

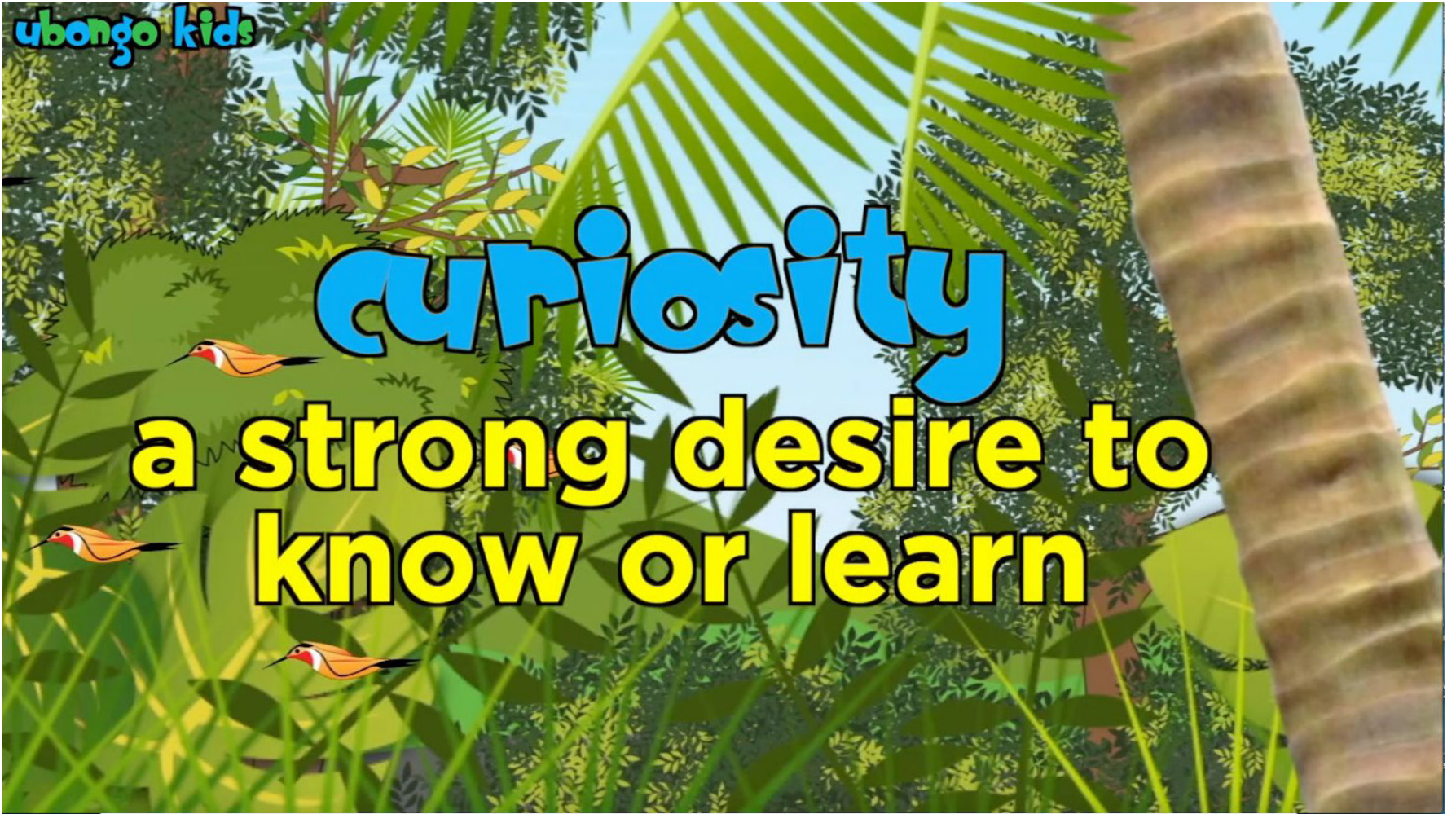
Ebook adapted from the TV series



ubongo kids

by ubongo

curiosity
**a strong desire to
know or learn**





It was a hot day in Kokotoa. Mzee Kigo gave his final instructions to his willing young farmers: Koba, Amani and Kiduchu. They agreed to take care of his farm while he attended a training course to learn new farming techniques.



Kiduchu couldn't help but ask, "You run the most successful farm in Kokotoa. Shouldn't you be teaching, not learning?" Mzee Kigo smiled. "I can't imagine a life without learning," he said as he hopped on the back of a motorbike.



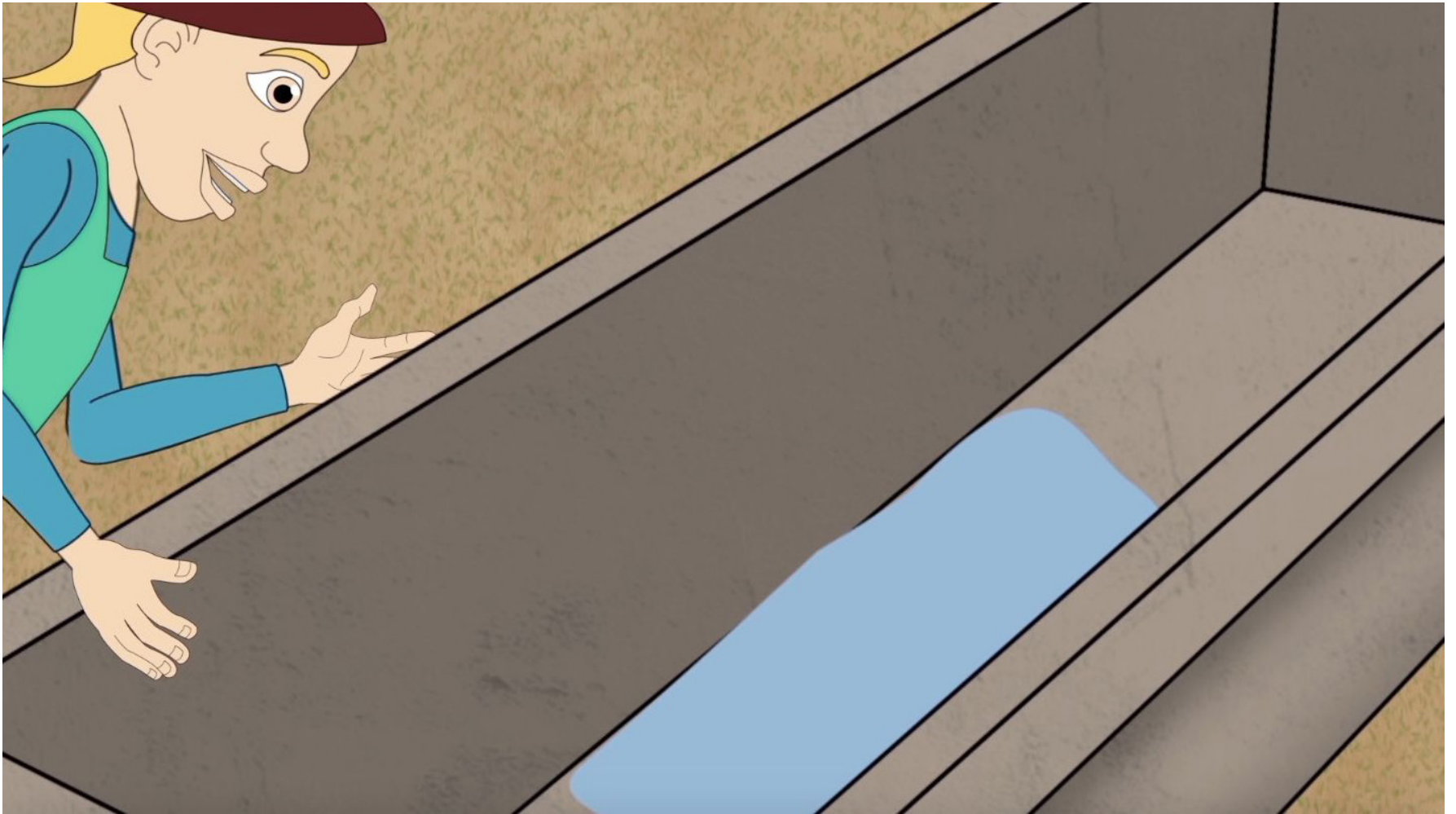
Koba, Amani and Kiduchu started by watering the cabbages, as Mzee Kigo had instructed. But it was hot in the field! They decided to look for a spot to rest.



