Title/Author: *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs* by Judi Barrett and Drawn by Ron Barrett

Suggested Time to Spend: 5 Days (about 30 minutes daily for the reading)

Common Core grade-level ELA/Literacy Standards: RL.1.1, RL.1.2, RL.1.3, RL.1.7; W.1.8; SL.1.1, SL.1.2, SL.1.4, SL.1.5, SL.1.6; L.1.1, L.1.2

Lesson Objective:

Students will listen to an illustrated read-aloud and use literacy skills (reading, writing, discussion, and listening) to understand the central message of the story.

Teacher Instructions

**Before the Lesson**

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis below. **Please do not read this to the students**. This is a description to help you prepare to teach the book and be clear about what you want your children to take away from the work.

Big Ideas/Key Understandings/Focusing Question

What happens when too much food falls from the sky? One key takeaway is that the characters can’t deal with the excess and have to leave their town.

What is this story trying to teach us? One key takeaway is that too much of a good thing can end up being a problem.

Synopsis

Grandpa tells a tall tale about a town where food falls from the sky. Using a weather forecasting format, the food comes instead of rain, snow, and wind. Food needs for the town are completely met three times a day. As supply comes through extreme weather conditions, the people are overwhelmed and have to leave their town.

1. Go to the last page of the lesson and review “What Makes this Read-Aloud Complex.” This was created for you as part of the lesson and will give you guidance about what the lesson writers saw as the sources of complexity or key access points for this book. You will of course evaluate text complexity with your own students in mind, and make adjustments to the lesson pacing and even the suggested activities and questions.
2. Read the entire book, adding your own insights to the understandings identified. Also note the stopping points for the text-inspired questions and activities. *Hint: you may want to copy the question, vocabulary words, and activities over onto sticky notes so they can be stuck to the right pages for each day’s questions and vocabulary work.*
3. Consider pairing this series of lessons on *Cloudy With A Chance of Meatballs* with a text set to increase student knowledge and familiarity with the topic. A custom text set can be found[here](https://achievethecore.org/page/2589/cloudy-with-a-chance-of-meatballs-with-companion-text-set-grade-1-version)[.](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B66A6Ds77LpiU3dIZVFxMFFkLUk) *Note: This is particularly supportive of ELL students.*

*Note to teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs): Read Aloud Project Lessons are designed for children who cannot read yet for themselves. They are highly interactive and have many scaffolds built into the brief daily lessons to support reading comprehension. Because of this, they are filled with scaffolds that are appropriate for English Language Learners who, by definition, are developing language and learning to read (English). This read aloud text includes complex features which offer many opportunities for learning, but at the same time includes supports and structures to make the text accessible to even the youngest students.*

*This lesson includes features that align to best practices for supporting English Language Learners. Some of the supports you may see built into this, and /or other Read Aloud Project lessons, assist non-native speakers in the following ways:*

* *These lessons include embedded vocabulary scaffolds that help students acquire new vocabulary in the context of reading. They feature multi-modal ways of learning new words, including prompts for where to use visual representations, the inclusion of student-friendly definitions, built-in opportunities to use newly acquired vocabulary through discussion or activities, and featured academic vocabulary for deeper study.*
* *These lessons also include embedded scaffolds to help students make meaning of the text itself. It calls out opportunities for paired or small group discussion, includes recommendations for ways in which visuals, videos, and/or graphic organizers could aid in understanding, provides a mix of questions (both factual and inferential) to guide students gradually toward deeper understanding, and offers recommendations for supplementary texts to build background knowledge supporting the content in the anchor text.*
* *These lessons feature embedded supports to aid students in developing their overall language and communication skills by featuring scaffolds such as sentence frames for discussion and written work (more guidance available* [here](https://achievethecore.org/page/3159/ell-supports-for-writing-and-discussion)*) as well as writing opportunities (and the inclusion of graphic organizers to scaffold the writing process). These supports help students develop and use newly acquired vocabulary and text-based content knowledge.*

