

REVIEW

## A review of ‘Rethinking Environmental Education in a Climate Change Era: Weather Learning in Early Childhood’

Rooney, T., & Blaise, M. (2022). *Rethinking environmental education in a climate change era: Weather learning in early childhood*. London: Routledge

### Review Authors

Yoga Adi Pratama, Laksmi Dewi and Juwintar Febriani Arwan

Faculty of Educational Sciences, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

**Corresponding author:** Yoga Adi Pratama; Email: [yoga.adipratama@upi.edu](mailto:yoga.adipratama@upi.edu)

*Rethinking Environmental Education In A Climate Change Era: Weather Learning in Early Childhood* was developed based on the issue of climate change. The authors recognize that there are young children growing up amidst the challenges of climate change. These children have an important right to survive and develop well into the future. Therefore, this book was written to illustrate the importance of providing climate change-informed environmental education for young children. More specifically, the authors focus on the practice and theory of weather education. This book consists of four sections: the concept of weather education, implementation methods, linkages and relevance and responses to weather learning. In addition, this book was developed with reference to findings from an ethnographic study conducted by Wright and Suchet-Pearson from 2016 to 2019 in Ngunnawal and Nambiri States that reinforced the human-nature relationship in educational concepts through collaboration between preschool education centers, child care centers and university researchers. This book also promotes the idea that humans and the environment are interconnected and that humans should not feel at the center.

The first part of this book explores an overview of the topic at hand, namely children’s relationship with the weather, and how it can open up more comprehensive learning opportunities about the complexities of human-weather relationships in an era of climate change. The authors believe that children are very close to their environment, so that the concept of environmental education in this book is clearly described. In this section, the authors successfully develop the concept of environmental education through a post-developmental approach and consider the responsive and affective aspects of children’s relationships with the world and learning, so as to provide fundamental clarity regarding the concept of environmental education. The authors do well to begin with the history of environmental education and the potential of students’ relationships with the environment. However, at the end of the explanation, the authors reveal their challenges, namely that the concept of weather education discussed in this book has not fully touched on all the phenomena and problems of climate change that occur in the environment. Nonetheless, in this section, the authors clearly convey the purpose and relevance of rethinking environmental education for understanding weather change.

In the second part, the authors effectively explain the methods or ways used to create environmental learning for young children so that they can recognize what weather is and derive meaning from the natural phenomena that occur around them. The authors reveal that this is done through three techniques: thinking, walking and writing. In addition, the authors also provide examples of practical activities that can be done to educate young children about recognizing the weather and the environment, such as singing, storytelling, writing stories and inviting children to walk and play with nature. The authors suggest that these simple activities can trigger children's curiosity, which then develops into knowledge. So in developing the discussion in this section, the authors succeed in emphasizing the importance of environmental learning methods that are in accordance with the characteristics of education in early childhood settings, which is reinforced by several studies, such as research conducted by the authors in Canberra, Australia. In addition, the authors also convey that educators need to involve children in exploring the weather through real-life experiences outside the classroom.

In the third part of this book, the authors focus on how young children relate to weather changes. At the beginning of this section, the authors emphasize the sensory dimension of children, and the discussion begins with the results of a survey conducted on children's responses to what they feel when they are in the environment, such as wind gusts and temperature levels. The authors wisely build an understanding that students' relationship with weather changes is built on everyday activities. Then, halfway through the second part of this book, the authors explore students' relationships with other natural elements apart from weather. This is intended to make children aware of the existence of other species (both abiotic and biotic) and pay attention to the workings of nature, such as the processes of decay and regeneration. So in this section, the authors carefully convey the message that children, as humans, have a relationship with nature. At the end of the discussion, the authors recommend that a pedagogical approach that considers environmental sustainability in the future is necessary. In addition, this section shows the shift in education that the authors are referring to, which is education that is responsive and connected to sustainable natural phenomena.

In the fourth part, the authors reflect on students' responses to environmental learning, especially weather learning. In their findings, the authors reveal that children at the time of weather learning need the right time and place, meaning that the implementation can be seasonal or at a certain time but must be continuous. In this section, the authors wisely impart that the weather education supports improving students' responsiveness to the introduction and understanding of the environment. In this section, the authors also reveal the position of weather learning not as a unit of material but as an understanding included in environmental education. The authors conclude by emphasizing the inseparability between humans and weather and challenging worldviews that favor a human-centered perspective. Through this book, the authors also give an invitation to take responsibility for addressing and preparing children to play a role in negotiating climate change so as to maintain the sustainability of life.

Overall, the authors of this book have succeeded in developing the information content and presenting the discussion systematically, from the concept of the importance of environmental education for early childhood to students' responses to learning about the environment and weather. This book provides a modern and innovative view of environmental education in the era of climate change. The authors successfully combine theoretical concepts with practices that can be applied in the context of weather learning in early childhood. This book is recommended for educators, parents and educational practitioners who are interested in deepening their understanding of the importance of environmental education and the influence of weather in learning to realize a sustainable life.

**Acknowledgments.** The authors would like to thank Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan and Pusat Layanan Pembiayaan Pendidikan as the sponsors.

**Competing interests.** The authors have no conflict of interest.

## Author Biographies

**Yoga Adi Pratama** is a master's student in Curriculum Development at Faculty of Educational Science at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. His research interests include teaching and learning, primary education, curriculum and environmental education.

**Laksmi Dewi** is a lecturer at Faculty of Educational Science at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. Her research interests include curriculum development, instruction and educational technology.

**Juwintar Febriani Arwan** is a master's student in Curriculum Development at Faculty of Educational Science at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. Her research interests include curriculum, teaching and learning, ocean literacy and learning and environmental education.

---

**Cite this article:** Pratama, Y.A., Dewi, L., & Arwan, J.F. (2024). A review of 'Rethinking Environmental Education in a Climate Change Era: Weather Learning in Early Childhood'. *Australian Journal of Environmental Education* **40**, 79–81. <https://doi.org/10.1017/aee.2023.33>