They rested in the shade of a banana tree, longing for the rainy season. It seemed like years ago since it had rained! They longed to feel those cool wet droplets on their faces.



Koba and Kiduchu fell asleep in the shade. Amani wanted to get back to work though. She headed off to refill the watering cans with water from the trough.



But when Amani arrived at the water troughs, she was shocked to find that the trough they had been using was empty!



She called for her friends to come and look. Kiduchu thought the trough was leaking. Koba suggested that they use one of the other troughs. He pulled the cover back on the second trough; it was full of water.



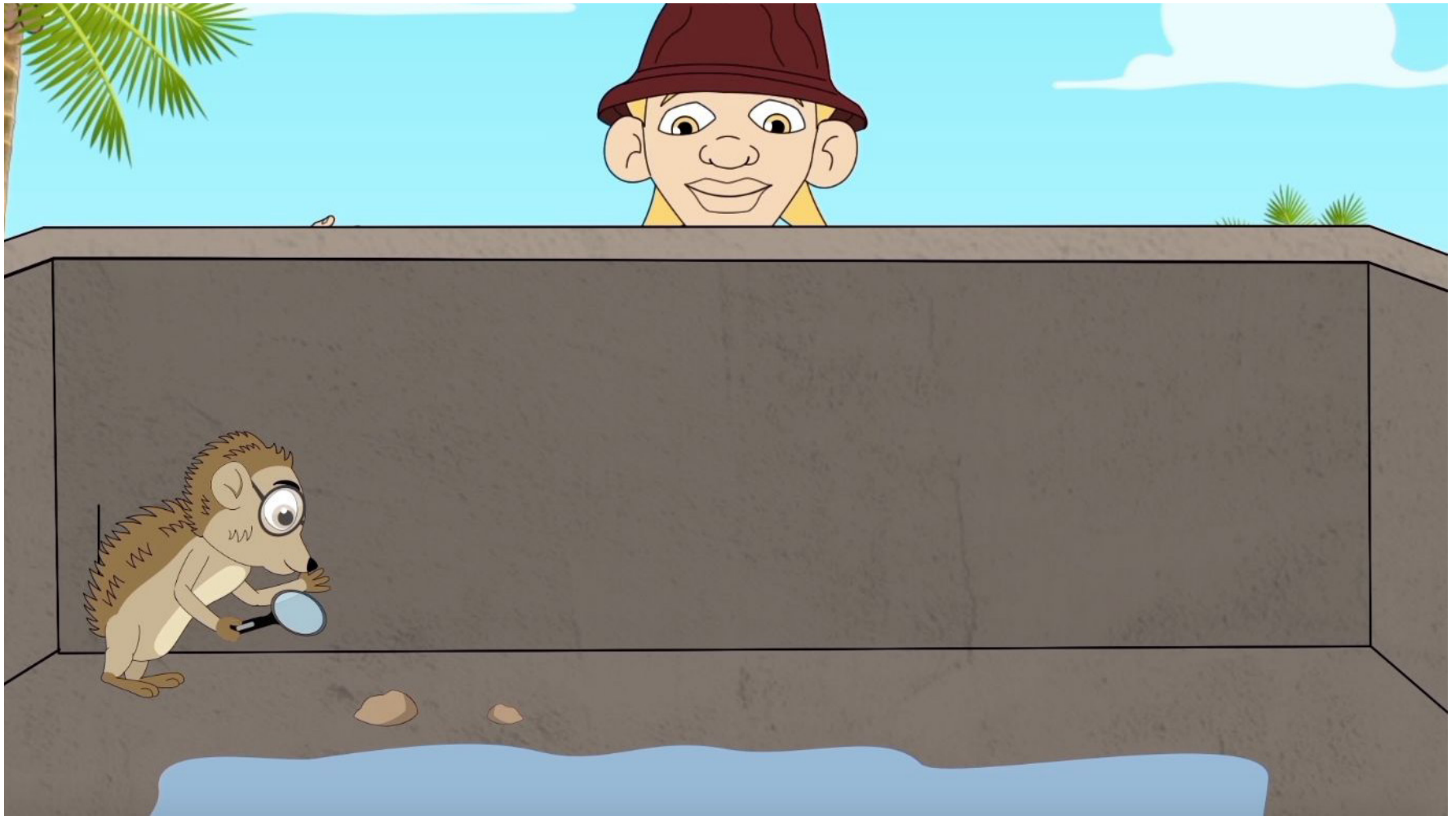
“We’ll finish watering after lunch,” Koba said. “I smell biriyani!” and off he ran, followed by Kiduchu. But Amani stayed at the troughs. She looked for any signs of cracks or leaks in the empty trough but found nothing. She wondered to herself, “why has the water disappeared?”



She kept on looking and came across a hedgehog! The hedgehog's name was Spiky. Amani touched one of his spines. "Ouch!" she cried. "You ARE spiky, Spiky."



Spiky admitted he'd taken a few sips of water from the trough. The pond where he usually got his water had dried up. "But I didn't drink ALL the missing water," he told Amani. "Maybe I can help you find it," he added.



Amani and Spiky could not find any cracks or leaks. “It’s a mystery,” said Amani. Spiky had never heard the word ‘mystery’ before. Amani explained that a mystery was a tricky puzzle, and to solve it you had to look for clues. “If it’s a mystery, then we must try and solve it!” declared Spiky.



They wondered if a bigger animal had tipped over the trough. But it was too heavy to tip over! Then Amani had an idea: maybe the water got sucked up into the sky – like backwards rain!



Amani and Spiky decided to look for signs of backwards rain. Spiky watched the water trough, while Amani sat in a tree to look for water droplets moving upwards toward the sky.



