

Unit 7 Tornadoes/Hurricanes

1. Whole class instruction

Objective: Students will understand what causes hurricanes and tornadoes. Students will be able to discuss the types of damage caused by hurricanes and tornadoes. Students learn some techniques for measuring wind speed.



1.1. Go To Textbook pages 24-25

“Did you know that a tornado has some of the fastest and strongest winds on Earth?”

- ▶ Discuss how tornadoes are formed. Use the illustration on page 24 to help explain how a tornado forms.
- ▶ Ask students why a tornado often looks dark. This is because the tornado is sucking soil and dust up into the funnel – the colour is this soil swirling in the tornado.
- ▶ Have students look at pictures of some tornadoes and describe what is happening in the picture. You may like to remind students that many tornadoes are very small and do not do much damage.

Pictures from picture gallery: 1 (tornado), 15 (tornado damage), 98 (tornado)

Students may be interested to know that the area of the American Midwest where tornadoes are common is called ‘Tornado Alley’. People who live in this area all have storm shelters under their houses.

1.2. Go to Textbook pages 26-27

“What does a hurricane look like?”

- ▶ Watch the Hurricane Season video. This shows all the hurricanes that come close to the United States in just one season. Discuss how a hurricane forms over water. Use the illustration on page 26 of the textbook to show what a hurricane looks like from the inside.
- ▶ Look at some of the photos in the Hurricane Katrina picture gallery or Creative Topic: Hurricane. Students can discuss some of the damage caused by the hurricane and what it might be like to live in a place that gets hurricanes.

Hurricane Season video, Creative Topic: Hurricane, Hurricane Katrina picture gallery.

Because hurricanes bring torrential rain, they are often accompanied by flooding.

2a. Group exploration

2.1. Making an anemometer

- ▶ Students can make a simple anemometer and use it to measure wind speed. Students make the anemometer by placing the cardboard strips so they make a plus (+) sign. Cut the rims off the cups and colour one cup any colour. Staple the cups to the ends of the cardboard strips; make sure they all face the same direction. Push the pin through the centre of the two strips and then through the rubber of the pencil. Blow on the cups to make sure the cups spin freely on the pin. Place the modelling clay on a surface outside. Stick the sharpened end of the pencil into the clay so that the pencil stands up straight. Students can now use the stopwatch to measure how many times the coloured cup turns per minute. This anemometer can give you a way to compare wind speeds. Students can measure wind speed at different times of the day.



Each group will need scissors, 4 small paper cups, a pen, stapler, 2 strips of cardboard around 20cm long by 5cm wide, a push pin, sharpened pencil with a rubber on the end, some modelling clay and a stopwatch.

2b. Literacy activity

Unit 3: Storm-chaser

- ▶ This workbook describes a meteorologist who chases after storms in order to study them. Many people think this is very exciting, so some meteorologists do take groups of ordinary people to try and find storms. You may like to discuss what it would be like to chase after a storm.

Comprehension workbook 7 Storm-chaser

3. Plenary session

- ▶ Review the causes and consequences of tornadoes and hurricanes.

4. Further work/homework

- ▶ Read the 'Hurricane' adventure story book. Students can then write a short synopsis of the book.

Hurricane Book on web site.