

The Dreaded Drought



Layla Boehm
Narrabri Public School



Enviro-Stories

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by PeeKdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area.

www.envirostories.com.au

Cotton Research and Development Corporation

Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC) is a partnership between the Australian Government and the Australian cotton industry. CRDC invests in and manages a portfolio of research, development and extension projects that seek to enhance the environmental, social and economic values associated with cotton production systems for the benefit of cotton industry participants, regional communities and the Australian people.

www.crdc.com.au

The Dreaded Drought

Author: Layla Boehm

Teacher: Mrs. Quirk

School: Narrabri Public School

This book has been published as part of the 2019 Our Farming Community Enviro-Stories program. Students used their imagination to write and illustrate stories that highlight the importance of where our food and fibre comes from. This program was supported by the Cotton Research and Development Corporation.

© Cotton Research and Development Corporation 2019

This publication has been prepared as a resource for schools. Schools may copy, distribute and otherwise freely deal with this publication, or any part of it, for any educational purpose, provided that the Cotton Research and Development Corporation is attributed as the owner. This publication cannot be used for commercial gain.

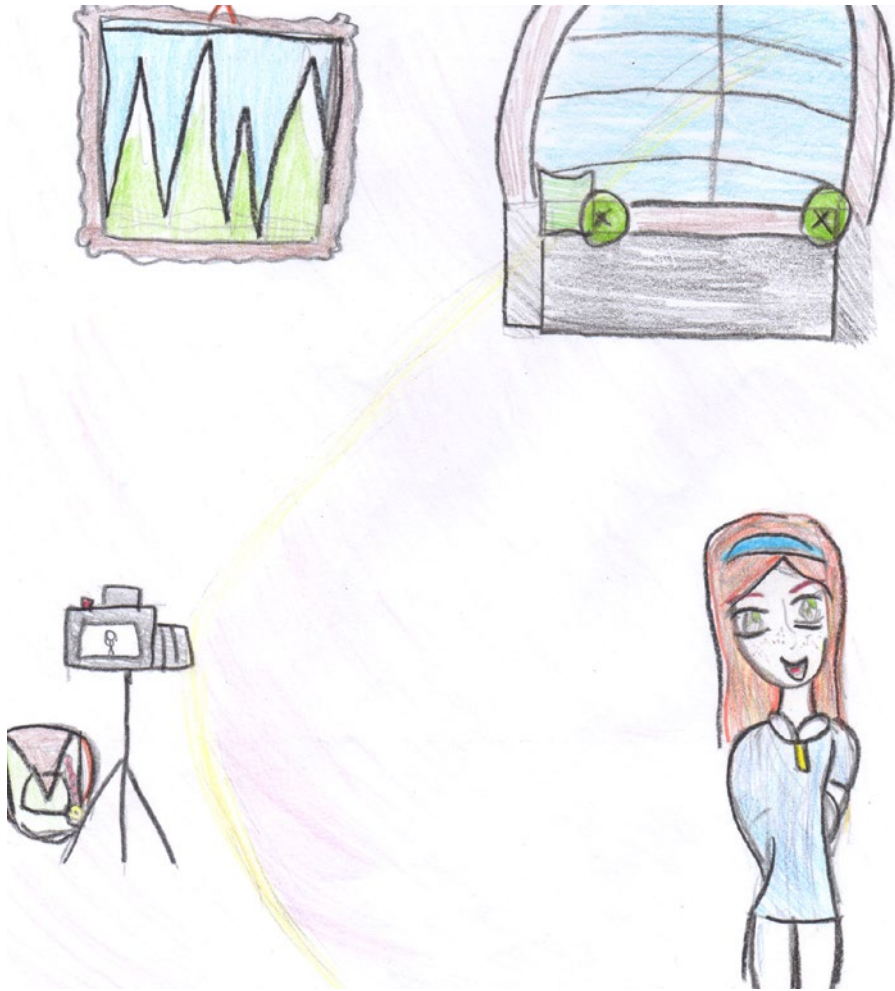
Enviro-Stories is a PeeKdesigns initiative, www.peekdesigns.com.au.

Citation: Boehm, L. 2019. *The Dreaded Drought*. Cotton Research and Development Corporation, NSW.



In an old town in northwest NSW in Australia, there is a family of five that were all being greatly affected by the 'dreaded drought' (in their own words).





"Hello, my name is..." *Sniff, hic, sob!*

"My name is..." *Hic, sob, sniff!*

"MUM I'M TRYING TO DO MY VIDEO PROJECT!
Anyway, my name is Jill and this is my video on how
the drought is affecting everyday life in our farming
community."



