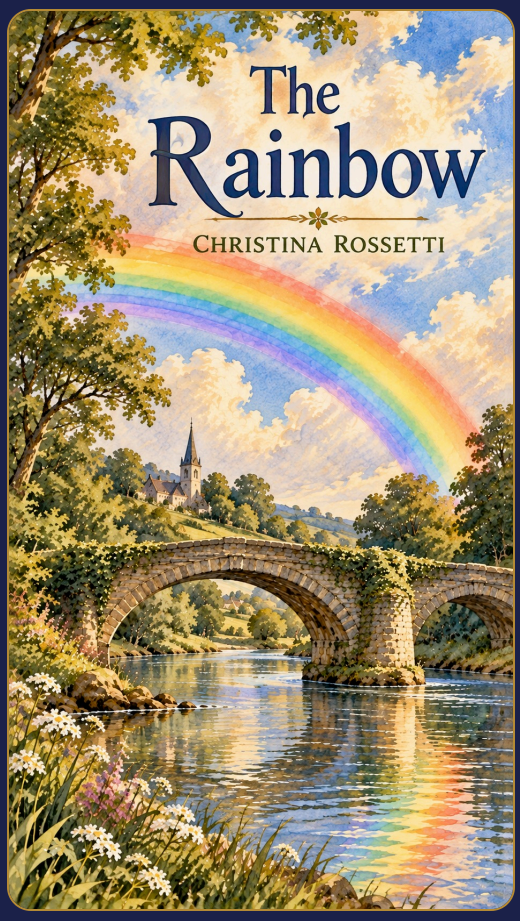
Storyland Classics

FREE POEM GUIDE

From Sing-Song: A Nursery Rhyme Book (1872)



- ✦ The Poem
- ✦ Meet the Poet
- ✦ Let's Talk
- ✦ Try It
- ✦ Word Match & Sort
- ✦ Word Search
- ✦ Missing Words
- ✦ Yes or No & ABC Order
- ✦ Rhyme Hunt & Syllables
- ✦ Put It in Order
- ✦ Read It With Voices
- ✦ Learn It by Heart
- ✦ Handwriting
- ✦ Answer Key
- ✦ Standards

Ages 4–8 ✦ Pre-K to Grade 2 ✦ Aligned to Common Core

This cover is for your screen. Print from page 2 to save ink.

FOR GROWN-UPS

How to Use This Guide

This free guide goes with the Storyland Classics read-aloud of “The Rainbow” by Christina Rossetti. Every page is ready to print, and no sign-up is needed. Pick the pages that suit your child or class.

ABOUT THE POEM

Boats sail on the rivers and ships sail on the seas, but Christina Rossetti says the clouds sailing across the sky are prettier. There are pretty bridges on the rivers too, but the prettiest bridge of all is the rainbow, the “bow that bridges heaven,” arching over the trees and building a road from earth to sky.

SKILL FOCUS

Comparing: how the poet compares things on the water with things in the sky

A simple routine

1. **Day 1.** Watch the read-aloud together (scan the QR code on the poem page), then read the poem aloud.
2. **Day 2.** Read it again. Meet the poet, then use Let’s Talk and Try It.
3. **Day 3.** Learn the words with the word match, word sort, word search and missing words.
4. **Day 4.** Listen for rhymes and syllables, put the poem in order, and perform it with voices.

What’s inside

The Poem 3
Meet the Poet 4
Let’s Talk 5
Try It 6
Word Match & Sort 7
Word Search 8
Missing Words 9
Yes or No & ABC Order 10
Rhyme Hunt & Syllables 11
Put It in Order 12
Read It With Voices 13
Learn It by Heart 14
Handwriting 15
Answer Key 16
Standards 17

Standards

Every activity is aligned to the Common Core State Standards for kindergarten to grade 2. Codes appear at the bottom of each page, and the full table is on the last page.

Younger children

Children who aren’t writing yet can answer out loud or tell a grown-up what to write.

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THE POEM

The Rainbow



Boats sail on the rivers,
And ships sail on the seas;
But clouds that sail across the sky
Are prettier far than these.

There are bridges on the rivers,
As pretty as you please;
But the bow that bridges heaven,
And overtops the trees,
And builds a road from earth to sky,
Is prettier far than these.

