



Educator & Caregiver Toolkit

Crackle, Crash, Boom, Bang, Bash!

By Zinnia Grace Bloom

A gentle guide for storm worries, calm breathing, brave thoughts, body awareness, caregiver connection, and helping children feel safe when the world feels loud.

Welcome

Crackle, Crash, Boom, Bang, Bash! is a rhythmic, reassuring picture book about a child named Jaden who feels frightened as a storm grows loud and dark. Through counting, breathing, caregiver support, glow sticks, play, and connection, Jaden learns that storms can feel big - but they do not last forever.

This toolkit is designed for classrooms, counseling groups, family read-alouds, libraries, and bedtime conversations. Children do not need to share personal fears. They may answer through the story, drawing, imagination, movement, or quiet reflection.

Best For

- Ages 3-8
- SEL lessons and read-alouds
- Counseling groups
- Weather anxiety and big-feeling conversations
- Breathing practice
- Family calm plans and storm routines

Core Themes

Calm breathing - Brave thoughts - Safety - Caregiver connection - Counting - Body awareness - Naming fear - Play as regulation - Storm preparedness - Hope after hard moments

Adult Reminder

The goal is not to tell children that storms are not scary. The goal is to help them notice fear, feel supported, practice a calm body skill, and remember that big weather and big feelings can pass.

How to Use This Toolkit

- Read slowly and let the rhythm do some of the calming work.
- Pause for one question or one breath at a time.
- Practice the breathing phrase before a storm happens.
- Pair the book with a real safety routine: safe room, flashlight, caregiver plan, and weather updates.

Dialogue Anchors

Use these story moments to connect the book to real-life social-emotional skills. They can become discussion prompts, journal starters, counseling group questions, or calm pauses during read-aloud.

Story Moment	Dialogue / Scene Anchor	SEL Connection
Storm approaches	The storm approaches, and clouds darken with worry and fear.	Children notice early signs of worry and name what is happening.
Window watching	Jaden asks whether the family will survive the night.	Validate fear; separate a feeling from a fact; invite reassurance.
Counting seconds	Jaden counts as lightning strikes and thunder follows.	Counting gives the mind a job and supports regulation.
Power flickers	The lights grow dimmer and Jaden runs for Mom.	Seeking a trusted adult is a healthy coping strategy.
Candles and flashlights	Mom gathers lights and creates a safer feeling space.	Caregiver co-regulation; practical preparation.

More Dialogue Anchors

Story Moment	Dialogue / Scene Anchor	SEL Connection
House goes dark	Jaden feels small in the night.	Fear can feel physical; small bodies need comfort and safety cues.
Garage door will not open	Mom pauses and finds another idea.	Flexible thinking when a first plan does not work.
Glow sticks	Bright, cheery fun fills the night.	Play, color, and light can shift the nervous system.
Storm grows quiet	The storm grows quiet, soft and slow.	Children practice noticing change and relief.
Breathing pages	In through your nose - hold two. Out through your mouth - slow and smooth.	Concrete breathing script for self-management.
Rainbow ending	After the rain, the world feels sweet and new.	Hope, closure, and remembering that storms pass.

Character Growth Map

Character	Begins With	Grows Toward
Jaden	Fear, worry, body alarm, storm thoughts	Calm breathing, counting, play, bravery, trust
Mom	Steady presence, problem solving, warmth	Co-regulation, creative comfort, safety routines
The Storm	Loud, dark, unpredictable	Something children can move through with support
The Home	Dark and uncertain at first	A cozy place with light, games, breath, and connection

Before Reading

Choose one or two warm-up questions. Children may answer aloud, draw, point to a face, or simply think quietly.

- What does your body feel like when thunder is loud?
- What helps you feel safe when the sky gets dark?
- Who is a grown-up you can go to when you feel worried?
- What is one cozy thing you like during rain?
- What do you think it means to have a brave breath?

Tip: Do not push children to share storm fears or past scary experiences. A child can answer from the story or from imagination.

During Reading Prompts

Pages 1-8: The Storm Begins

- What does Jaden notice outside?
- How do the pictures show that the storm feels big?
- What does Jaden do when he feels afraid?
- How could counting help when a sound feels loud?

Pages 9-17: Fear, Darkness, and Finding Mom

- Why does Jaden run to Mom?
- What changes when the lights flicker?
- How does Mom stay calm when the garage door does not open?
- What could a child say when they need help?

