**Literature Settings – Weather or Not**

**This six-week unit invites students to explore geography as it relates to seasons and weather. Students explore how these settings are represented in—and affect events in—literature.**

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**Overview**

* + Students read contrasting styles of poems about weather, including Carl Sandburg’s “The Fog” and Robert Frost’s “Dust of Snow,” and discuss how poetic techniques impact the interpretation of poems. Then students read informational text, such as “Kenya’s Long Dry Season” by Nellie Gonzalez Cutler, and apply the information learned to their appreciation of the setting of *Safari Journal* by Hudson Talbott. Students learn about geography and weather through a variety of informational texts. Class discussions will focus on the back-and-forth relationship between information gleaned from the informational texts and the insights they develop from literature. Finally, this unit ends with a class discussion and paragraph response to the essential question.
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**Focus Standards**

* + These Focus Standards have been selected for the unit from the Common Core State Standards.
    - **RL.4.1:**Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
    - **RL.4.3:**Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions).
    - **RI.4.3:**Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
    - **RF.4.4:**Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
    - **RF.4.4(a):**Read on-level text with purpose and understanding.
    - **RF.4.4(b):**Read on-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.
    - **W.4.2:**Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
    - **SL.4.1:**Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
    - **SL.4.1(c):**Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
    - **SL.4.1(d):**Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.
    - **L.4.5:**Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
    - **L.4.5(a):**Sort words into categories (e.g., colors, clothing) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.

[Common Core State Standards, ELA](http://commoncore.org/free/resources/CCSSI_ELA_Standards.pdf) (1.5 MB)

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**Suggested Student Objectives**

* + - Read and discuss a variety of fiction and nonfiction about seasons and weather.
    - Find similarities and differences in story settings, and how the setting impacts a story.
    - Find similarities and differences, and causes and consequences, of weather.
    - Write a variety of responses to stories and poems.
    - Explain how factual knowledge of weather increases appreciation of literature about weather.
    - Research a weather phenomenon and write a question and answer (Q&A) report that includes audio and/or visual aids.
    - Recite poetry for classmates.
    - Begin to define relationships between weather words.
    - Participate in group discussions about seasons, weather, and literature written about them.
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**Suggested Works**

* + (E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars.

**Literary Texts**

**Stories (set in Kenya)**

* + - *Safari Journal (ASPCA Henry Bergh Children's Book Awards)*(Hudson Talbott)
    - *Owen and Mzee: The True Story of a Remarkable Friendship*(Craig Hatkoff)

**Poems**

* + - "[Dust of Snow](http://www.online-literature.com/frost/743/)" (Robert Frost) (E)
    - "[Fog](http://www.poetry-online.org/sandburg_carl_fog.htm)" by Carl Sandburg (E)
    - *A Visit to William Blake's Inn: Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers*(Nancy Willard)
    - “[Clouds](http://www.scrapbook.com/poems/doc/106/118.html)” (Christina Rosetti)
    - *The Storm Book* (Charlotte Zolotow)

**Book About Poetry Terms**

* + - It Figures!: Fun Figures of Speech (Marvin Terban)

**Stories**

* + - *Time of Wonder*(Robert McCloskey)
    - *Strawberry Girl*(Lois Lenski)
    - *The Long Winter*(Laura Ingalls Wilder) (EA)
    - *One Day in the Prairie*(Jean Craighead George)
    - *A Prairie Alphabet (ABC Our Country)*(Jo Bannatyne-Cugnet)
    - *Rainbow Crow*(Nancy Van Laan)
    - *Hurricane Book & CD (Read Along)*(David Wiesner)
    - *Hurricane*(Jonathan London)

**Informational Texts**

**General Reference**

* + - *National Geographic Atlas for Young Explorers*

**Seasons and Weather (in Kenya)**

* + - “Kenya’s Long Dry Season” (Nellie Gonzalez Cutler) (E)

