Chad. But regardless of what happens to impermanent things, knowledge cannot be taken away. This book left me awe-struck. It has never occurred to me that kids somewhere might have this sort of experience. My daughter also enjoyed the book, with its crisp prose and warm illustrations and unspoken lessons. There are so many ways to go with this book: a look at different cultures, poverty, seasonal changes and/or taking things for granted. I recommend RAIN SCHOOL highly.

Thomas, a young child in the African country of Chad, eagerly anticipates his first day of school. When he arrives at the schoolyard, Thomas is surprised to see a teacher but no building and no desks. He discovers that before the reading instruction can begin, he needs to help make mud bricks, build walls, and thatch a roof. When the school term ends nine months later, Thomas has learned a great deal. That knowledge will stay with him, even though not much will remain of the mud building once the rainy season has passed its course. With its exuberant illustrations and graceful text, this book introduces readers to how young children living in remote parts of Chad, one of the poorest countries in the world, may experience primary school. The author draws on his Peace Corps experience in Chad to add realism and to convey the desire of children to overcome the obstacles they face and become educated.

Bought this after it was recommended by a professional website. Love the perspective and the illustrations. I wish the book gave a little more information, but my students were highly engaged when I read this book aloud. It was a great jumping off point for a discussion about what school means.

This book is beautifully written, stunningly illustrated, and the story is just perfect -- for any age. It is among the top few books we've ever bought for our daughter. We pull it out to read with our 3 year old regularly and the whole family loves it. As a former Peace Corps volunteer in East Africa, I also deeply appreciate that this book shares the reality of an African village life in Chad by showing its beauty, lessons and community spirit. At her age our daughter doesn't see the kids in the book

lacking in some way because they don't have the same things we do. Rather for her (and us) it's insight into kids in a different place who are like her but have different lives and experiences. Those kids don't see what they don't have either -- they see and are excited about what they do have -- a teacher and a school they built and can now learn in. We love the idea the book conveys that kids have something vital to offer schools - not just schools to kids. We talk about how we can make our schools better like Thomas does - by keeping them clean, helping other students, listening to our teacher, planting gardens, etc. We talk about Africa and other places we've learned about. We talk about the toys Thomas plays with, the step-by-step process of making bricks, how we get school clothes and how Thomas does, the smell of a school made with earthy materials... We trace letters in the air, look at maps... There is just so much in this book to discover and learn from.

I used this book as the introductory lesson in a unit on the lengths at which children across the world must go to to receive their education, and it was perfect! My students and I loved it!

It's the first day of school. A group of children are walking to school, excited about the start of classes. They walk and walk and finally they arrive. There are no books. There are no desks. There is no school building. The teacher is there. "We will build our school," she says. "This is the first lesson." "What a moment. "We will build our school," she says. "This is the first lesson." The children live in the African country of Chad. The children have an excitement about learning that I don't see every day in my work in the schools in America. I feel the power of that excitement in these pages. It enables a group of children, led by a teacher, to build a place each year, from scratch, in which children can learn, knowing that, at the end of the school year, rains will come and the whole building and everything in it will be washed away by the heavy rain. A moving story. Very powerful.

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