Hic, sob, hic, sniff!

"MUM STOP CRYING!" I said, annoyed at the interruptions.

"I c-can't s-stop J-Jill. S-sorry it's th-the dreaded drought. Things are so bad in the region that it means I have to close down our shop," explained Mum through her tears.

Hic, sniff, sob!



"Oh that's terrible. I'm sorry mum," I said feeling really bad about yelling at her. "Maybe you can help me with my project on how the drought is affecting people."

"OK Jill, I think it may be a good idea to ask the rest of the family over for dinner and you can interview them as well," Mum said a little shakily.





A few hours later our long table was filled with our extended family who lived, worked and farmed in the area.

After a nice meal, when the family was full to the brim with turkey, I decided to ask them for help on my video report.

“Hey, would you guys like to help me with my video report on how the drought is affecting everyday life,” I asked tentatively.

“We thought it would do us all some good to reflect and discuss the issues,” Mum added in support.

“Um, OK, sweetie whenever you’re ready,” replied Uncle Tony.



Cotton research centre



After a couple of minutes setting up the camera I said, "Ready? Who wants to start?"

"I will!" squeaked Aunty Suzie-Maya.

"On 3, 2, 1..." I counted down, "Hi, my name is Jill and this is my report looking at how the dreaded drought is affecting everyday people. Aunty Suzie tell us, what is your job?"

"I work at the cotton research institute centre," replied my Auntie.

"Next question. Does this weather effect your job and your family?"

Auntie Suzie-Maya explained, "Well, too much rain can be a problem because when the rain comes the cotton gets wet so they can't harvest."

She continued, "But drought is the worst thing that can happen. When we are in drought the dirt is too dry, which means the plants can't get enough moisture and therefore do not grow as good. Many farmers are left with very little or no crops to harvest, which ends up creating a shortage of cotton."

Auntie Suzie finished by saying, "this affects the amount of money for our research, the farmers and the whole community."





"OK who's next?" after thanking Auntie Suzie.

"I'll go," said Uncle Toby.

"Where do you work and how is the drought affecting you?" I asked.

"I work in a chemist," he replied. "And yes the drought causes us problems as well. See, we need the oils and vitamins from the crops to make medicines. Otherwise things cost a lot more bringing them from other places. The drought also means that people leave the area to look for work which makes it very hard for all of the businesses."



Slowly and surely we moved around the table and everyone took their turn to be interviewed. There were several farmers, labourers, business owners, a teacher and even a local policeman. They all had their stories about how the drought affected them personally.

Although things were tough at the moment, they all seemed happy to be involved in my report. They said it was a great idea because it brought them together to talk about their problems and support each other.

Eventually, it was my mother's turn.

"Thanks, now Mum, it's your turn."

"Ok Jilly, ask away."

"So, tell us a bit about yourself."

"Umm, my name is Lily. I'm twenty-eight, my favourite colour is blue and..." Mum said as everyone laughed.