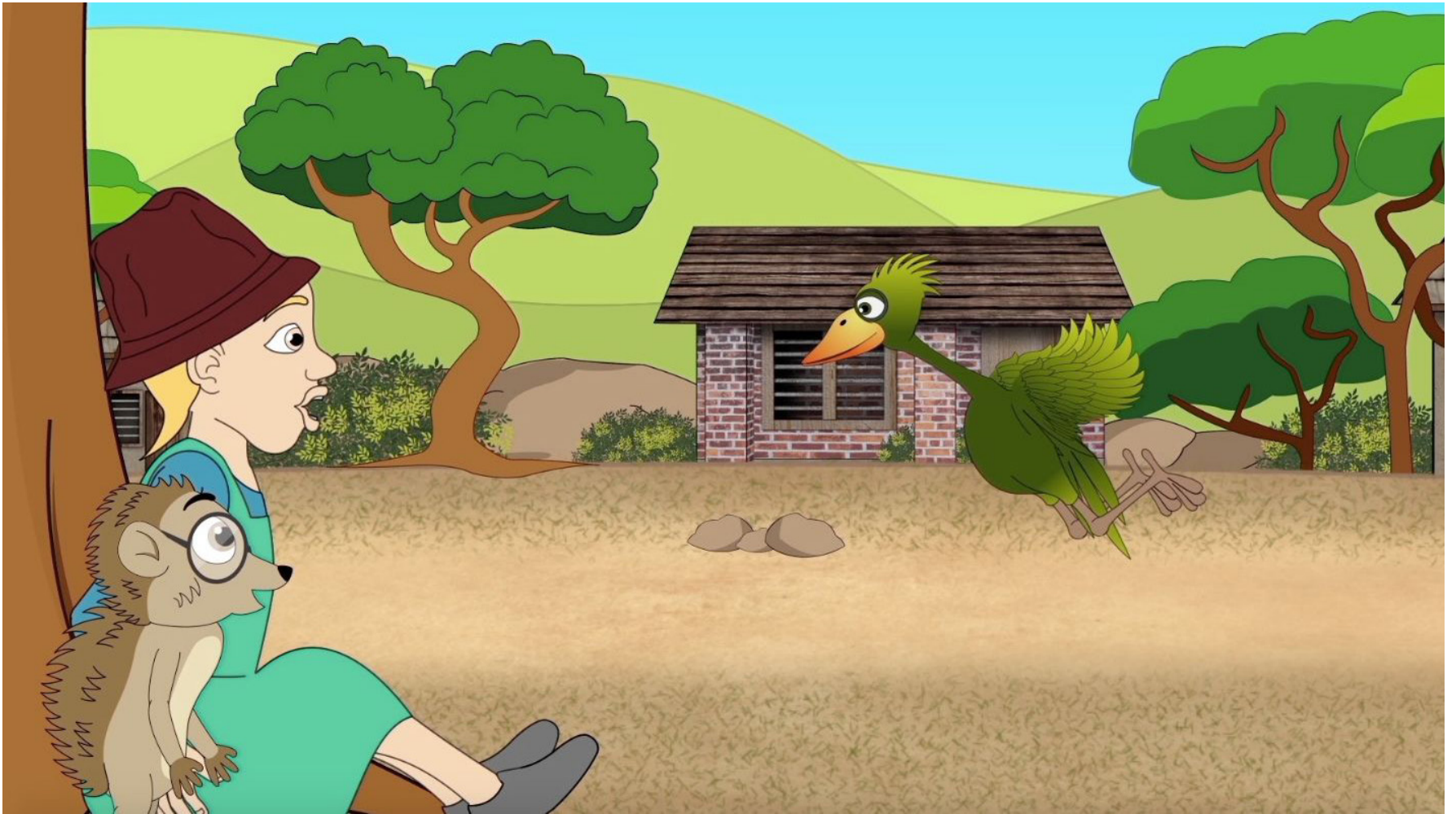
Ngedere was in the tree too, fanning himself with a large leaf. Amani asked him if he had ever seen backwards rain. Ngedere told Amani that he had never even heard of 'backwards rain' and besides, he was too hot to answer questions.



Amani and Spiky were disappointed that they hadn't found any evidence of backwards rain. They began to wonder where the rain would go once it was in the sky. Then Amani had another idea: maybe the backwards rain went into the clouds!



They knew they needed to examine some clouds to know for sure. But there wasn't a cloud in the sky. Amani and Spiky decided to perform a cloud dance to try to make some clouds appear, but their dance moves didn't seem to be working.



Just as they were about to give up, Mama Ndege appeared in the sky above them. “What’s troubling you?” Mama Ndege asked them.



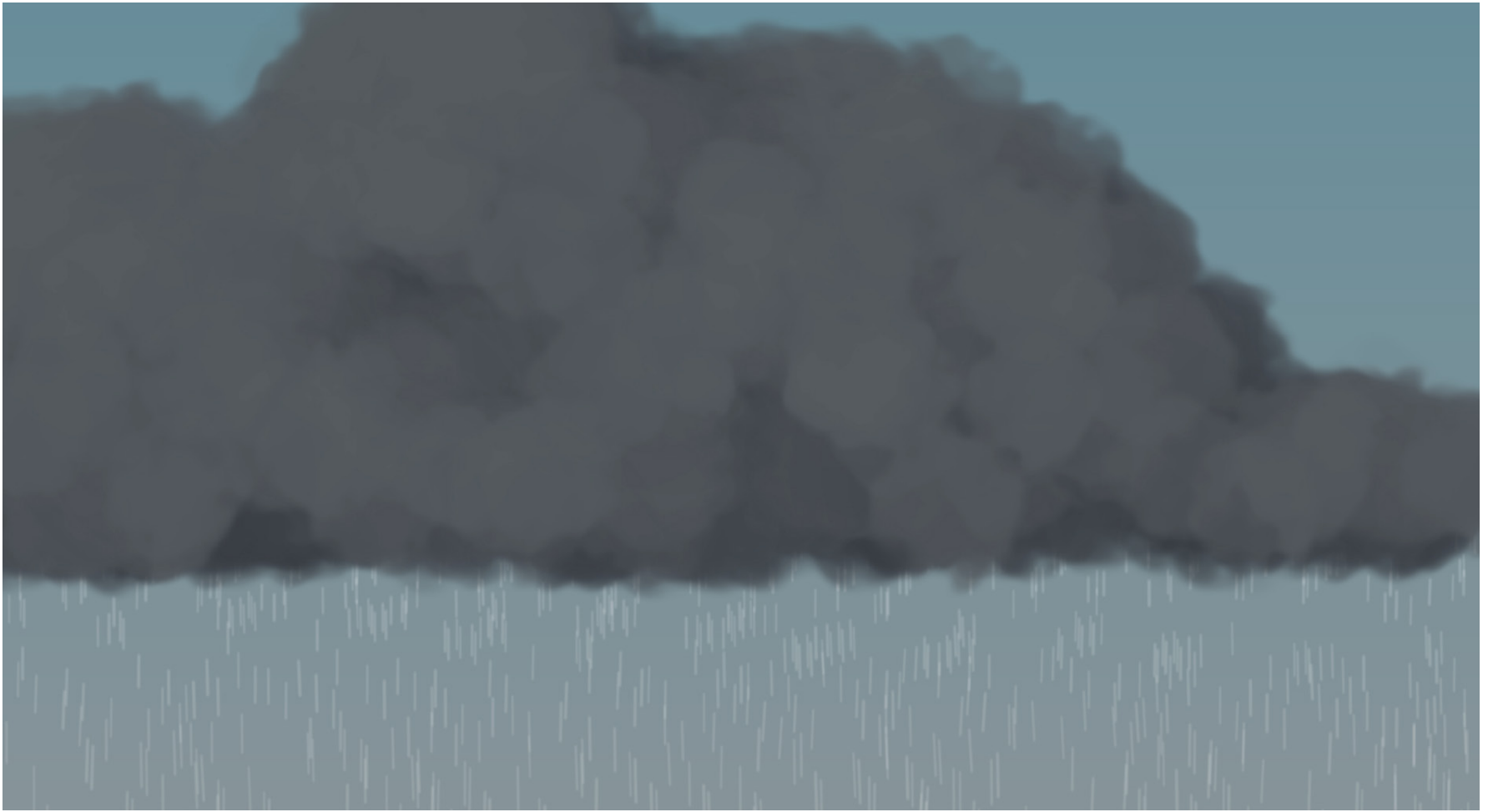
Amani explained that Ngedere wouldn't answer her questions, so that she couldn't find out more about the backwards rain theory. "Questions are VERY important," Mama Ndege told them. "Asking questions shows that you are CURIOUS, and being curious can help you discover incredible new things!"