▸ Watch the read-aloud

Scan the code to watch "The Rainbow" read aloud, or visit storylandclassics.com/rainbow-guide.

Christina Rossetti, Sing-Song: A Nursery Rhyme Book (1872). Public domain.

Name _____ Date _____

MEET THE POET

Christina Rossetti

1830–1894 ✦ English poet

Christina Rossetti was born in London in 1830. She grew up in a busy, book-loving family: her brother Dante Gabriel Rossetti became a famous painter and poet. Christina began writing poems as a girl, and she became one of the best-loved poets of her time. In 1872 she wrote *Sing-Song*, a book of short, gentle rhymes for little children about animals, the weather, colors, babies and the seasons. Many of her poems ask questions or name the things children see every day.

Questions About the Poet

1. In what city was Christina Rossetti born?

2. What is the name of her book of poems for little children?

3. Christina Rossetti liked to write about things children see every day. What would you write a poem about?

Who Is Talking?

A speaker tells this poem. Read it again, then answer.

1. What does the speaker think is prettier than boats and ships?

2. What does the speaker call the rainbow?

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Name _____ Date _____

LET'S TALK

The Rainbow

Young children can answer out loud. Older children can write their answers.

REMEMBER

1. What sails on the rivers? What sails on the seas?

2. What sails across the sky?

3. What does the rainbow build?

THINK

4. How is a rainbow like a bridge?

5. Why do you think the poet says the sky things are prettier?

CONNECT

6. When have you seen a rainbow? What was the weather like?

NARRATION

Close the book and tell the poem back in your own words. Why does the poet think the rainbow is so pretty?

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Name _____ Date _____

TRY IT

The Rainbow

SKILL FOCUS

Comparing: how the poet compares things on the water with things in the sky

The poet says a rainbow is like a bridge. Write what else a rainbow could be like, and why. (A slide? A smile? A road?)

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Name _____ Date _____

WORDS TO KNOW

Word Match

Draw a line from each word to what it means.

rivers	paths built over water
ships	goes higher than
prettier	long streams of water that flow
bridges	the sky above
bow	more pretty
heaven	the ground we live on
overtops	very big boats
earth	a curved shape, like an arch

Word Sort: On the Water or In the Sky?

Write each word in the right box.

boats · clouds · ships · rainbow · bridges · sun · rafts · birds

On the water	In the sky

Name _____ Date _____

WORD SEARCH

The Rainbow

Find the words from the poem. Words go across (left to right) and down (top to bottom). Circle each word, then check it off.

C	S	D	T	S	M	V	P	A	H
B	H	R	U	C	U	A	T	S	B
K	I	T	G	T	V	D	R	E	W
K	P	F	F	R	S	U	J	A	B
W	S	Y	C	L	O	U	D	S	W
E	F	B	O	A	T	S	V	I	S
K	R	I	V	E	R	S	E	L	O
E	W	W	N	S	J	S	T	F	F
R	A	I	N	B	O	W	W	I	D
W	S	K	Y	V	T	R	E	E	S

WORD BANK

- [ ] RAINBOW
- [ ] BOATS
- [ ] SHIPS
- [ ] SEAS
- [ ] RIVERS
- [ ] CLOUDS
- [ ] SKY
- [ ] TREES

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Name _____ Date _____

MISSING WORDS

The Rainbow

Read each line from the poem. Choose the missing word from the word bank and write it on the line. Then read the whole line aloud.

clouds | rivers | ships | sky | these | trees

1. Boats sail on the _____ ,
2. And _____ sail on the seas;
3. But _____ that sail across the sky
4. Are prettier far than _____ .
5. And overtops the _____ ,
6. And builds a road from earth to _____ ,

Make New Rhymes

Write a new word that rhymes with each word from the poem. Silly words count too!

rivers _____ _____ ships _____ _____

clouds _____ _____ these _____ _____

DID YOU NOTICE?

Read each line with the word you chose. Does it sound right? Check the poem to see if you were right!

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Name _____ Date _____

CHECK YOUR READING

Yes or No?

Read each sentence about the poem. Circle **Yes** if it is true. Circle **No** if it is not.