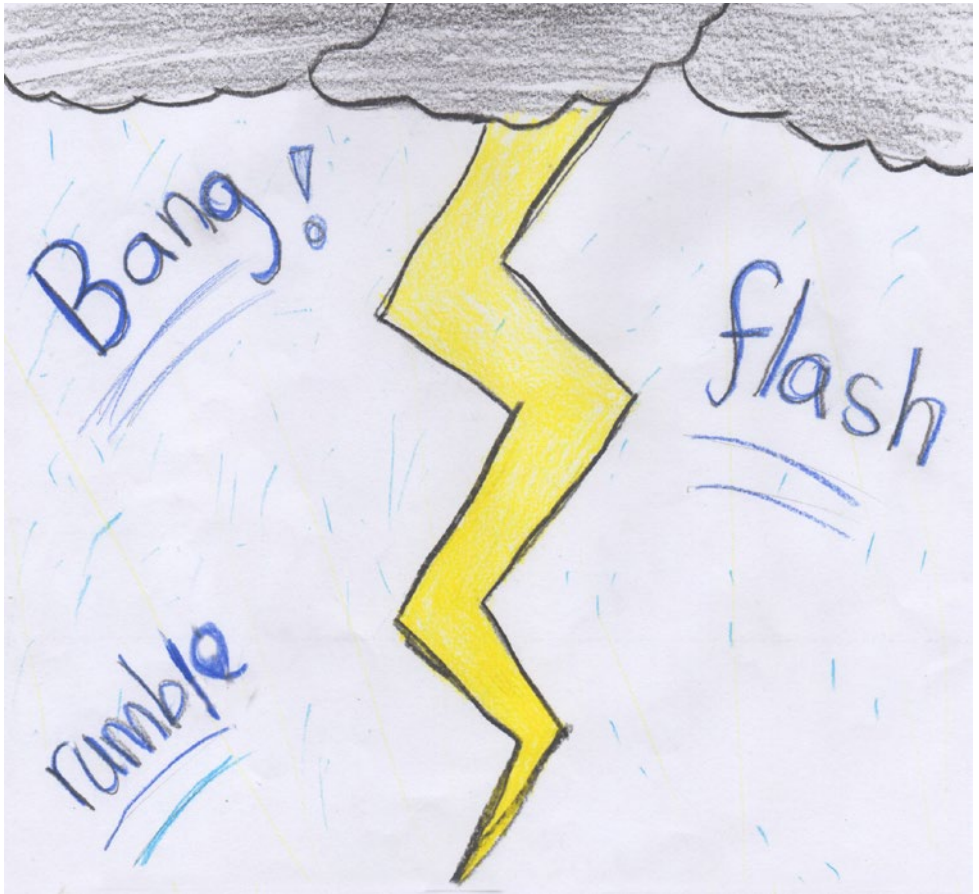




"Stop being silly MUM! What's your job and how does the drought affect you?"

"I own a kennel," Mum started more seriously, "The drought greatly affects the income that crops and stock can bring to the area. This can end in shortages of normal day things which in the long run affects everyone's jobs and life."

She continued, "If people do not have money to spend in the local community, businesses like mine might have to shut because we can't pay our bills. Every business that shuts is a loss to the community!"



BANG! RUMBLE! pitter-patter pitter-patter pitter-patter pitter-patter.

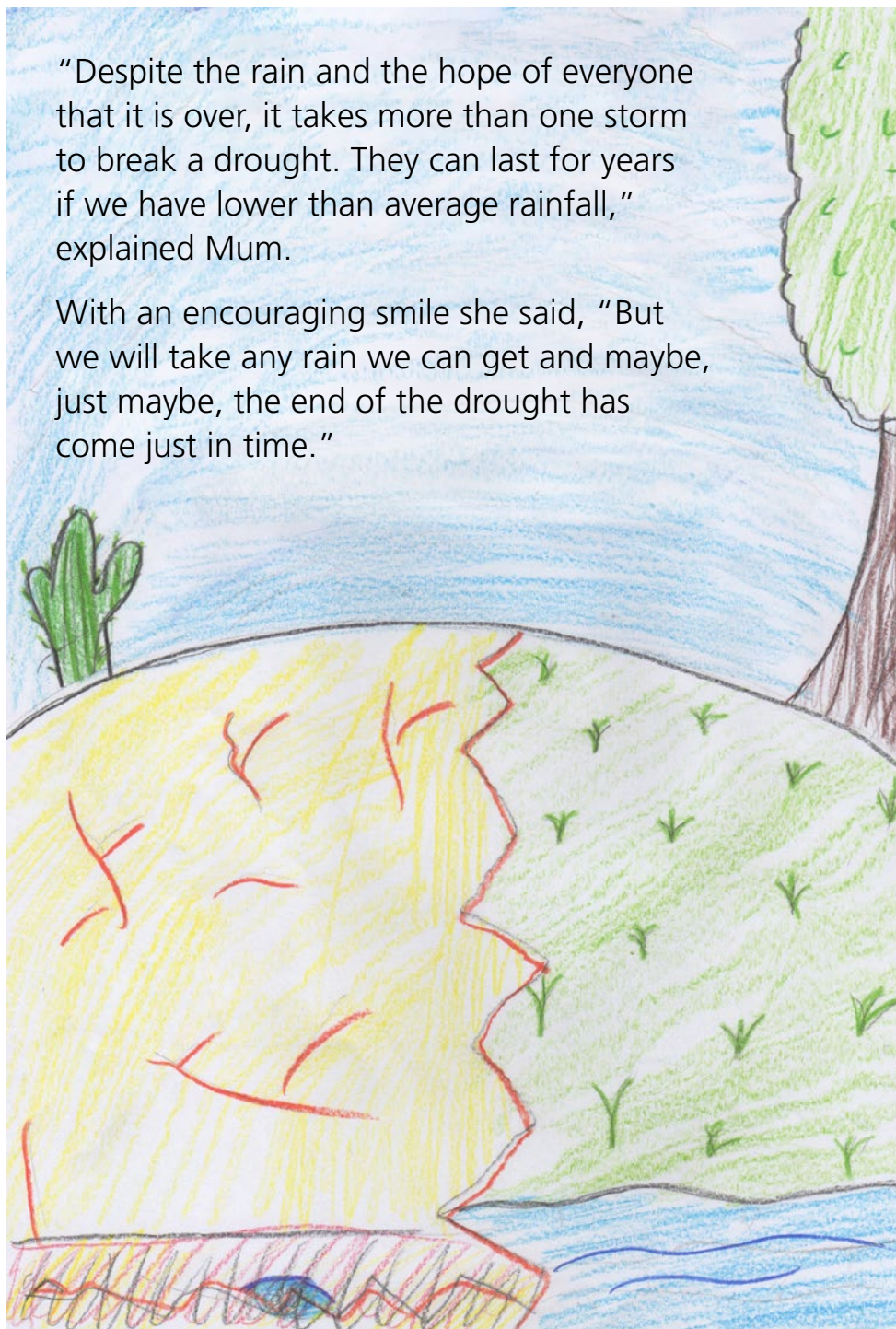
“Oh my, is that rain?” everyone screamed at the same time, for it had been four years since it had rained much at all.

