



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2007 Volume IV: The Science of Natural Disasters

Severe Weather Trackers

Guide for Curriculum Unit 07.04.04
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I am currently a first-grade teacher at John C. Daniels School in New Haven, Connecticut. John C. Daniels was the first dual language program implemented in the city. As a dual language school, we teach every child English as well as Spanish. For the first two years, grades kindergarten and first, children learn their academic foundational skills in their dominant language of English or Spanish. They are exposed to the opposite language as a second language, where they begin to learn the very basics of that language. Beginning in the second-grade, children learn all of their academic skills in both languages. There is only one other school like ours in New Haven, which makes our programs distinctive.

With these children in mind, I developed a science unit for my classroom. Through this five-week unit, the children will learn about different types of severe weather. The children also will learn about choosing meteorology as a career and what it takes to get there. Bringing the idea of a career to children in this community would be beneficial because they may never realize this could be an option for their future. This unit will help them get excited about science and weather and possibly a future career to consider.

This unit will fulfill the weather portion of the district's first-grade science curriculum. Relevant standards include:

- Children will address, describe, question, classify and experiment (1.2s)
- Children will understand that tools help scientists make better observations, measurements and are the equipment for investigations (5.2s).

Overall, my goals for this unit are to get the children excited and engaged in scientific inquiry. The children will be learning about severe weather through hands-on experiments, video clips and pictures. The more children are able to do and see, the greater the impact of their learning. I also want the children to learn how meteorologists contribute to science and our society. I want them to see what an interesting job they have, but also how difficult it can be. Most of all, I want the children to gain an interest in weather and have fun! Severe weather is a very interesting topic with plenty of excitement to keep the children's attention and participation.

(Recommended for Science, grade 1.)

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