The Lesson – Questions, Activities, and Tasks

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| **Questions/Activities/Vocabulary/Tasks** | **Expected Outcome or Response (for each)** |
| FIRST READING:  (Display on a document camera or projector if possible.)  Read aloud the entire book with minimal interruptions. Stop to provide word meanings or clarify only when you know the majority of your students will be confused. | The goal here is for students to enjoy the book, both writing and pictures, and to experience it as a whole. This will give them some context and sense of completion before they dive into examining the parts of the book more carefully. |
| SECOND READING:  **Reread page 1**.  (Display on a document camera or projector if possible.)  “And Grandpa was doing the flipping.” If necessary complete the sentence …of the pancakes, or direct students to look at the picture to understand the use of “flipping.”  **Reread pages 2-3.**  “Breakfast continued quite uneventfully.” Explain to students that the pancake as a flying object was an event – nothing else strange happened, so breakfast continued \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(uneventfully).  **Reread page 4**  “That night, touched off by the pancake incident at breakfast, Grandpa told us the best tall-tale bedtime story he’d ever told.”  Something happened to lead Grandpa to tell his bedtime story. What happened to “touch off” his telling of the story? (May have to go back to pages 1-2 to read about the pancake incident.)  Grandpa’s story was a “tall-tale” bedtime story. Tell students a tall-tale is an exaggerated story about things that wouldn’t really happen.  Let’s look back at the illustrations on pages 1-5. Pages 1-3 are all black and white pictures. On pages 4 and 5 the illustrator begins to add some color. What is the illustrator helping us to understand by adding this color?  **Reread page 5**  Why did the author name the town Chewandswallow?  **Reread pages 6-8**  Chewandswallow was “very much like any other tiny (or small) town”, except for the weather**.** How was the weather different?  **Reread pages 10-11**  The people watched the weather report on the television. Explain to the students that we might listen to the weather report for a prediction of whether it will be hot or cold or rainy (snowy). This helps us to dress properly or plan appropriate activities. Why did the people in Chewandswallow listen to the weather report, and how did they prepare? Turn and tell your partner one way the people of Chewandswallow prepared for the weather.  **Reread pages 12-14**  After reading “The menu varied” restate by saying, “Just as our weather changes from day to day, the food the townspeople received varied, or changed, from day to day.”  Remind the students that the title of the story is “Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs.” On our weather report we might hear ‘cloudy with a chance of rain, or snow, or sleet. In the story we find phrases like “after a brief shower, low clouds of eggs, and followed by pieces of toast.” Perhaps the title gives us a clue that the story is written like a weather report. Have students show with their hands whether a brief shower would last a long time or a short time and whether drizzle is a little or a lot of rain (soda). Post signs on the wall showing directions north, south, east, west, northwest. Have students turn toward northwest and pantomime wind blowing in from that direction, then shifting to the east. Then they can be the jello (sun) setting in the west.  **Reread page 15**  When reading the last sentence state, “The rest of the food was put back into the earth so the soil would be richer, or better, healthier, for the people’s flower gardens.”  The Sanitation Department of Chewandswallow is like our garbage/trash collectors. How was their job unusual, or different, from what our garbage/trash collectors do?  **Reread page 16**  “Life was delicious until the weather took a turn for the worse.” Turn to your partner and tell what made life delicious in Chewandswallow. | Reread the story, stopping on the pages listed to clarify the meaning of the words that may be unfamiliar to the students.  Page 1 – Students show understanding of “flipping” by pantomiming the action.  Page 3 – “uneventfully”  The pancake as a flying object was an event – nothing else strange happened, so breakfast continued \_\_\_\_\_ (students respond “uneventfully”)  Page 4  While Grandpa was flipping a pancake, it flew across the kitchen and landed on Henry. Everyone laughed. Maybe this pancake incident gave Grandpa the idea to make up a story about food falling from the sky.  The illustrator is helping us to understand that the real events are ending and the tall-tale part is beginning. (much like the Wizard of Oz)  Page 5  The food falls from the sky – all the people have to do is to “chew and swallow” it.  Pages 6-8  In Chewandswallow it never rained, snowed, or blew wind. It rained things like soups and juice, snowed mashed potatoes and green peas, and sometimes the wind blew in storms of hamburgers.  Pages 10-11  They listened to the weather report so they would know what food they would have the next day. They prepared for any kind of weather by taking plates, cups, glasses, forks, spoons, knives, and napkins outside.  Pages 12-14  As a class make a chart using symbols to show how the weather has changed, or varied, over the past three days. Then draw pictures or write words to show how the menu changed from breakfast to lunch to dinner in Chewandswallow.  Students show with their hands that brief means short (not long). They stand and face the direction northwest and show with their hands wind coming from that direction, and then turning to the east to bring wind from that direction. They can show drizzle with their fingers “raining down.” They can then face the west and squat down to show how the (jello/sun) was setting.  Page 15  They had to remove the food that fell on houses, lawns (yards), and sidewalks. They used this food to feed the cats and dogs, fish, turtles, and whales in the ocean, and to make the soil richer (better) for the flower gardens.  Page 16  Food fell from the sky three times a day to feed all the people. They had so much food they had left-overs to feed the animals, and they used it to make their soil better for their flower gardens.  As a class make a list of things that “made life delicious” in Chewandswallow. |
