

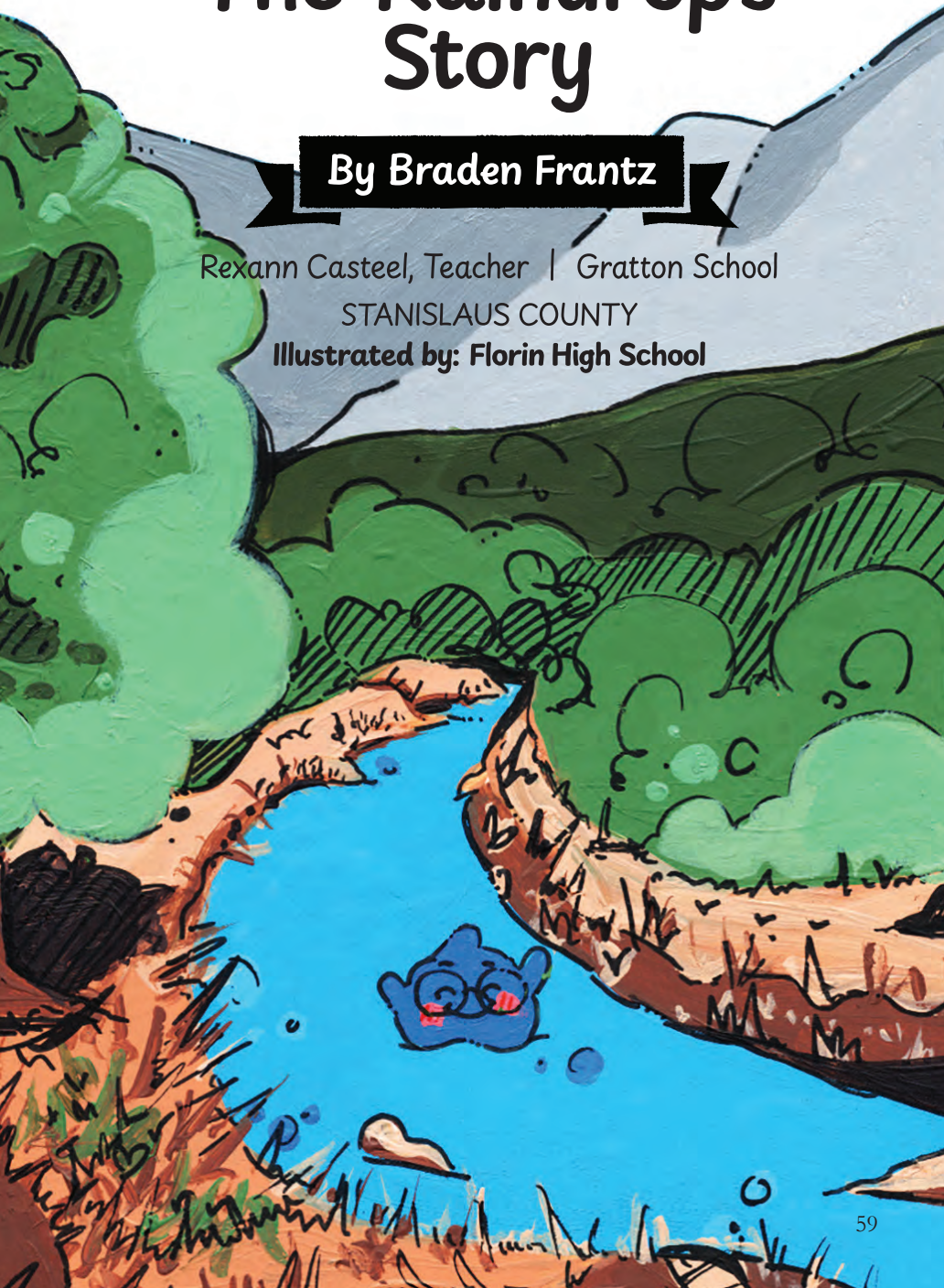
The Raindrop's Story

By Braden Frantz

Rexann Casteel, Teacher | Gratton School

STANISLAUS COUNTY

Illustrated by: Florin High School

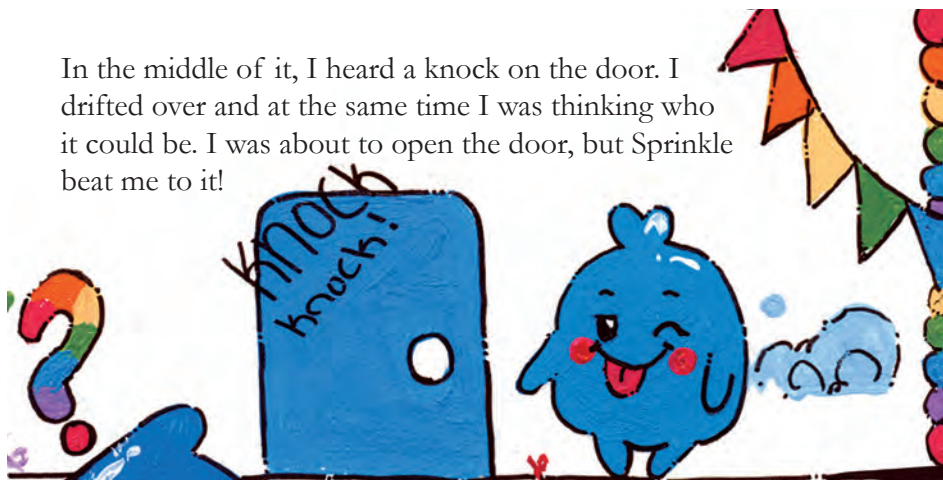


The air was wet and dewy. Well, it always is since I'm in a cloud! I'm Blobby, a raindrop. My Aunt Dew and Uncle Splatter are here in cloud 6389. So are my parents, Blob and Tear. I have five other driplets—Aqua, Slippie, Dribble, Trickle, and the favorite, Sprinkle.

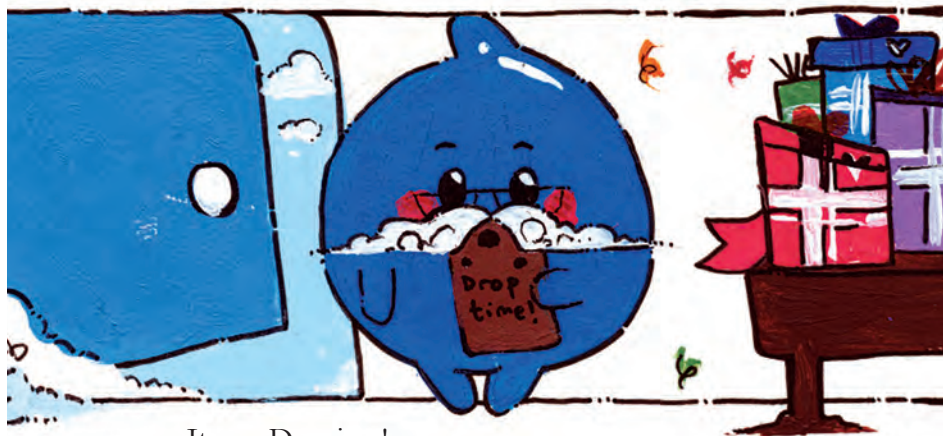
Today is Aunt Dew's birthday. We raindrops love to be decked out. The cloud was decorated with balloons, streamers, and at least two pounds of glitter. The table of presents was stacked high up to the ceiling with boxes, bags, and everything in between. The DJ announced it was time for cake. We all gathered around the table and jumped into the first verse of "Drippy Birthday."



In the middle of it, I heard a knock on the door. I drifted over and at the same time I was thinking who it could be. I was about to open the door, but Sprinkle beat me to it!



She opened the door with a flourish. Sometimes she's a showoff.



It was Dropicer!

"Good evening, Dropicer," said my dad, Blob.

"Good evening, sir. For most of you here, it is time for you to drop," said Dropicer.

