

12 Genre: science fiction

From *All Summer in a Day*

'Ready?'

'Ready.'

'Now?'

'Soon.'

'Do the scientists really know? Will it happen today, will it?'

'Look, look; see for yourself!'



The children pressed to each other like so many roses, so many weeds, intermixed, peering out to look for the hidden sun.

It rained.

It had been raining for seven years; thousands upon thousands of days compounded and filled from one end to the other with rain, with the drum and gush of water, with the sweet crystal fall of showers and the concussion of storms so heavy they were tidal waves come over the islands. A thousand forests had been crushed under the rain and grown up a thousand times to be crushed again. And this was the way life was forever on the planet Venus, and this was the schoolroom of the children, of the rocket men and women who had come to a raining world to set up civilisation and live out their lives.

'It's stopping, it's stopping!'

'Yes, yes!'

Margot stood apart from them, from these children who could never remember a time when there wasn't rain and rain and rain. They were all nine years old, and if there had been a day seven years ago, when the sun came out for an hour and showed its face to the stunned world, they could not recall.

Ray Bradbury

Chat challenge

What do you think are the features of **science fiction**?

In what kind of places are they usually set?

In what time are they usually set?

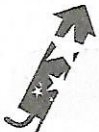
Where did you find out about these features?

What makes you think that this passage comes from a science fiction book?



Comprehension

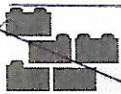
- 1) Where is this story set?
- 2) Why had all the people gone there in the first place?
- 3) What were the children all looking for?
- 4) Why does this seem surprising to us?
- 5) How long had it been raining? Do you find this surprising? Why?
- 6) How does this kind of information make you feel about the story?
- 7) Why was Margot different from the rest of the children?



Objective focus

- 1) What phrases in the passage tell you immediately that this story is not set in our own time or in our own world?
- 2) Identify the other features in the passage that would tell you this was from a science fiction story. Use a chart to help:

Setting	
Characters	
Events	
- 3) List any other kinds of details, people or objects that you would expect to find in a science fiction story. Where have you found out about these things?
- 4) What do you think happens next? How will it end? Do science fiction stories have a particular way of developing? You could continue the story.



Links to writing

- 1) Continue with this science fiction story. Why has it been raining for so long on Venus? What happened to the sun? What happens to Margot?
- 2) Create some lists of settings, characters and events that you could choose from to write a science fiction story, for example:
 - setting: in the future, another planet, space ship, alien world, space
 - characters: hero, villain, captain of spaceship, aliens, boy, girl, robot
 - events: finding new planet, aliens fighting back, bad things happening to the world, space ship breaks down, time travel