| THIRD READING:  **Reread pages 1 – 16**  “Life for the townspeople was delicious until the weather took a turn for the worse.” Let’s look at the newspaper on page 16. How does the newspaper help the reader understand that “the weather took a turn for the worse.”?  **Reread pages 16-26** to allow students to hear the events that indicate the “weather took a turn for the worse.”  **Page 16**  Explain the meaning of the word *until*  “Life for the townspeople was delicious *until* the weather took a turn for the worse.” The word *until* lets the reader know that something has changed. Listen for events that show life is changed because the weather took a turn for the worse.  (Guide students through the pages to identify things that indicate the “weather took a turn for the worse.”  **Page 17**  Gorgonzola is a kind of cheese – it has a strong taste and smell. As a class, list the things that the people may not like about the food now.  **Reread page 18**  “The food was getting larger and larger, and so were the portions.” The individual pieces of food (rolls) were getting bigger, but so was the portion, or the amount of food that came at one time. “Violent storms blew up frequently.” Bad storms came more often.  Tell your partner what happened when the portions got bigger and the violent storms came up.  **Reread pages 19 - 21**  What other events show the weather taking a turn for the worse is affecting the townspeople.  (“Lunch one day brought fifteen-inch drifts.” may be a difficult sentence structure that needs to be restated for some children.) “Everyone ate themselves sick and the day ended with a stomachache.” This may be a difficult sentence for students – can be restated – “Everyone ate so much they got a stomachache by the end of the day.”  “There was an awful salt and pepper wind *accompanied by* an even worse tomato tornado. People were *sneezing themselves silly* and running to avoid the tomatoes.” *Accompanied by* means happening along with; *sneezing themselves silly* means sneezing a whole lot.  **Reread page 22-23**  “The job was too big.” The mess was so big the Sanitation Department couldn’t clean it all up. The people were so scared they decided they had to abandon, or leave, their town Chewandswallow.  Let’s look back at our weather chart and see how the weather has changed for the worse. | Page 16  The picture shows deep spaghetti; words say spaghetti “ties up” town, record-breaking pasta fall causes chaos, traffic snarled on Lower Intestine Street.  Pages 16-26  Students listen to these pages – then go back and list the events that show that weather has taken a turn for the worse as the pages are reread to them.  Page 17  They may not like the cheese; even if the people like broccoli, it was overcooked; brussel sprouts may (or may not) be a food people liked, but mayonnaise with peanut butter probably didn’t taste good; the pea soup was so thick that people had a hard time finding the rest of their food.  Page 18  Everyone had to stay indoors, roofs were damaged, and the Sanitation Department couldn’t keep up with the mess, bread got stale when the portions got bigger and the violent storms blew up.  As a class, add to the list the things that happened that indicate life has taken a turn for the worse. (everyone had to stay indoors, roofs were damaged, streets were messy, birds couldn’t eat the bread before it became stale)  Pages 19-21  Storm of pancakes and a maple syrup flood, a huge pancake covered the school so the kids can’t go to school.  There was so much food the kids ate too much and got a stomachache.  People sneezed a lot because of the pepper and had to run to avoid the tomatoes.  The town was a mess with all the tomato seeds and pulp.  Add additional events to the list.  Pages 22-23  Turn and tell your partner why the people decided to abandon Chewandswallow. (The mess was too big to clean up; the children couldn’t go to school; the stores were boarded up; the people could no longer live in their town; the people might die if they stayed.)  Add to the weather chart symbols for hurricane, fifteen-inch drifts of snow, tornado, and hail. Draw pictures or write words to show how the weather had changed in Chewandswallow. |
| FOURTH READING:  As a class review the events of the story –  tell what happened first (pages 1-3)  what happened in Grandpa’s tall tale that indicated life was good in Chewandswallow (pages 6-16)  what bad things happened to cause a problem (pages 16-23)  **Reread pages 23-27 (to the end of the tall tale)**  The people took the “absolute necessities with them, and set sail on their rafts…” They took the things they really needed and left Chewandswallow to go to a new land.  “They finally reached a small coastal town” – restate “a town near the ocean. “  “…to build temporary houses…” – restate “houses that would last a for a short time.”  “And nobody dared to go back to Chewandswallow to find out what had happened to it. They were too afraid.”  Turn to your partner and tell why the people were too afraid to go back to Chewandswallow.  **Reread page 27 (after the end of the tall tale) – page 29**  Look at the illustrations on pages 28 and 29. How does the illustrator help the reader understand that the tall tale has ended? Explain the little bit of color on page 29.  What was Grandpa telling the children through his tall tale? Students may need help in understanding the big idea of the story. | Students can participate in class discussion to retell the story. Or, they can dictate or write sentences on sentence strips to retell the story up to this point. Students put the sentences in order of the events to review.  The people were too afraid to go back to Chewandswallow because when they left the place there was a lot of damage to their houses, their town, their school. They couldn’t clean up the mess. They had been unable to go outside most of the time.  The illustrator has returned to black and white pictures. The bit of color on page 29 connects the “real story” to the tall tale as the children imagine they are seeing mashed potatoes with butter on top.  Too much of a good thing may become a problem. |

