EXTREME WEATHER

Lesson Plan

Wind Speeds

Lesson Plan for *Hurricanes*
Grade 3

Objective

To help students demonstrate understanding of hurricane wind speeds by sorting storms into appropriate categories.

Things Needed:

- *Hurricanes* book
- Whiteboard
- Wind Speeds worksheet (attached)

Before the Activity

Have students read Chapter 1 ("How Hurricanes Form") of the *Hurricanes* book. Print a copy of the Wind Speeds worksheet for each student.

Activity

A hurricane is a large storm with fast, spinning winds. Ask students the following questions to review the main ideas of Chapter 1:

- How fast must the winds be for a storm to be called a hurricane? (Answer: 74 miles per hour)
- What two other kinds of storms have slower winds? (Answer: tropical depressions and tropical storms)
- How fast are the winds in a tropical depression? (Answer: 38 miles per hour or less)
- How fast are the winds in a tropical storm? (Answer: 39 to 73 miles per hour)

Write the wind speeds for tropical depressions and tropical storms on the whiteboard. Then have students turn to pages 22 and 23. Explain that scientists sort hurricanes into categories based on wind speed. Storms with faster winds get higher numbers.

Pass out the Wind Speeds worksheet. Students should determine if the storm in each description is a hurricane, a tropical storm, or a tropical depression. If the storm is a hurricane, students should also include which category it belongs to.

Evaluation

Use the attached answer key to give students 1 point for each correct answer.

Standards

This lesson plan may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational texts, grade 3 (RI 3.1).

Wind Speeds

Use each storm's wind speed to determine if it is a hurricane, a tropical storm, or a tropical depression. If the storm is a hurricane, remember to include the category in your answer.

1. A storm hits the coast of Cuba with wind speeds of 135 miles per hour.

2. A storm hits the coast of Florida with wind speeds of 97 miles per hour.

3. A storm traveling across the Gulf of Mexico has wind speeds of 31 miles per hour.

4. A storm traveling across the Pacific Ocean has winds speeds of 43 miles per hour.

5. A storm rushing toward Hawaii has wind speeds of 82 miles per hour.

6. A storm rushing toward Puerto Rico has wind speeds of 72 miles per hour.

7. A storm forming over the Atlantic Ocean has wind speeds of 102 miles per hour.

8. A storm forming over the Caribbean Sea has wind speeds of 9 miles per hour.

9. A storm hits the coast of Haiti with winds speeds of 158 miles per hour.

10. A storm hits the coast of New Jersey with winds speeds of 121 miles per hour.

Wind Speeds Answer Key

Use each storm's wind speed to determine if it is a hurricane, a tropical storm, or a tropical depression. If the storm is a hurricane, remember to include the category in your answer.

1. A storm hits the coast of Cuba with wind speeds of 135 miles per hour.

category 4 hurricane

2. A storm hits the coast of Florida with wind speeds of 97 miles per hour.

category 2 hurricane

3. A storm traveling across the Gulf of Mexico has wind speeds of 31 miles per hour.

tropical depression

4. A storm traveling across the Pacific Ocean has winds speeds of 43 miles per hour.

tropical storm

5. A storm rushing toward Hawaii has wind speeds of 82 miles per hour.

category 1 hurricane

6. A storm rushing toward Puerto Rico has wind speeds of 72 miles per hour.

tropical storm

7. A storm forming over the Atlantic Ocean has wind speeds of 102 miles per hour.

category 2 hurricane

8. A storm forming over the Caribbean Sea has wind speeds of 9 miles per hour.

tropical depression

9. A storm hits the coast of Haiti with winds speeds of 158 miles per hour.

category 5 hurricane

10. A storm hits the coast of New Jersey with winds speeds of 121 miles per hour.

category 3 hurricane