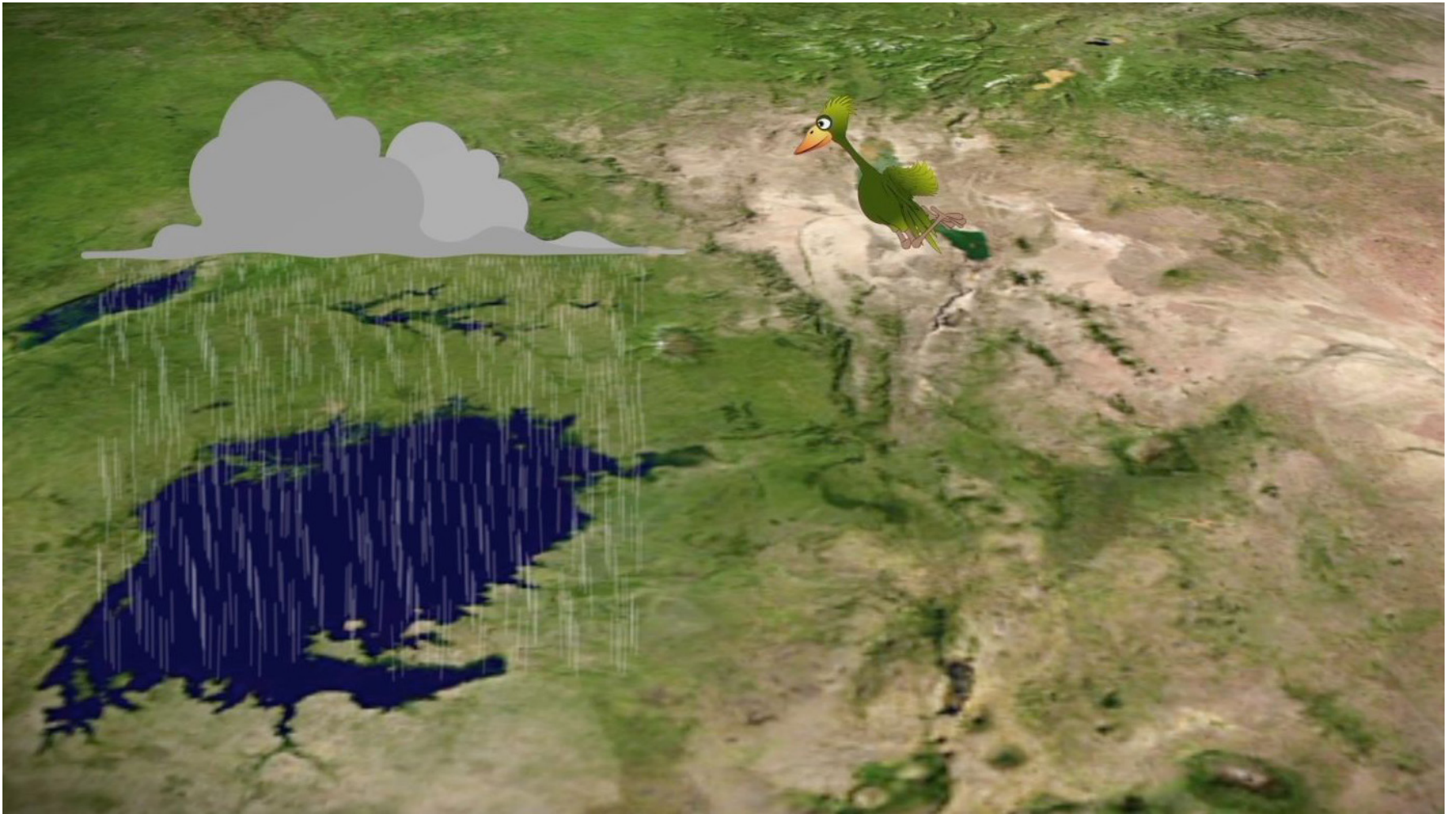
Spiky explained their theory to Mama Ndege – that clouds might hold the water that gets sucked up into the sky. “Clouds DO hold water,” Mama Ndege told them, delighted by their curiosity.



“This is how it works: Clouds are made up of tiny droplets of water or ice. The clouds are carried by the wind, picking up more and more droplets as they go.