FINAL DAY WITH THE BOOK - Culminating Task

* **Discussion:** In the book *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs,* Grandpa tells the children a tall-tale about people in the town Chewandswallow. What happened to those people? Why did they have to leave their town? Think about the lists we have made of things that “made life delicious” and the events that caused them to abandon the town.
  + Guide the class discussion to help the students understand that life was good when there was just enough food – and life became unbearable when there was too much food.)
* **Activity:** Fold your paper (hotdog style and then hamburger style) to make four sections. Place the paper landscape style. On the left side of the paper in the top square draw a picture showing how life was delicious. Write a sentence (or sentences, depending on the ability of your students) in the space beneath your picture. On the right side in the top square draw a picture showing why the people had to leave Chewandswallow, and write your sentence (or sentences) in the space below it.
* **Summary of lesson:** What lesson is the author trying to teach us? Write your answer in one complete sentence at the bottom of your paper. (Too much of a good thing may become a problem.)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| (picture) | (picture) |
| The people in Chewandswallow had enough good food to eat. They didn’t even have to cook it. | There was so much food that they couldn’t live there anymore. The town was destroyed by all the food. |
| Judi Barrett is trying to teach us that just enough of something is good, but when we have too much it might cause problems. | |

Vocabulary

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| --- | --- |
| **These words merit less time and attention**  (They are concrete and easy to explain, or describe events/  processes/ideas/concepts/experiences that are familiar to your students ) | **These words merit more time and attention**  (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part  of a large family of words with related meanings. These words are likely to describe events, ideas, processes or experiences that most of your student will be unfamiliar with) |
| Page 1 - flipping – turning over  Page 4 – “touched off” – started by  Page 11 – prepared – ready for something  Page 15 - surrounding – all the oceans that were around them  Page 15 – richer – better (or healthier soil)  Page 16 – “life was delicious” – life was good  Page 16 – “took a turn for the worse” – things got really bad  Page 17 – gorgonzola – a cheese with a strong taste that comes from Italy  Page 17 – broccoli – a green vegetable with little green buds  Page 17 – brussel sprouts – a vegetable that looks like little cabbages  Page 17 – pea soup fog – very thick fog that is hard to see through  Page 18 – portions – amount, or size, of the serving of food  Page 18 - frequently – happening very often  Page 20 – ate themselves sick – ate until they had a bad stomachache  Page 21 – accompanied by – happened at the same time  Page 21 – sneezed themselves silly – sneezed a lot  Page 21 – pulp – the soft inside part of the tomato | Page 3 - uneventfully – with no surprises or excitement  Page 12 - varied – changed over time, differed  Weather terms  Page 10 – prediction – to say that something will happen before it happens, telling what weather will happen in the future  Page 12 – brief shower – little rain not lasting very long  Page 13 – “blew in from the northwest” – winds coming from the northwest direction  Page 13 – “shifted to the east and brought…”the wind changed direction and brought a different kind of weather  Page 13 – drizzle – soft rain  Page 14 – becoming heavy at times – large amounts of rain or snow some of the time  Page 14 – occasional – happening sometimes, but not regularly  Page 14 – gradual clearing – clouds going away slowly over time  Page 18 – violent storms – storms that caused a lot of damage – hurricanes – storms with very strong winds that usually begin over large bodies of water like an ocean.  Page 21 – tornado – another storm with strong winds that twist  and destroy buildings and trees. |
