

Instructional Unit Title: Weather and Seasons

The teacher may review/assess prior knowledge by checking understanding of the idea of temperature, how it relates to human behavior, and how tools (e.g., thermometer) are used to understand weather so that students can demonstrate their current level of understanding.

The teacher may demonstrate how to document observational data so that students can begin recording their personal observations of weather and temperatures.

The teacher may provide opportunities to research past weather temperatures for a given location so that students can look for patterns in weather and temperatures across seasons.

The teacher may direct students in the creation of graphs from selected temperature data so the students can begin exploring how to visually represent, interpret, and make predictions based on (temperature) data.

The teacher may provide weather/season related scenarios so students can begin identifying similarities and differences with regards to how organisms adapt (e.g., snakes shed their skins, trees lose their leaves).

The teacher may present students with information regarding organism behavior (e.g., migration, hibernation) and physical characteristics (e.g., shedding, dormancy) so that students can begin to identify how organisms adapt to weather/seasons.

The teacher may brainstorm with students the changes humans make related to season and weather to guide students' thinking about how the changing weather affects them.

The teacher may provide different visual examples of weather so that students can begin identifying the relationship between different kinds of weather and seasons.

The teacher may brainstorm with students specific examples of local severe weather so that students can categorize severe weather types by season.

The teacher may provide different kinds of classroom labs so that students can explore examples of severe weather and catastrophic events (e.g., tornadoes in a bottle, flood table).

The teacher may discuss local catastrophic events (Black Forest fire, flood, etc.) so that students can begin connecting these events with weather and with human and other organisms' adaptations.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT: You are a Colorado weather forecaster and have been chosen to report on the effects of weather and seasons on a local environment. In your report you must include the season, the types of weather occurring within that season, the temperatures, the changes in the organisms (humans, animals, or plants) and their behavior, and the changes in the environment. You must also identify potential severe weather (e.g. hail, tornadoes, blizzards) and its effect on the local environment and organisms.

This unit was authored by a team of Colorado educators. The unit is intended to support teachers, schools, and districts as they make their own local decisions around the best instructional plans and practices for all students. To see the entire instructional unit sample with possible learning experiences, resources, differentiation, and assessments visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunitsamples>.