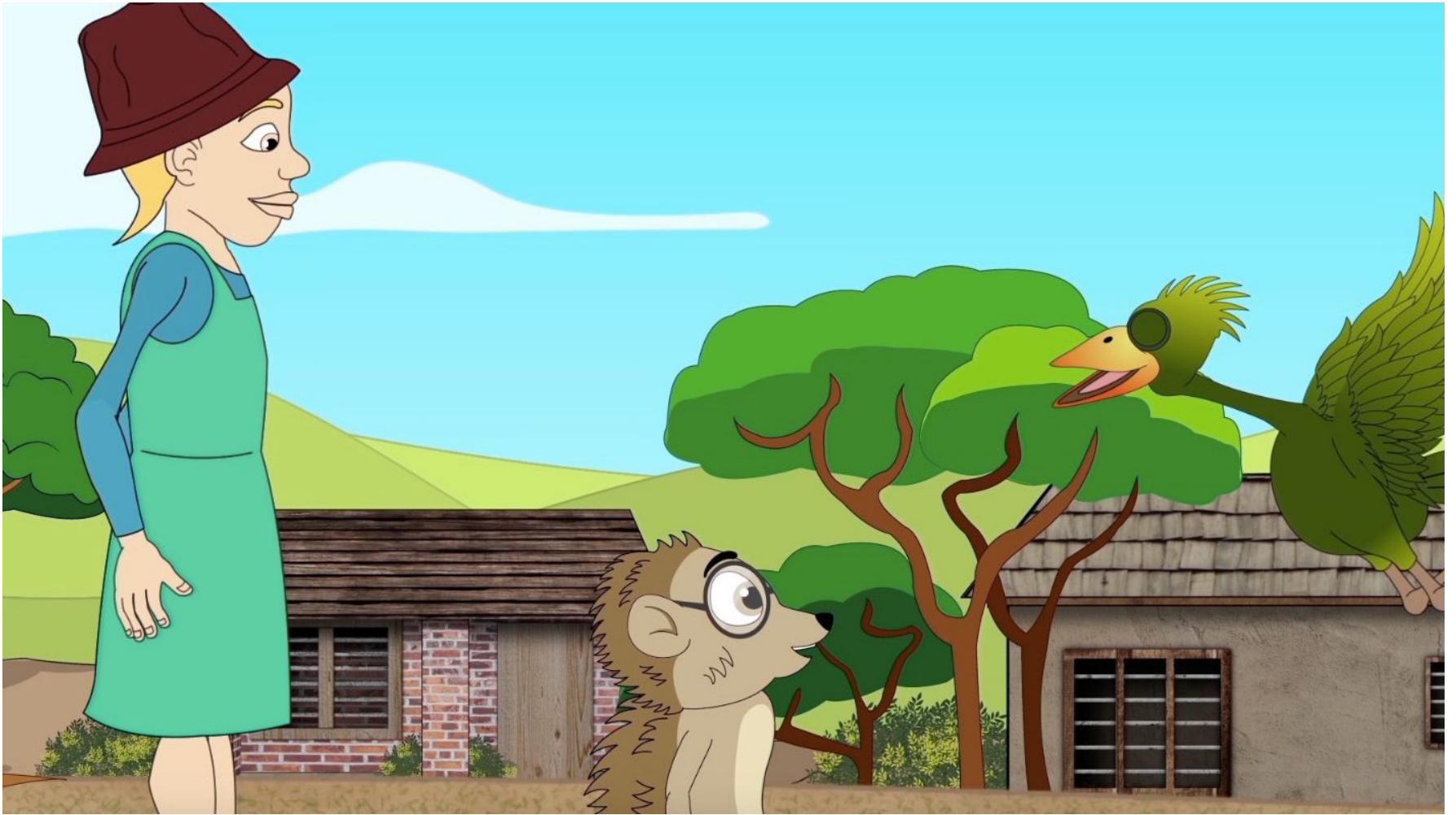
When they can't hold any more, the water droplets fall as rain.”



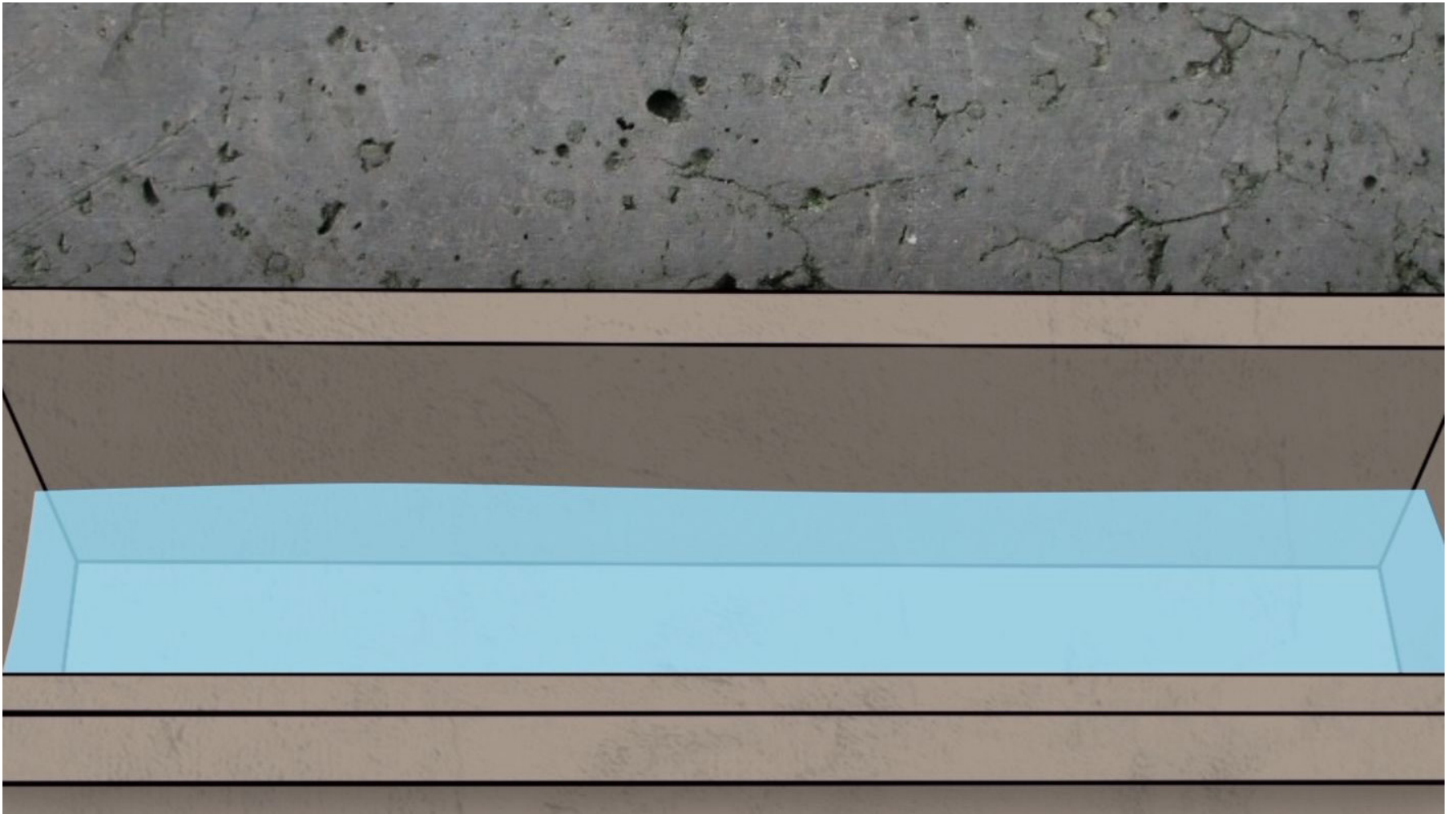
She told them that she once followed a cloud all the way to Lake Victoria, and saw the water from Kokotoa rain down on the fishermen at the lake.