| Page 22 – “feared for their lives” –were afraid they would die  Page 22 – “boarded up” – boards were nailed over the doors and windows  Page 23 – abandon – to leave because of troubles without planning to come back  Page 23 - survival – to stay alive after something bad has happened  Page 25 – absolute necessities – things that are very important  Page 26 – “coastal town” – a town near the ocean  Page 26 – temporary – something that lasts a short time | Page 20 – drift of snow – pile of snow  Page 22 – hail – balls of frozen rain |

Extension learning activities for this book and other useful resources

* After reading the weather report from Chewandswallow (pages 12-14), the class can watch a weather report on the weather channel or have a weather forecaster visit the class. The class can develop a chart comparing the real weather terms (words, symbols, pictures, etc.) with the weather forecast items in Chewandswallow (words or pictures). *Note: This is particularly supportive of English Language Learners.*
* Write and illustrate a class book with students showing “too much of a good thing” (too many toys, too much TV time, too much rain, too much sun…). Include why this excess may be a problem (state an opinion W.1.1)
* Students can discuss who is telling the story – the children are “Henry and I” – who is I? (The author, Judi Barrett may be “I”)
* Why did the author (page 27) state “Henry and I were awake until the very end of Grandpa’s story. I remember his goodnight kiss.” Does this help us to understand the kids were awake for the entire bedtime story – even remembering his goodnight kiss?

Note to Teacher

* Many compound words are listed in the book – can take this opportunity to teach compound words:

Compound Words in Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs

**Closed Compounds** **Open Compounds**

backyards townspeople themselves sunny side

pancake schoolhouse stomachache tall tale

everything nearby meatballs

everyone sidewalks overcooked

everywhere without into

whatever indoors supermarket

sometimes beside nobody

outside itself downstairs

leftovers northwest bedtime

downpour goodnight

**What Makes This Read-Aloud Complex?**

1. **Quantitative Measure**

Go to <http://www.lexile.com/> and enter the title of your read-aloud in the Quick Book Search in the upper right of home page. Most texts will have a Lexile measure in this database.

Most of the texts that we read aloud in K-2 should be in the 2-3 or 4-5 band, more complex than the students can read themselves.

2-3 band 420-820L

4-5 band 740-1010L

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1. **Qualitative Features**

Consider the four dimensions of text complexity below. For each dimension\*, note specific examples from the text that make it more or less complex.

Too much of a good thing may become a problem

Tall tale told within story

Structure of weather forecast

Sentence structure (syntax) –“ lunch one day brought…”

Figurative language – “drizzle of soda” “ate themselves sick”

Different types of weather

**Meaning/Purpose**

**Structure**

**Language**

**Knowledge Demands**

\*For more information on the qualitative dimensions of text complexity, visit <http://www.achievethecore.org/content/upload/Companion_to_Qualitative_Scale_Features_Explained.pdf>

1. **Reader and Task Considerations**

What will challenge my students most in this text? What supports can I provide?

Concept that more is not always better – multiple readings of text pointing out cause and effect

How will this text help my students build knowledge about the world?

This humorous story shows the outcome of too much. Students will learn about weather terms and conditions.

1. **Grade level**

What grade does this book best belong in? 1

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