Pitter-patter, pitter-patter, pitter patter.

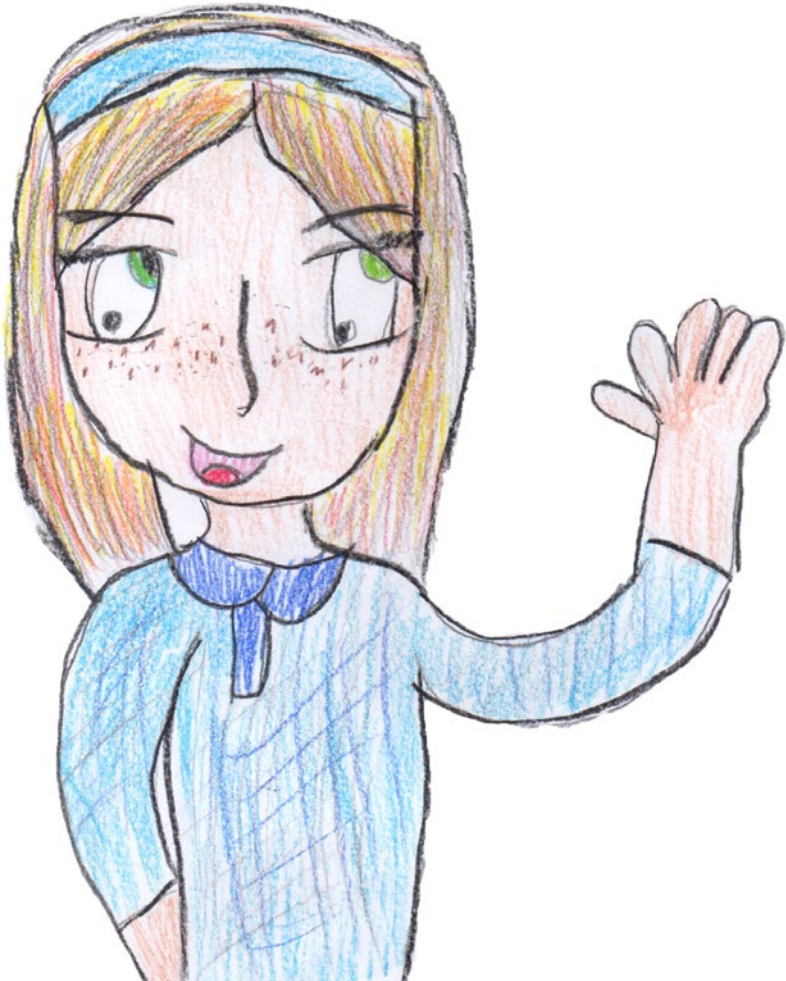
“Mum, this means you don’t have to close down, everything can go back to normal!”

“Despite the rain and the hope of everyone that it is over, it takes more than one storm to break a drought. They can last for years if we have lower than average rainfall,” explained Mum.

With an encouraging smile she said, “But we will take any rain we can get and maybe, just maybe, the end of the drought has come just in time.”



“That’s all folks, thanks for listening to my report and goodbye!” I finished, happy with knowing that not only had I completed my homework, but that I helped our family come together and support each other.





Layla Boehm
Narrabri Public School, Year 6 2019



CRDC
COTTON RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