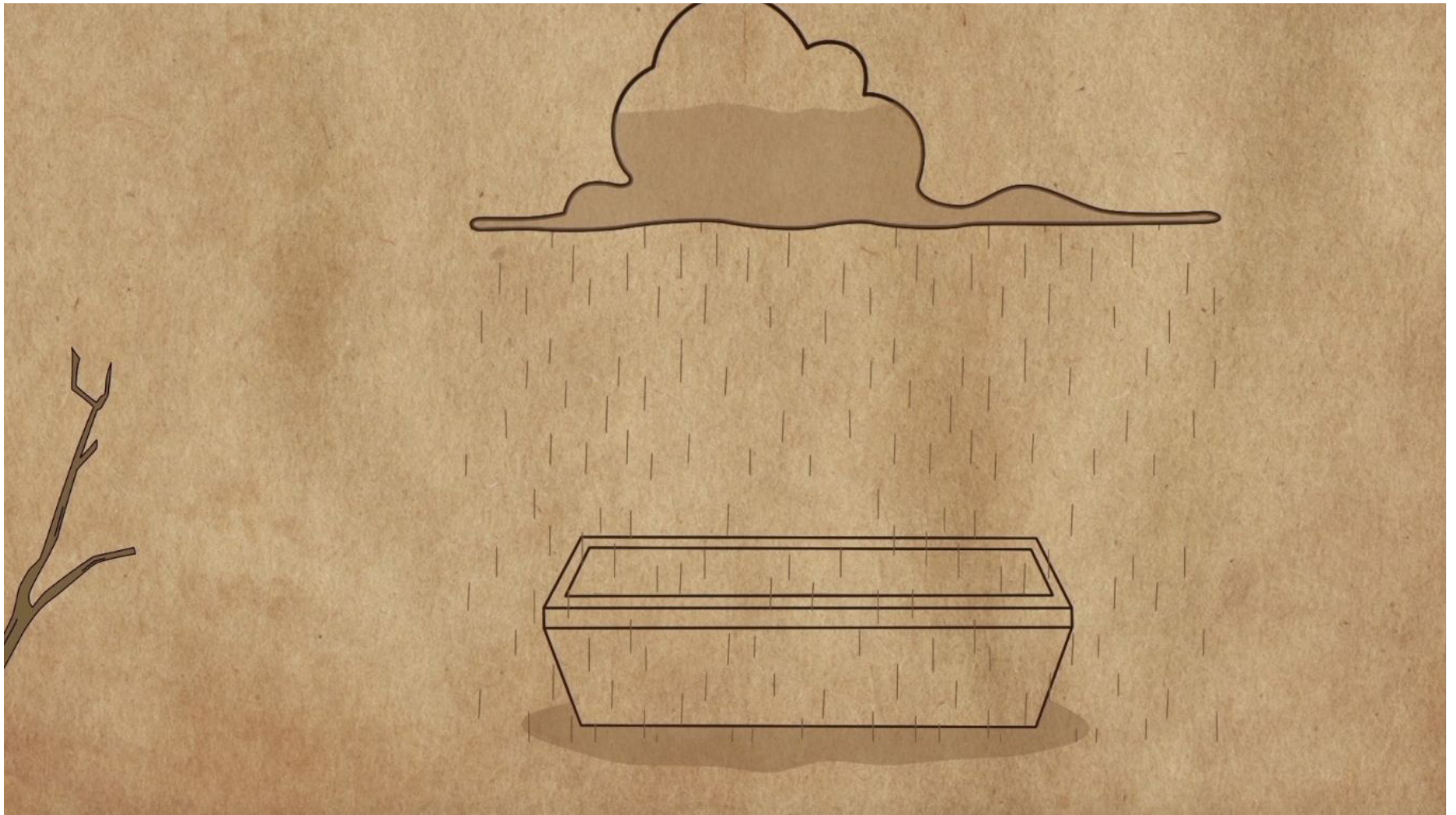
Mama Ndege agreed that it could be fun to try a cloud dance. She showed them some extra special moves.



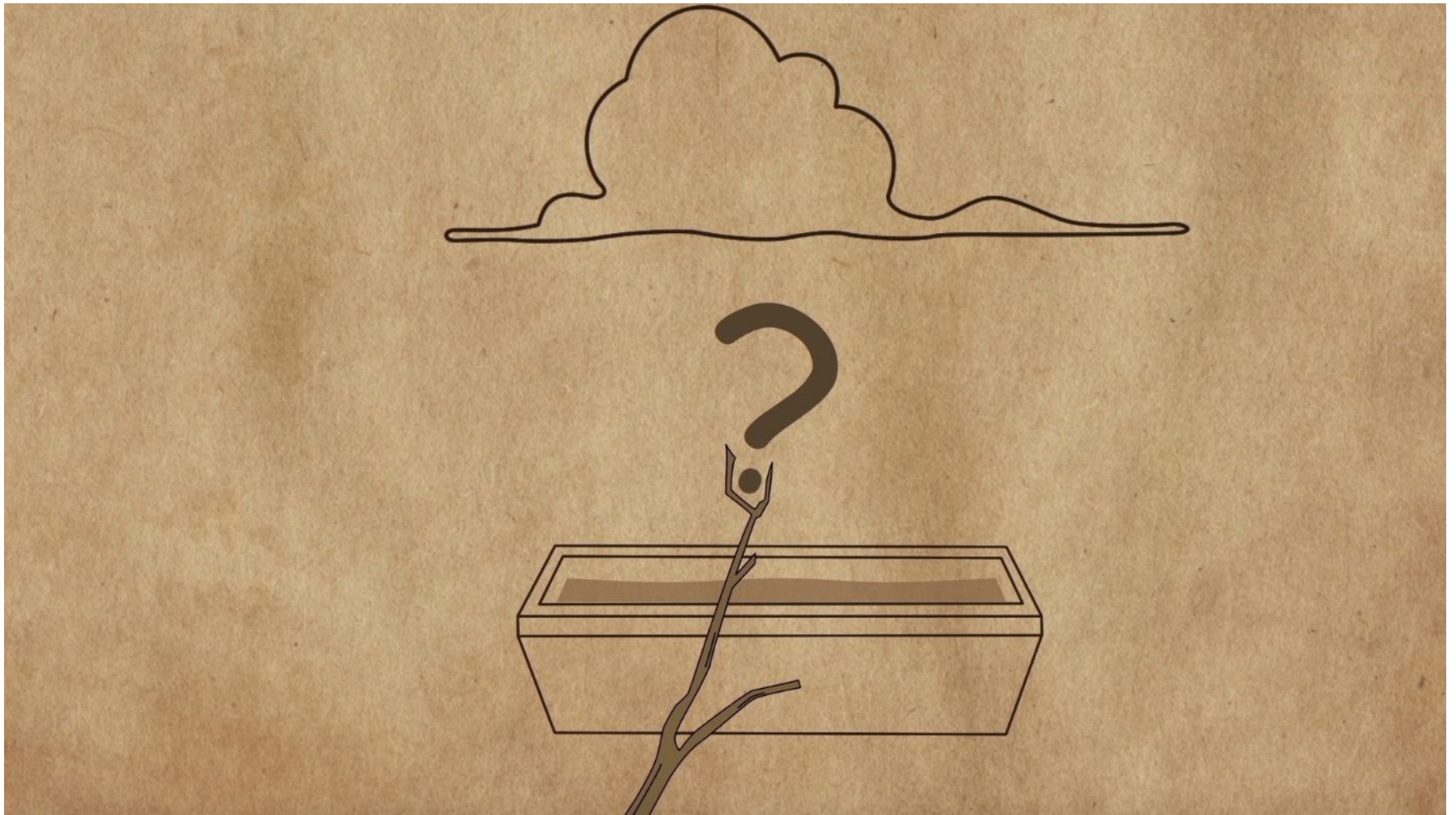
Mama Ndege knew that dancing doesn't make the clouds come, but it was a fun way to pass the time. Mama Ndege had so much fun, and she couldn't even hear Amani and Spiky when they tried to ask her more questions.