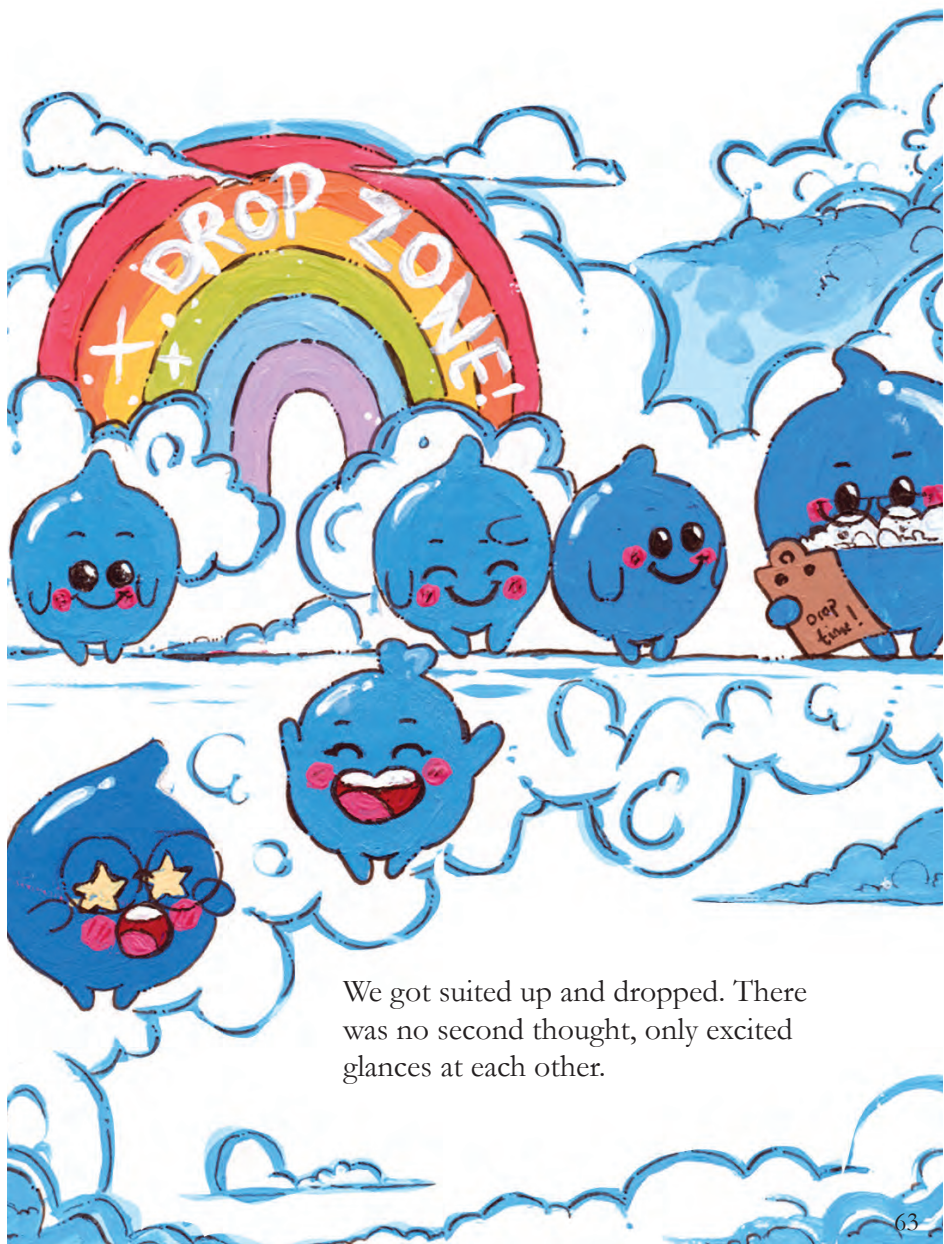
"Oh great," said Blob nervously.

Dropicer started announcing the names off his clipboard.

“Dew, Aqua, Trickle, Sprinkle, and Blob, please come with me to the drop-off zone,” Dropicer droned. We all started hugging each other and said our farewells.



Then we walked with Dropicer in a single file line. No one said anything. This is one of my favorite parts of the water cycle. Before we knew it we were in the drop zone.



We got suited up and dropped. There was no second thought, only excited glances at each other.