During Reading Prompts, continued

Pages 18-24: Light, Play, and Connection

- What surprise does Mom have for Jaden?
- How do the glow sticks change the feeling of the room?
- Why can games and laughter help during a hard moment?
- How does Jaden know he is not alone?

Pages 25-31: After the Storm and Calm Breathing

- What changes outside after the storm?
- What does Jaden learn about storms?
- Try the breathing words together: in through your nose, hold two, out slow and smooth.
- What is Jaden's brave light?

After Reading Discussion

Understanding the Story

- What made the storm feel scary at first?
- What helped Jaden feel calmer?
- What did Mom do that helped?
- How did Jaden change from the beginning to the end?

Real-Life Connection

- What is one thing you can do when a storm feels loud?
- What can you keep in a storm comfort kit?
- How can you ask a grown-up for help?
- What calm sentence can you remember?

Page-by-Page Toolkit

Pages	Focus	Prompt
1-3	The storm approaches; worry begins.	What clues tell Jaden that a storm is coming?
4-6	Jaden names fear and tells Mom.	Why is it brave to say, I am scared?
7-8	Lightning and thunder arrive.	How can counting give your brain something steady to do?
9-13	Lights dim; the house gets dark.	What does Jaden need from Mom right now?
14-17	A first plan does not work; Mom stays flexible.	What can we do when our first idea does not work?
18-21	Glow sticks turn fear into play.	How can light, color, or play help a worried body?

Page-by-Page Toolkit, continued

Pages	Focus	Prompt
22-24	Thunder feels less scary; the lights return.	What changed inside Jaden even before the storm ended?
25-27	Rainbow, relief, and connection.	How does Jaden know the storm has passed?
28-31	Breathing practice and brave light.	Practice the breath together. What does your body notice?
32	Calm breathing page.	Before and after breathing, how does your body feel?
33-34	Caregiver note and resources.	How can adults practice calm with children before a storm?
35-80	Bonus calm activity pages.	Which activity would help you most: breathing, drawing, journaling, counting, or calm words?

SEL Alignment: CASEL 5

Self-Awareness

In the story: Jaden notices worry, fear, shivering, and relief. Skill supported: naming feelings and noticing body cues. Prompt: What did Jaden's body do when he felt scared?

Self-Management

In the story: Jaden counts, breathes, and shifts attention to light, play, and connection. Skill supported: calming strategies and emotional regulation. Prompt: What calm skill did Jaden try?

Social Awareness

In the story: Mom notices Jaden's fear and responds with patience. Skill supported: empathy and attunement. Prompt: How did Mom show she understood Jaden?

Relationship Skills

In the story: Jaden asks for help, stays near Mom, and participates in calming activities together. Skill supported: help-seeking, trust, and shared coping. Prompt: Who can help you when you feel worried?

Responsible Decision-Making

In the story: Mom chooses safe indoor options, light, breathing, and calm connection. Skill supported: making safe, thoughtful choices during storms. Prompt: What is one safe choice to make when thunder starts?

ELA and Counseling Connections

Theme: storms, fear, calm breathing, caregiver support, and remembering that hard moments pass.

Character response: Jaden changes because he is not left alone with fear. Mom offers steady support, makes a plan, and turns the dark moment into a calmer shared experience.

Rhyming and sound: The title and storm words invite children to hear language as playful sound. Students can identify rhymes, repeated sounds, action words, and onomatopoeia such as crackle, crash, boom, bang, and bash.

Narrative writing: Children can write or draw their own weather story using a feeling, a helper, a calm tool, and an ending where the feeling changes.

Counseling use: This book can support conversations about weather anxiety, power outages, bedtime fears, separation worries, sensory sensitivity to loud sounds, and creating a family calm plan.

Suggested group structure

- Read 4-6 pages at a time.
- Pause for one body check: What do you notice in your face, shoulders, belly, or hands?
- Practice one breath together.
- End with one drawing or one calm sentence.

Activities

My Storm Comfort Kit

Children draw or list three things that help them feel safe during loud weather: a flashlight, blanket, stuffed animal, song, grown-up, headphones, book, or favorite game.

Count and Calm

Practice counting slowly from one to five after a pretend lightning flash. Add one slow breath after the count. Keep this playful and never use real storm danger as a game.

