

Raining cats and dogs 英国迎来新一轮雨天

Vocabulary: *weather* 形容天气的词汇

Get into conversation with someone from Britain and they will invariably mention the weather.

It plays an important role in people's lives and determines their mood. But there is one **climatic condition** that is bound to make us complain – the rain.

Britain is currently **splashing** and squelching its way through probably the wettest June on record. Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised as the UK is used to the wet stuff, coming in all forms from light **drizzle** to a heavy downpour.



With so many outdoor events and festivals taking place this summer you would think all the British want is a long **spell** of warm sunshine. But London's Olympic opening ceremony next month will see fake clouds hovering over the stadium providing a dampening just in case the real stuff fails to rain on the parade.

But despite our familiarity with **precipitation** our vocabulary to describe it is limited. The Inuit people allegedly have 50 words to describe snow because they see so much of it, although Geoff Pullman, a linguist from Edinburgh University says "...the idea is neither empirically true nor practically necessary... as humans we experience lots of variety in everyday life but we don't try to bring it under linguistic observation."

Given that, the British could be forgiven for having just a handful of words. However colloquial English gives **meteorological** terms a bit more colour. A few drops of rain is described as *spitting* and one of the most descriptive phrases for heavy rain is *it's raining stair-rods*. There's also *chucking it down* and **bucketing down** which conjures up a picture of some heavenly creature emptying buckets of water from above, **drenching** the miserable folk below. But the weather you might want to most avoid is when it's **raining cats and dogs** – a rather cruel way of describing torrential rain.

词汇表请参看答案与词汇部分

Quiz 测验

阅读短文并回答问题。

1. According to the article, what weather do British people complain most about?
2. In terms of rainfall, what is June most likely to be?
3. What will hover above the Olympic stadium during the opening ceremony?
4. True, false or not given: *The Inuit people have 50 words to describe rain.*
5. What colloquial expression is used when there are just a few drops of rain?

Exercise 练习

请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。从每个表格中选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. John was walking in the mountains when it started to rain and he got completely _____.

dunking	drenched	drowning	downpour
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2. Following a _____ of sunny weather, all the strawberries had ripened and were ready for picking.

spell	spit	sprout	shine
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3. When the rain stopped, the little boy wanted to _____ in the puddles in his new boots.

shout	splash	drenching	splashing
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4. The village fair had to be cancelled after it started _____.

bucketing down	dunking	drizzle down	cats and dogs
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5. It started _____ so John had to go and buy an umbrella.

stair-rods	precipitation	drizzling	spits
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Answers and Glossary 答案与词汇

Quiz 小测验

1. According to the article, what weather do British people complain most about? The British complain most about the rain.
2. In terms of rainfall, what is June most likely to be? Probably the wettest June on record.
3. What will hover above the Olympic stadium during the opening ceremony? Fake rain clouds.
4. True, false or not given: *The Inuit people have 50 words to describe rain.* False. The Inuit people allegedly have 50 words to describe snow.
5. What colloquial expression is used when there are just a few drops of rain? It's spitting with rain.

Exercise 练习

1. John was walking in the mountains when it started to rain and he got completely drenched.
2. Following a spell of sunny weather, all the strawberries had ripened and were ready for picking.
3. When the rain stopped, the little boy wanted to splash in the puddles in his new boots.
4. The village fair had to be cancelled after it started raining cats and dogs.
5. It started drizzling so John had to go and buy an umbrella.

Glossary 词汇表

climatic condition	天气状况
splashing	溅水的声音
drizzle	小雨
spell (of weather)	一段时间
precipitation	雨水
meteorological	气象的
(raining) stair-rods	倾盆大雨
bucketing down	大雨倾盆
drenching	全身浸透
raining cats and dogs	倾盆大雨