I fell and experienced something I have never felt before.

My heart was literally in my eyes. I screamed for dear life.

I closed my eyes and woke up in Lake Don Pedro in Tuolumne County. I opened my eyes and I only saw blue and brown. Wait, there was also a dam for Lake Don Pedro. After a while I saw something coming towards me. It was a boat with some people on it. They were also wakesurfing behind it. Then it zoomed by me.



After that encounter, I felt something pulling me down.
I submerged and went down a pipe. I then went through
something that spun me around, called a turbine.

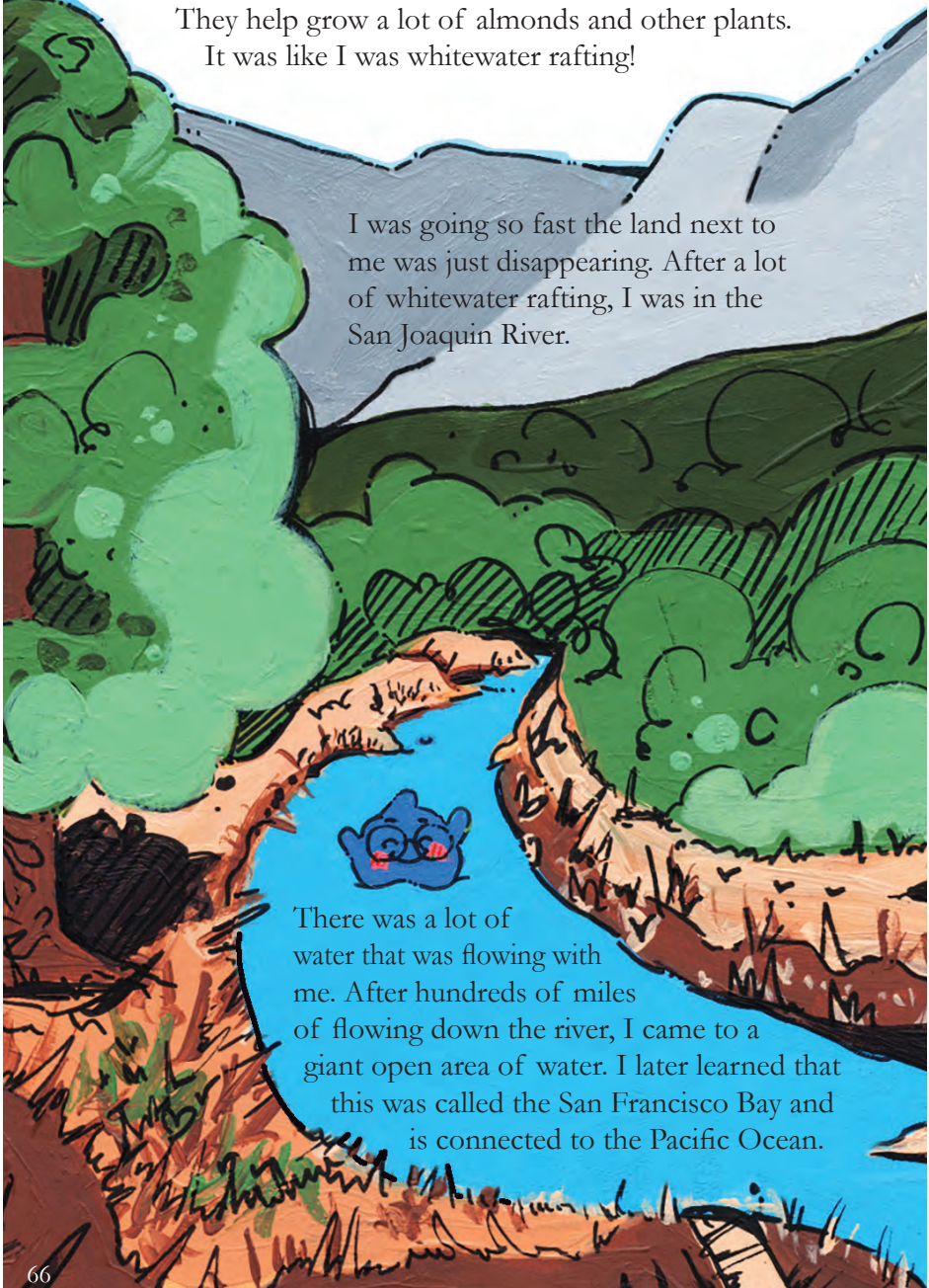


This is hydroelectric energy,
which is energy that is created
from water. This energy supplies
one-fifth of California's power.

