



# Tornado Poetry

In ***Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs***, if you didn't like the days' weather, you didn't eat.

Real weather might not affect your day or your daily meals as much as the unique weather conditions of Chewandswallow, but most people do have strong feelings about weather. Some love hot, sunny days; others enjoy gentle spring rain. Some people complain about snow and cold; others dislike thunderstorms.

Talk with your child about his feelings about different types of weather. Encourage him to offer descriptions of how different types of weather look, smells, feel and sounds. Looking at nonfiction books about weather may stimulate thinking. Together, write down his ideas.

Now encourage him to use his brainstorm to create an alliterative poem about his most favorite or least favorite weather. Alliteration is the repetition of initial consonant sound in two or more neighboring words or syllables, such as "the wintry wind whistles." Talk with your child about other examples of alliteration that he's likely encountered in brand names and advertising — like Best Buy, Red Robin, Chuck E. Cheese's, Krispy Kreme — and why the alliteration helps make words and phrases memorable. Alliterative words twist the tongue and are fun to read and say! A poem full of alliteration is like a tiny tornado in your mouth.

Offer your child paper and pencil and have him write a poem that is at least five lines long and uses alliteration at least three times. Read his poem aloud or record him reading it if possible so he can appreciate the repetition of sounds and hear the quickness and intensity alliteration adds to his writing.

## **Waiting for the Sound of Thunder**

While the sounds of a thunderstorm can be frightening for some children, most kids love to make noise of their own! Ask your child what he would do if he had the job of making special sound effects for a movie about weather. Have him gather kitchen and household items that he thinks could imitate the sounds of rain falling on the roof, wind, hail, rushing or splashing water, and thunder and lightning. Then let him make the sounds for you to see if you can correctly guess which weather effect it is. Talk with your child about what really makes the noises of weather. Is it the rain or the object the rain strikes? Does weather sound different in different places?

**Variation:** If you have a smart phone or tablet, let your child try to imitate weather sounds using a musical instrument app. Or use real instruments if available.