Glow Stick Feelings

Use crayons or colored strips of paper. Children choose a color for worried, safe, brave, cozy, and calm. Invite them to make a bracelet of calm colors.

Storm Sound Word Play

Make a list of silly storm sounds: rumble, tumble, splish, splash, crackle, whoosh. Children can clap or drum each sound softly, then lower the volume to practice control.

Rainbow After the Storm

Draw a rainbow and write one thing that feels better after a hard moment passes. Sentence starter: After the storm, I can remember...

More Activities

Brave Breath Practice

Say together: In through your nose - hold two. Out through your mouth - slow and smooth. Repeat three times. Ask: What changed in your body?

Safe Room Map

With an adult, children draw the safest cozy place to go during a storm. Include the grown-up, a light, shoes, blanket, water, or comfort object.

What Mom Did

List or draw helpful grown-up actions from the story: listened, stayed calm, looked for lights, offered a game, breathed with Jaden, gave a hug.

Storm Safety Talk

Children complete three safety ideas with an adult, such as staying inside, moving away from windows, keeping a flashlight nearby, and listening to trusted grown-ups.

Printable Reflection Prompts

- One thing Jaden felt was...
- One thing Mom did to help was...
- When I feel worried, I can...
- A calm sentence I can remember is...
- My brave light looks like...
- Storms feel big, but...

For Sensitive Readers

Some children may relate strongly to Jaden feeling afraid, the lights going out, loud thunder, darkness, or the worry that something bad might happen. These connections can be meaningful, but they should be handled gently.

Helpful adult responses

- That makes sense.
- You do not have to talk about it if you do not want to.
- We can talk about Jaden instead of talking about you.
- Your body is trying to keep you safe.
- Let's take one slow breath together.
- I am here with you.

Avoid saying

- There is nothing to be scared of.
- You are being dramatic.
- Big kids are not afraid of storms.
- Just calm down.
- That storm was not a big deal.

Instead, try

- Storms can feel loud and surprising.
- Your feeling is real, and we can help your body feel safer.
- Let's choose one calm tool.
- We have a plan for what to do.

Family or Classroom Calm Plan

Use this page before storms or during calm weather practice. Children feel safer when they know what will happen and who will help.

Plan Part	What to Decide	Example
Safe place	Where will we go inside?	A cozy room away from windows.
Comfort item	What can the child hold?	Stuffed animal, blanket, book, headphones.
Light plan	What lights are ready?	Flashlight, battery lantern, glow stick.
Sound plan	How can loud thunder feel less overwhelming?	Headphones, song, counting, hand squeeze.
Breath plan	What words will we repeat?	In through your nose, hold two, out slow and smooth.
Grown-up plan	Who will help?	Parent, caregiver, teacher, counselor, librarian.

Storm Safety Note

This story supports emotional calm, but adults should still follow local weather alerts and safety guidance. During real storms, prioritize physical safety first, then use breathing, comfort, and connection.

Extension Activities

Science Connection: Weather Words

Introduce child-friendly vocabulary: cloud, rain, thunder, lightning, wind, rainbow, storm, calm. Invite students to match each word with a picture or movement.

Math Connection: Count the Thunder

Practice counting slowly to five, then backward from five to one. Emphasize that counting is a calming tool, not a way to predict safety.

Art Connection: Before and After

Fold a page in half. On one side, draw the storm at its loudest. On the other, draw the room after Jaden feels calm.

Music Connection: Soft Storm Song

Use quiet tapping, rubbing hands, or soft claps to make rain sounds. Then slowly make the sounds softer to show the storm passing.

Writing Connection: My Calm Words

Children trace or copy: I am safe. I can breathe. Storms do not last forever. My calm, brave light can guide me on.

Closing Reflection

For Children

A storm can be loud. A feeling can be big. But you do not have to face it alone. You can pause, breathe, hold a safe hand, find a little light, and remember that storms pass.

For Adults

Children often borrow calm before they can create it on their own. Repetition, warmth, and simple words help build a sense of safety. The same breathing phrase practiced on a sunny day may become easier to use when thunder arrives.

One More Calm Breath

In through your nose - hold two.

Out through your mouth - slow and smooth.

I can pause. I can breathe. I can feel better.

Thank you for sharing stories that help children feel safe, connected, and brave.