Suddenly, I got flung out of a tube and into a river. This river is called the Tuolumne River. This river flows for 50 miles where it then connects with the San Joaquin River. These two rivers provide a lot of water for agriculture in California.

They help grow a lot of almonds and other plants.

It was like I was whitewater rafting!




I was going so fast the land next to me was just disappearing. After a lot of whitewater rafting, I was in the San Joaquin River.

There was a lot of water that was flowing with me. After hundreds of miles of flowing down the river, I came to a giant open area of water. I later learned that this was called the San Francisco Bay and is connected to the Pacific Ocean.

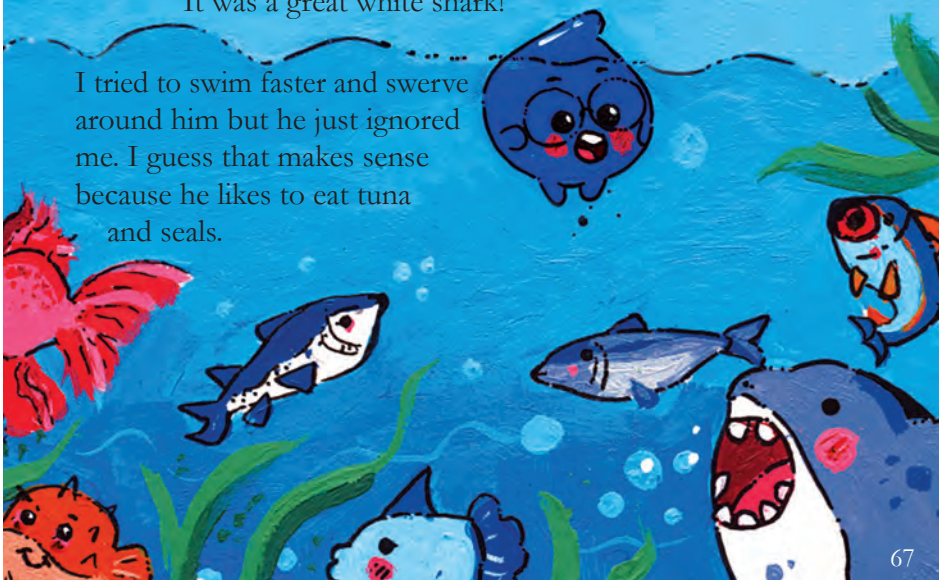
The Pacific Ocean is the largest ocean in the world.