Amani and Spiky returned to Mzee Kigo's house. They looked into the second trough, which had been full of water when they left. The water level had dropped. "Oh, no!" said Spiky when he saw that more water had disappeared!



Amani drew a diagram in the soil to help them think through what they knew: the water started in the trough and somehow reached the clouds. And then the clouds will pour that water down as rain.



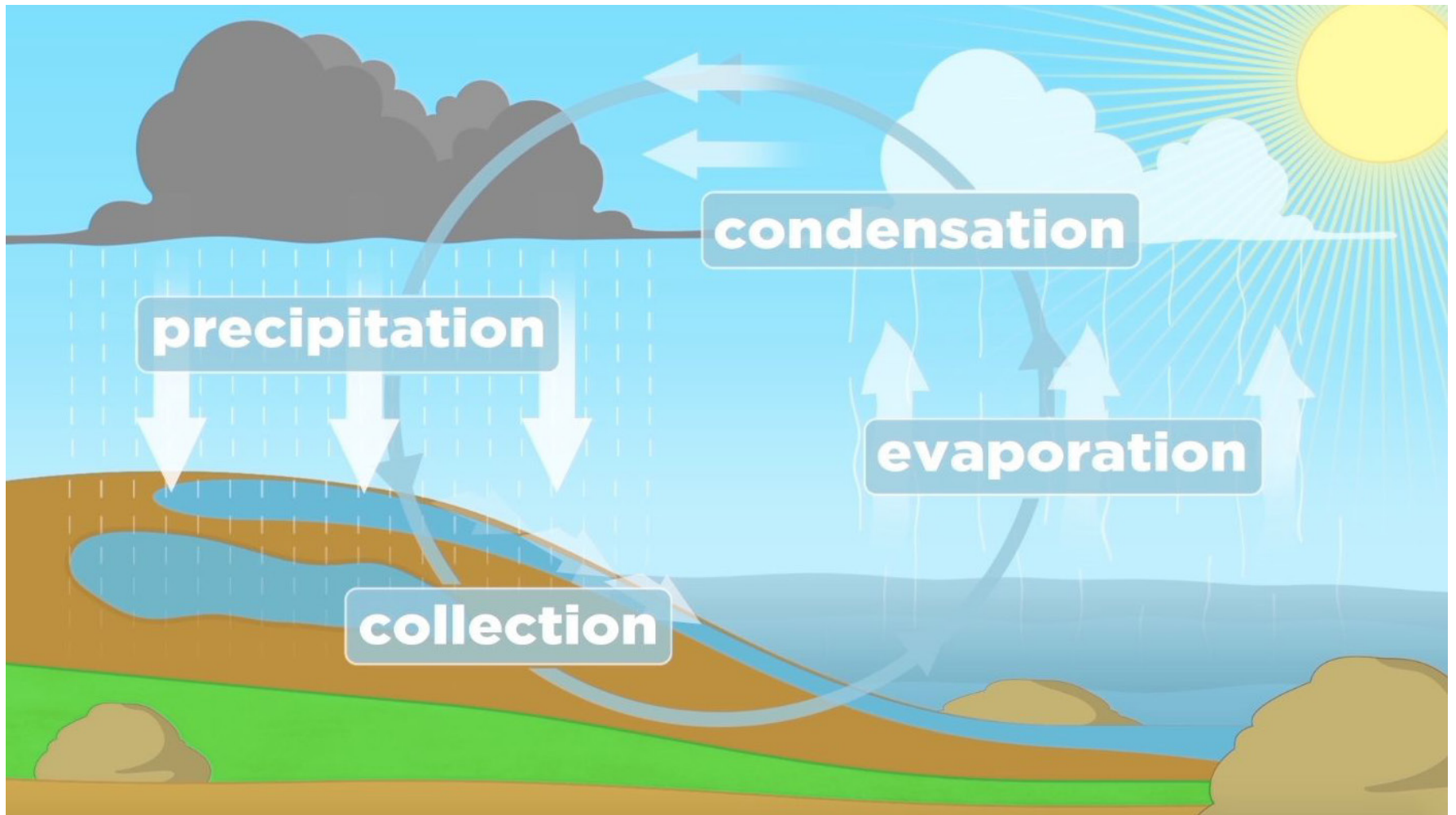
“But how does the water get sucked up into the clouds?” she wondered.



Amani and Spiky agreed that they had had an adventure, even if they hadn't found all the answers. They decided to stop and have some tea. As Amani poured tea for her new friend, Spiky was fascinated by the steam rising from the cup.



Suddenly Amani jumped to her feet. “Vapour rises from the hot water,” she cried. “It must be the SUN that sucks up the water! The hot sun turns the water to vapour, which rises and forms clouds!”



