



# Water

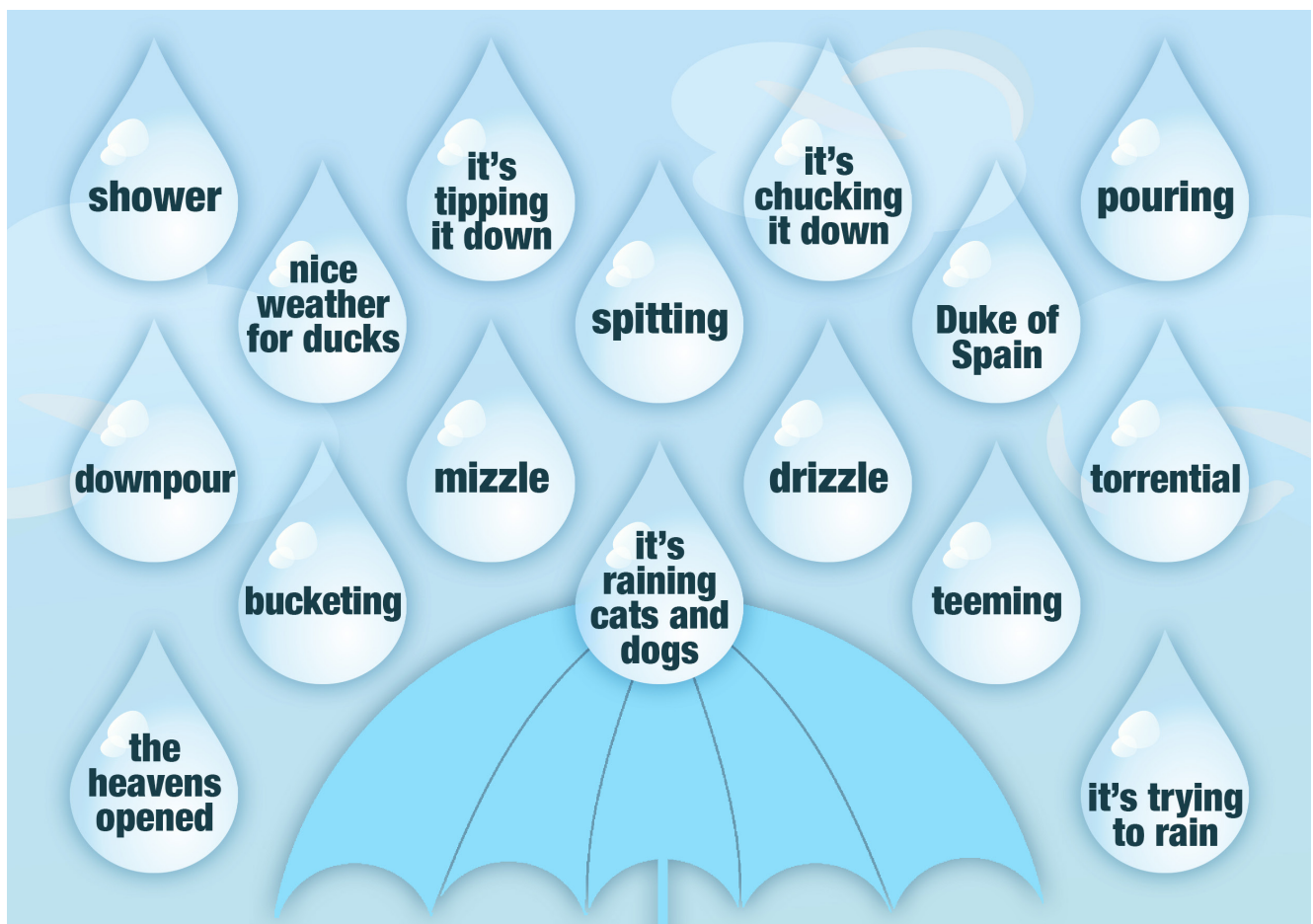
## Raining cats and dogs



Britain has quite a reputation for rain – without it, there would be no lush, green fields or flower-filled gardens. Not every part of Britain gets a lots of rain though – East Anglia and the South East are generally quite dry and often suffer drought. There are even some famous dry gardens, such as Beth Chatto's Gravel Garden in Colchester. Wales, Scotland and the West of England do get a lot of rain though and the gardens in these parts are especially green and luscious.

The thing about British weather is that it's really quite unpredictable at times. On Monday you might enjoy sunny, cloudless skies and 35°C temperatures, but a day or two later it may be just 12°C and raining non-stop. And the rain? Well, that varies too, from very light rain all the way to monsoon-like weather!

No wonder the British have so many different words and phrases to describe the rain. Some well known ones are found in the grid below, but can you work out which ones are use to describe rain, and why? Circle the correct answers then turn over to find out more.





# Water Raining cats and dogs ANSWERS



The words on the previous page are all words and phrases used in Britain to describe rainfall. This is what they mean:

## **Bucketing**

A verb used to describe rain so heavy it seems as if buckets of water are being poured from the sky, as in 'it's still bucketing down'.

## **Chucking it down**

A phrase used to describe very heavy rain; chuck is a verb meaning to throw.

## **Downpour**

A noun meaning a heavy fall of rain, as in 'there was a sudden downpour'.

## **Drizzle**

A noun meaning light or fine rain. Also a verb used to mean light rain, as in 'it's drizzling' or 'it drizzled'.

## **Duke of Spain**

An East London cockney rhyming slang term for rain (Spain rhymes with rain).

## **Mizzle**

A noun meaning light or fine rain accompanied by a mist. Also a verb used to mean light rain on a misty day, as in 'it's mizzling' or 'it mizzled'.

## **Nice weather for ducks**

A humorous phrase used to mean that the rain must be good for something.

## **Pouring**

A verb used of rain meaning to fall heavily, as in 'it's pouring with rain'.

## **Raining cats and dogs**

A phrase used to describe heavy rain. One theory is that the phrase originated in the 18th century when cats and dogs often slept on thatched roofs and would slide off when it rained heavily.

## **Shower**

A noun meaning a short and usually light fall of rain.

## **Spitting**

A verb used to describe light rainfall, as in 'it's spitting outside'.

## **Teeming**

A verb meaning to pour down or fall heavily; used to describe heavy rain, as in 'it's teeming down here'.

## **The heavens (have) opened**

A phrase used to describe sudden or unexpected rainfall.

## **Tipping (it) down**

Used to describe heavy rainfall, tipping is a verb which means to empty out the contents of a container.

## **Torrential**

An adjective used to describe heavy and persistent rain, as in 'it was torrential rain'.

## **Trying to rain**

A phrase used for when the first few spots of rain fall from a sky full of rainclouds.