

The SKY  
is Not  
BLUE



Joy Jones  
illustrated by Sawyer Cloud

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free spirit  
PUBLISHING®



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Thanks to Millay  
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story was born.



Ask Robert to name his favorite color. "All of them!" he'd shout. He liked every shade of green he saw in a tree, bush, or backyard lawn. The bold, bright beauty of a red fire engine made his eyes light up, and the funny, sunny yellow of an egg yolk put a grin on his face.



Robert's teacher saw things differently.  
Mrs. Murphy made Robert think of a  
marching band without the music or the fun.



She wasn't mean, but she liked things to  
be just so. "Things need to be neat and in  
order, in order to learn neat, new things,"  
she'd say. She wanted her students to sit  
up straight in their seats. Even the trash  
in her wastebasket seemed to fall into  
formation.



## Draw the Sky

What color is the sky for *you*? Draw the sky whatever way you want! Or maybe you'd like to write a poem describing the sky, or make up a dance about it. Get creative and depict the sky the way you see or imagine it.



## Questions to Think and Talk About

- Why does Robert say the sky is not blue?
- Why do you think Mrs. Murphy wants Robert to make the sky blue in his pictures?
- On the last day of school, what do you think Robert means when he says the sky is bigger than blue?
- How does Mrs. Murphy feel after she sees Robert's blue sky? Why do you think she feels that way?
- When have you disagreed with your teacher, or someone else? How did you handle the situation?
- What are some things you like to draw? Why do you enjoy drawing those things?



### A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Children learn many things from their teachers—yet sometimes teachers can learn from students! In this story, Robert holds fast to what he knows and believes. In the end, this leads Mrs. Murphy to open her eyes to all the colors and wonders that the sky—and her students—have to offer.

## Did You Know?

### FUN FACTS ABOUT THE SKY

- Clouds are floating containers of water. They look like light cotton puffs, but they're very heavy, carrying millions of pounds of water.
- The colors in a rainbow appear in the following order: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. (One way to remember this is to think of this name: Roy G. Biv.)
- Have you ever seen a moonbow? That's a rainbow that appears at night. It doesn't happen often, but if the moon is very bright and full, reflected light from the moon may cause a moonbow.
- Rain isn't shaped like a teardrop. Its actual shape is flatter, more like a hamburger bun.
- Every 60 seconds there are 2,000 thunderstorms happening somewhere on Planet Earth. The average thunderstorm carries about the same level of energy as 10 atomic bombs!
- The amount of time it takes for light from the sun to reach Planet Earth is about 8 minutes.
- To learn more fun facts about the sky and the sun, visit [kids.kiddle.co/Sky](http://kids.kiddle.co/Sky).

### WHY DO WE SAY THE SKY IS BLUE?

On a bright, clear day, the sky looks blue. This is because of how sunlight reaches Planet Earth. Light comes from the sun in waves of rainbow colors. All the color waves come through the atmosphere to reach Earth. The blue waves are shorter and more scattered than the others, and so they are more visible to us. The other longer waves are not scattered as much, so we don't see them. Our eyes see those shorter waves and see . . . blue!

### WHY IS THE SKY DIFFERENT COLORS AT DIFFERENT TIMES?

The air has many different gases. The two main ones are oxygen and nitrogen. Other gases can move through the atmosphere too. When there are more gases in the atmosphere, more light from the sun is scattered. This makes the skies more colorful.

### WHY IS THE SKY SOMETIMES WHITE OR GRAY?

When the sky is white, that white is reflecting light off of clouds. When the sky is gray, it can also be from light reflecting off of clouds. Heavy gray clouds are dark because they hold lots and lots of water.

To learn more about the sky and all its colors, visit *Curious Kids at The Conversation*: [theconversation.com/curious-kids-why-is-the-sky-blue-and-where-does-it-start-81165](http://theconversation.com/curious-kids-why-is-the-sky-blue-and-where-does-it-start-81165).