1. Boats sail on the rivers. Yes No
2. Ships sail on the clouds. Yes No
3. The poet thinks the clouds are prettier than ships. Yes No
4. There are bridges on the rivers. Yes No
5. The rainbow is under the trees. Yes No
6. The rainbow builds a road from earth to sky. Yes No

ABC Order

Write these words from the poem in ABC order. Look at the first letter of each word.

rainbow · boats · ships · clouds · trees

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

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Name _____ Date _____

SOUNDS OF THE POEM

Rhyme Hunt

Find each word's rhyming partner in the word bank and write it on the line.

again · float · high · these · these · trees

seas _____ please _____

trees _____ sky _____

boat _____ rain _____

LISTEN

This poem has one big rhyme sound that comes again and again: seas, these, please, trees, these. Clap each time you hear it!

Clap the Syllables

Say each word and clap for every part. Write the number of claps.

rainbow claps: ___	rivers claps: ___	prettier claps: ___
bridges claps: ___	heaven claps: ___	clouds claps: ___

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Name _____ Date _____

PUT IT IN ORDER

What Happens First?

Read each sentence. Write 1 in the circle next to what happens first, 2 next to what happens next, and so on up to 6.

- ◯ Ships sail on the seas.
- ◯ Boats sail on the rivers.
- ◯ The rainbow builds a road from earth to sky.
- ◯ There are bridges on the rivers.
- ◯ Clouds sail across the sky.
- ◯ The bow that bridges heaven overtops the trees.

Retell the Poem

Use the order words to tell the poem in your own words. Say it out loud, or write it.

First, _____

Next, _____

Then, _____

Last, _____

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Name _____ Date _____

PERFORM IT

Read It With Voices

Reader 1 | Reader 2 | Everyone

Reader 1 reads the first verse and **Reader 2** reads the second. **Everyone** says "Is prettier far than these!" at the end, and draws a big rainbow in the air with one arm.

TIPS FOR READING ALOUD

Read the river and sea lines in a plain voice, then make your voice light and amazed for the clouds and the rainbow.

Read It Three Times

Read the poem aloud three times. Color a star each time. Your reading gets smoother every time!



My Favorite Part

Write about your favorite part of the poem.

My favorite part is _____

_____

_____

because _____

_____

_____

_____

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LEARN IT BY HEART

Say It From Memory

Learn this verse by heart. Check off each step as you go.

Boats sail on the rivers,
And ships sail on the seas;
But clouds that sail across the sky
Are prettier far than these.

- [ ] Listen to the verse on the read-aloud video.
- [ ] Read it aloud three times with the book.
- [ ] Say it with a grown-up, one line at a time.
- [ ] Say it with the book closed. Peek if you need to!
- [ ] Say it to someone at home or in class.

✦ CERTIFICATE ✦

I can say “The Rainbow” by heart!

by Christina Rossetti

Name _____ Date _____

Heard by _____

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CCSS RF.1.4b · SL.K.6 · SL.1.6

Name _____ Date _____

HANDWRITING PRACTICE

The Rainbow

Trace the gray words, then write them on your own on the empty lines. Tall letters touch the top line; small letters reach the dotted line.

Boats sail on the rivers,

Boats sail on

the rivers,

And builds a road from earth to sky,

And builds a road

from earth to sky,

☐ I started with a capital letter. ☐ I left spaces between words. ☐ I copied the end mark.

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FOR GROWN-UPS

Answer Key & Ideas

Who Is Talking?

The clouds sailing across the sky are prettier than boats and ships. The rainbow is “the bow that bridges heaven.”

Let’s Talk

1. Boats sail on the rivers; ships sail on the seas. 2. Clouds. 3. A road from earth to sky. 4–6. Answers will vary.

Word Sort

On the water: boats, ships, bridges, rafts. In the sky: clouds, rainbow, sun, birds.