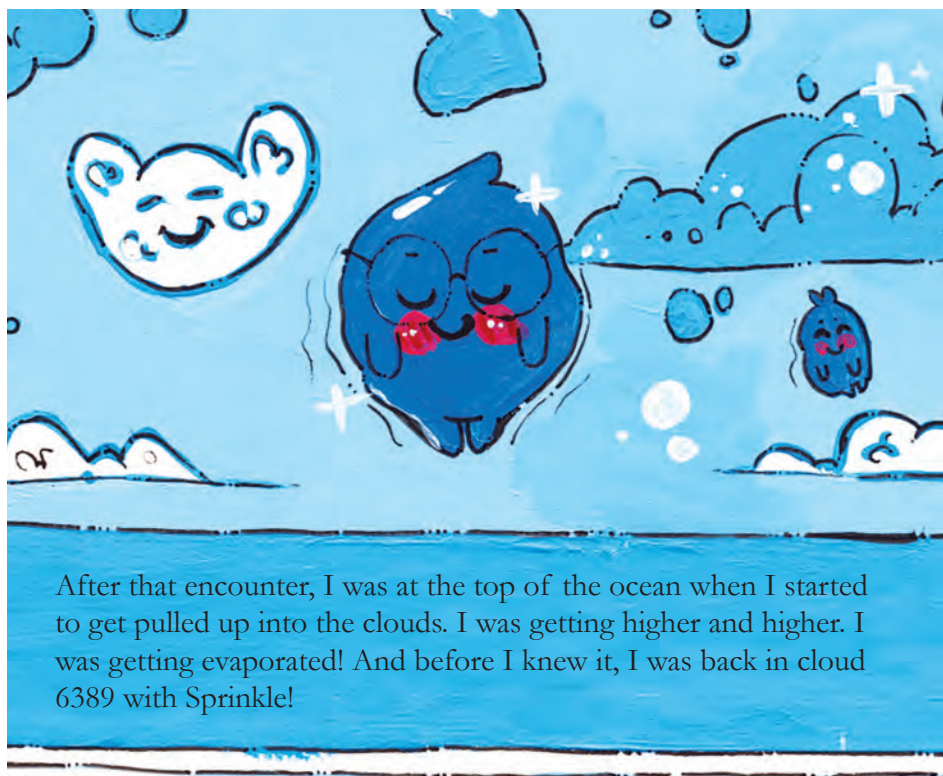
I saw something I have never seen before. There was a city in the background and there were so many different types of fish under me. There were chinook salmon, Pacific herring, and sunfish. There were many other fish that I saw. Then I saw boats and many people on them again.



I saw some boats that looked gigantic. These are called cargo ships. I was going with the current when I felt something under me. I looked down and guess what it was? It was a great white shark!

I tried to swim faster and swerve around him but he just ignored me. I guess that makes sense because he likes to eat tuna and seals.



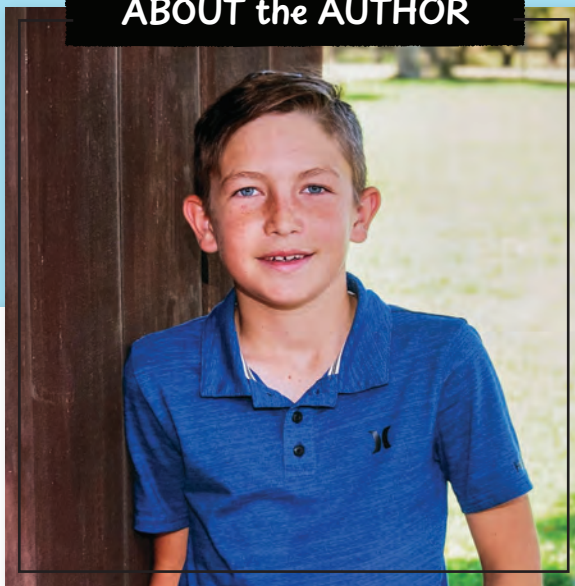


After that encounter, I was at the top of the ocean when I started to get pulled up into the clouds. I was getting higher and higher. I was getting evaporated! And before I knew it, I was back in cloud 6389 with Sprinkle!

None of my parents were there. It was just Sprinkle and me in the cloud. This is called the water cycle.



ABOUT the AUTHOR



Braden Frantz

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There is a lot of talk about water in Braden's home! His father serves on an irrigation board in Stanislaus County. While it was initially challenging for Braden to find a story idea, those conversations about the importance of water, especially for California's agricultural bounty, resulted in "The Raindrop's Story." Braden enjoyed researching fun facts, such as the length of the San Joaquin River. He hopes readers learn about the water cycle and how hydropower works.

ABOUT the ILLUSTRATOR



Djefterline Jean Philippe

Florin High School
Alexandra Pease, Art Teacher

Patience and perseverance were essential to Djefterline's illustration process.

The high school junior started with researching and learning about the water cycle and developing the main character. Dividing up the story visually proved challenging at first, but once she decided where each scene would start and end, the illustration process materialized. After referencing online images of cartoon water cycles, rivers, lakes and turbines, she started sketching the scenes. Next, it was time to paint! Using acrylic paint, Djefterline enjoyed punctuating her illustrations with pops of color, the final step in making "The Raindrop's Story" a vibrantly visual tale.