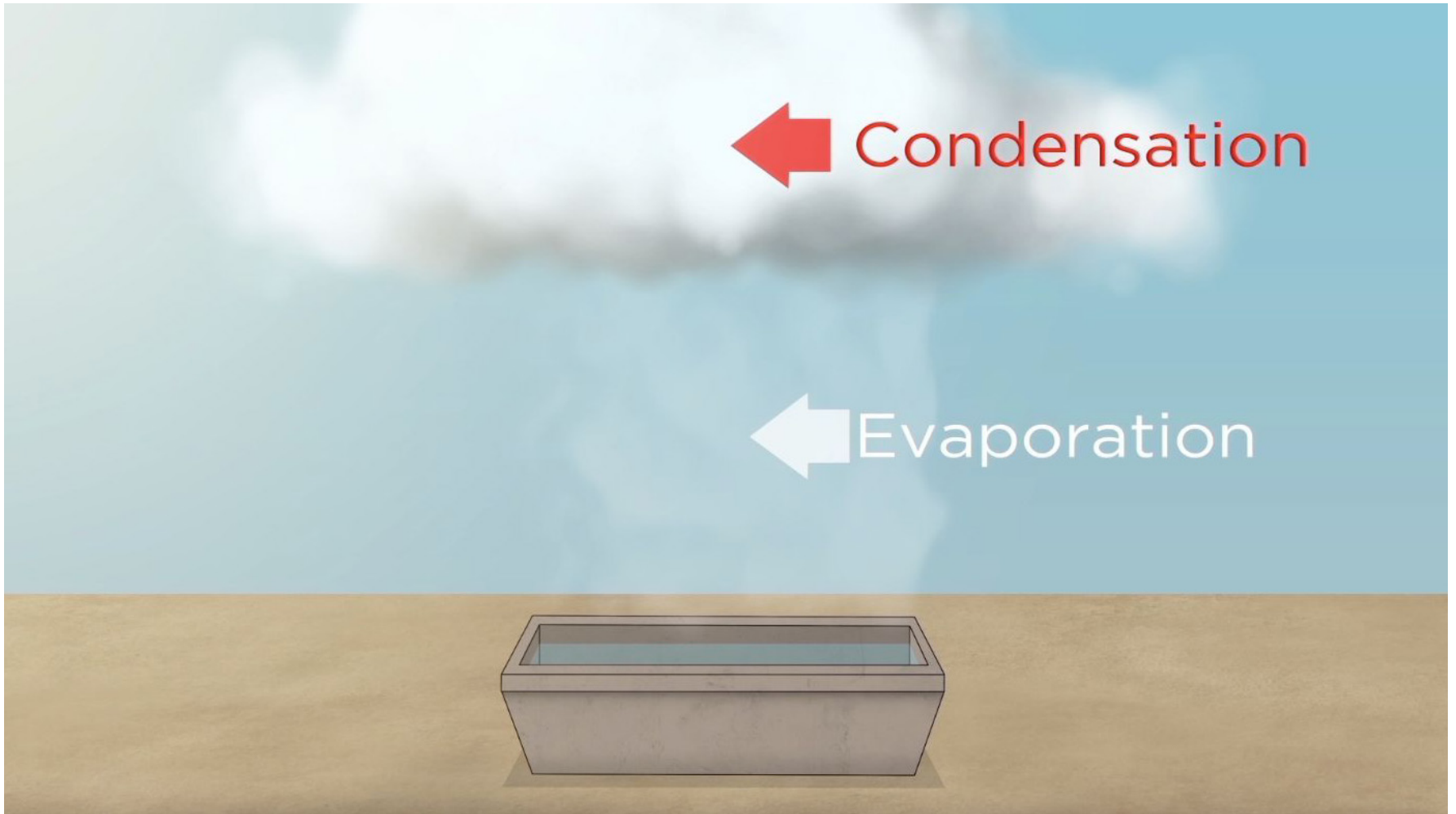
“You’ve solved the mystery,” Spiky told her. “It’s a great water cycle! The sun turns water into vapour, the vapour gets cold in the sky and forms clouds, and then the clouds rain the water down where it forms rivers and streams and puddles. And then the sun comes out, and the cycle starts again!”



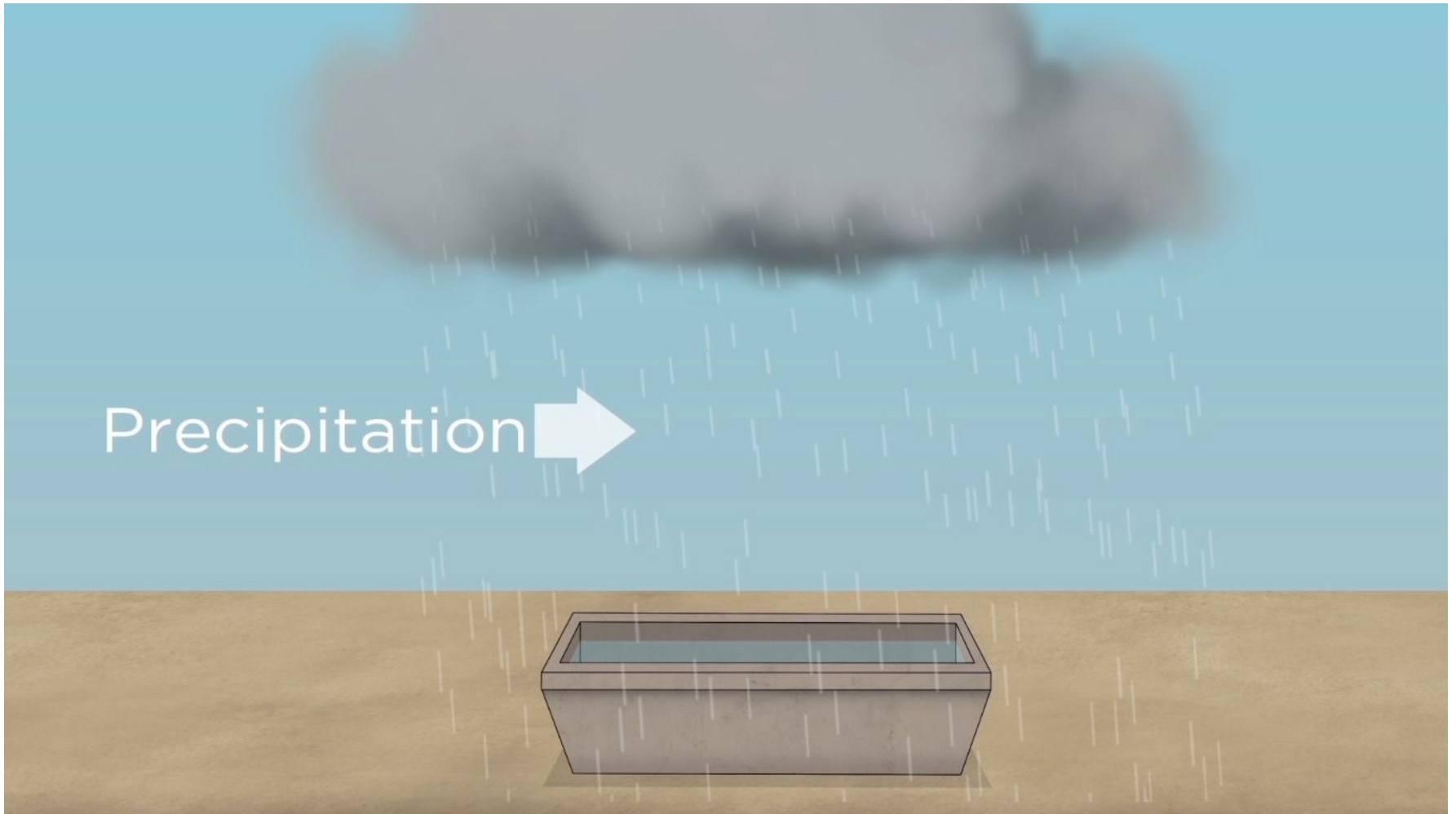
Amani and Spiky went to cover up the troughs, so that the sun wouldn't turn any more water to vapour. As they covered the troughs, Mzee Kigo returned. Spiky introduced himself and gave Mzee Kigo his paw to shake.



Mzee Kigo invited them inside, where Amani explained the mystery of the disappearing water. Mzee Kigo told them they had discovered **EVAPORATION** - when water gets hot and turns to vapour.



They had also discovered CONDENSATION - when droplets gather together to form clouds, and...



PRECIPITATION - a fancy word for rain!



Mzee Kigo was impressed that Amani and Spiky had been curious enough to solve the mystery of the disappearing water, and discover the water cycle along the way!



When Koba and Kiduchu heard, they were impressed too. “Now I want to be curious and find a mystery to solve!” they said.



The End

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