Word Search

C	S	D	T	S	M	V	P	A	H
B	H	R	U	C	U	A	T	S	B
K	I	T	G	T	V	D	R	E	W
K	P	F	F	R	S	U	J	A	B
W	S	Y	C	L	O	U	D	S	W
E	F	B	O	A	T	S	V	I	S
K	R	I	V	E	R	S	E	L	O
E	W	W	N	S	J	S	T	F	F
R	A	I	N	B	O	W	W	I	D
W	S	K	Y	V	T	R	E	E	S

Word Match

rivers: long streams of water that flow · ships: very big boats · prettier: more pretty · bridges: paths built over water · bow: a curved shape, like an arch · heaven: the sky above · overtops: goes higher than · earth: the ground we live on

Yes or No? & ABC Order

1. Yes · 2. No · 3. Yes · 4. Yes · 5. No · 6. Yes. ABC order: boats, clouds, rainbow, ships, trees.

Missing Words

rivers, ships, clouds, these, trees, sky

Rhyme Hunt & Syllables

seas: these · please: trees · trees: these · sky: high · boat: float · rain: again. Claps: rainbow 2, rivers 2, prettier 3, bridges 2, heaven 2, clouds 1.

Put It in Order

boats sail on the rivers → ships sail on the seas → clouds sail across the sky → bridges on the rivers → the bow overtops the trees → it builds a road from earth to sky.

Ideas to extend the lesson

- Make a rainbow with a glass of water in a sunny window or a garden hose spray.
- Paint a rainbow and label its colors in order.
- Read it with “What Is Pink?”, another Rossetti poem full of colors.

MORE FROM STORYLAND CLASSICS

Find more Christina Rossetti poems with free guides at storylandclassics.com and on YouTube at @StorylandClassics.

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FOR TEACHERS

Standards Alignment

The Rainbow ✦ Common Core State Standards, kindergarten to grade 2

STANDARDS	WHAT CHILDREN PRACTICE	WHERE IN THIS GUIDE
RL.K.1 RL.1.1 RL.2.1	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	Let's Talk and Yes or No?; Let's Talk
RL.K.2 RL.1.2	Retell stories and poems, including key details, and show understanding of their message.	Put It in Order and Retell
RL.K.3 RL.1.3	Identify and describe characters, settings and major events.	Let's Talk and Put It in Order
RL.K.4 RL.2.4	Understand words and phrases, including rhyme, rhythm and words that appeal to the senses.	Word Match; Rhyme Hunt (rhyme and repeated lines)
RL.2.5	Recognize types of texts and describe the overall structure (beginning, middle and end).	Put It in Order: beginning, middle and end
RL.1.6 RL.2.6	Identify who is speaking and use a different voice for each character when reading aloud.	Who Is Talking?; Read It With Voices
RL.K.10 RL.1.10	Engage in group reading of poems and stories with purpose and understanding.	The Poem and Missing Words; The Poem (reading together)
RF.K.1b RF.K.1d	Understand the organization of print (left to right, top to bottom).	Word Search; ABC Order (letters of the alphabet)
RF.K.2a RF.K.2b	Hear and work with spoken words, rhymes and syllables.	Rhyme Hunt and Make New Rhymes; Clap the Syllables
RF.K.3c RF.1.3	Read common high-frequency words by sight.	Word Search and Missing Words; Word Search
RF.1.4a RF.1.4b RF.2.4b	Read aloud with accuracy, appropriate rate and expression.	Missing Words (read with purpose); Read It With Voices and Read It Three Times
SL.K.1 SL.1.1	Take part in conversations about the text with classmates and adults.	Let's Talk and Meet the Poet (discussion); Let's Talk (discussion)
SL.K.2	Ask and answer questions about a text read aloud or presented through media.	Read-aloud video (QR code)
SL.K.6 SL.1.6	Speak audibly and express ideas clearly.	Read It With Voices and Learn It by Heart; Learn It by Heart (recite)
L.K.1a L.1.1 L.1.1a	Print upper- and lowercase letters and use common position words.	Handwriting Practice; ABC Order (alphabetize words)
L.K.2a L.1.2b	Use capital letters and end punctuation.	Handwriting checklist
L.K.4 L.1.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown words and phrases.	Word Match
L.K.5a	Sort words into categories, connect words to real life and act out shades of meaning.	Word Sort
W.K.1 W.1.1	Use drawing and writing to share an opinion and give a reason.	My Favorite Part
W.K.2	Use a combination of drawing, dictating and writing to compose informative texts.	Try It
W.1.8	With guidance and support, recall information from experiences or gather information to answer a question.	Try It

Codes are Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. Find free read-alouds and guides at storylandclassics.com.