



THE CLOUD SPINNER

AUTHOR: MICHAEL CATCHPOOL

ILLUSTRATOR: ALLISON JAY

See a video of the book read aloud here: [The Cloud Spinner](#)

**** REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! ****

OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE BOOK

One small boy has a special gift—he can weave cloth from the clouds: gold in the early morning with the rising sun, white in the afternoon, and crimson in the evening. He spins just enough cloth for a warm scarf. But when the king sees the boy's magnificent cloth, he demands cloaks and gowns galore. "It would not be wise," the boy protests. "Your majesty does not need them!" But spin he must—and soon the world around him begins to change. (amazon.com)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Catchpool was formerly a primary school head teacher, and is now curriculum advisor on English and Drama for Hertfordshire LEA. He is married with two young children, and currently lives in Royston (England).

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Allison Jay has a first-class degree in illustration from the London College of Printing. She worked in animation before moving on to children's illustration. She is well known for her children's books and her *Welcome to the Zoo* was selected as one of New York's Bank Street's best books of the year in 2009.

THE READ ALOUD

BEFORE READING

Use these before reading the story to help students activate background knowledge and make predictions:

- Introduce the author and illustrator
- (cover) I notice the boy is making something. What might he be doing?
- I think the illustrator has a good sense of humor. She used objects from nature to make smiling faces. Can you find them on the cover?
- Do you think this will be a happy or sad book?

DURING THE STORY

Use these while reading the story to help students interpret the action and content.

- (p. 1-2) Some things on these pages make me think this is not a true story. If you agree, thumbs up, if you disagree, thumbs down.

THE CLOUD SPINNER

TOPICS & THEMES:

- Clouds
- Spinning yarn
- Greed
- Doing the right thing

Tips for every book!

POWER PHRASES:

I WONDER...

I NOTICE...

TELL ME MORE...

DIGGING DEEPER:

"Tell me more, why do you think that?"

"How do you know that?"

"Why do you think they feel like that?"

"Interesting, did you notice anything else?"

- (p. 3-4) What lesson did the boy's mother teach him?
- (p. 7-8) I wonder why the boy thought the king should not have a long scarf.
- (p. 11-12) I wonder why the boy said the king and family did not need the cloth for a cloak and dresses.
- (p. 19-20) How could the villagers' problem be solved?
- (p. 21-24) How did the princess help solve the villagers' problems?

AFTER READING

Use these after reading the story to help students understand what they just read.

- Did you like this story? If you did, what was your favorite part?
- Did anyone notice what colors were used most by the illustrator?

BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE!

- What items that you can find around the house make you think of clouds? (possible answers: cotton, marshmallow, fluffy towels, tissues, etc).

COOPERATIVE LEARNING

- Choose a partner and think of 3 words each that describe clouds. Share these words with class. See how many different words we can come up with.

SMALL-GROUP IDEAS

1. DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

- Take a book walk, stopping at pages with clouds.
- See if you can see an image in the clouds on any page.
- How many important characters were there in the story? Can you name them?
- I wonder what characters were your favorites and why?
- What did you learn from this book?

Suggested Optional Activity:

- Draw a sky with clouds. Make some of the clouds look like animals, people or things from nature.

2. WRITING ACTIVITY

Write 5 sentences about clouds: 1. When I see a cloud, I think . . . ; 2. When I see a cloud, I feel . . . ; 3. When I see a cloud, I imagine . . . ; 4. When I see a cloud, I wish . . . ; 5. When I see a cloud, I know . . .

3. EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Outdoor activity: plan a mini-school outing to the playground, or other outdoor area, during a cloudy day, and do some cloud-spotting. Ask the students what they see in the clouds.

COMMON CORE LINKS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy .RL 2.1,2.2,2.3,2.5,2.7,