**Seasons and Weather**

* + - *W is for Wind: A Weather Alphabet* (Pat Michaels)
    - *Hurricanes: Earth's Mightiest Storms*(Patricia Lauber) (E)
    - *Hurricanes*(Seymour Simon) (EA)
    - *The Everything Kids' Weather Book*(Joseph Snedeker)
    - *Do Tornadoes Really Twist? Questions and Answers About tornadoes and Hurricanes*(Melvin and Gilda Berger) (EA)
    - *Weather Whys: Questions, Facts And Riddles About Weather*(Mike Artell)
    - *Let's Investigate Marvelously Meaningful Maps*(Madelyn Wood Carlisle) (E)
    - *If You're Not from the Prairie*(David Bouchard)
    - *Can It Rain Cats and Dogs? Questions and Answers About Weather (Scholastic Question and Answer Series)*(Melvin Berger) (EA)
    - *Storms*(Seymour Simon) (EA)
    - *Cloud Dance*(Thomas Locker)
    - *The Cloud Book: Words and Pictures* (Tomie DePaola) (EA)
    - *The Snowflake : A Water Cycle Story*(Neil Waldman)

**Informational Text (Advanced Readers or Read Aloud)**

* + - *The Weather Wizard's Cloud Book: A Unique Way to Predict the Weather Accurately and Easily by Reading the Clouds*(Louis D. Rubin Sr.)

**Art, Music, and Media**

**Art**

* + - John Constable, [Seascape Study with Rain Cloud](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Constable_-_Seascape_Study_with_Rain_Cloud.jpg) (1827)
    - Emile Nolde, [Bewegtes Meer](http://www.museen-sh.de/ml/digi_einzBild.php?pi=18_593&digiID=200.6881224&s=2&&page=1&action=vonsuche&r=9) (1948)
    - Claude Monet, [Rouen Cathedral: The Portal (Sunlight)](http://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/collections/index-of-works/resultat-collection.html?no_cache=1&zoom=1&tx_damzoom_pi1%5Bzoom%5D=0&tx_damzoom_pi1%5BxmlId%5D=001287&tx_damzoom_pi1%5Bback%5D=en%2Fcollections%2Findex-of-works%2Fresultat-collection.html%3Fno_cache%25) (1893)
    - Martin Johnson Heade, [On the San Sebastian River](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:On_the_San_Sebastian_River_Florida_Martin_Johnson_Heade.jpeg) (1883-1890)
    - Thomas Hart Benton, [July Hay](http://www.metmuseum.org/works_of_art/collection_database/modern_art/july_hay_thomas_hart_benton/objectview_enlarge.aspx?page=37&sort=0&sortdir=asc&keyword=&fp=1&dd1=21&dd2=0&vw=1&collID=21&OID=210008310&vT=1) (1943)
    - Tom Thompson, [April in Algonquin Park](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Tom_Thomson,1917,_April_in_Algonquin_Park,21_x_26,5_cm,_Tom_Thomson_Memorial_Art_Gallery.jpg) (1917)
    - Edouard Manet, [Boating](http://www.metmuseum.org/works_of_art/collection_database/european_paintings/boating_edouard_manet/objectview_enlarge.aspx?page=2&sort=0&sortdir=asc&keyword=delacroix&fp=1&dd1=11&dd2=0&vw=1&collID=11&OID=110001392&vT=1) (1874)
    - Wassily Kandinsky, [Cemetery and Vicarage in Kochel](http://www.wassilykandinsky.net/work-9.php) (1909)
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**Sample Activities and Assessments**

* + **Literary Graphic Organizer**

As a class, we will keep a chart with the categories listed below of the stories and poems we read. As the chart is filled in, we will use the information to talk about what we learned from literature.

* + - Title and author
    - Type of literature (story or poem)
    - Main character(s)
    - Setting (geography, season and/or weather)
    - Summary (using the “[Somebody-Wanted-But-So” strategy](http://wvde.state.wv.us/strategybank/Somebody-Wanted-But-So.html))

Write your own response on a Post-It note, white board, or in your journal and share it with a partner before each section of the class chart is filled in. (RF.4.4a, RF.4.4b, RL.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.4.3, RL.4.5, L.4.5a)

**Class Discussion**

Let’s compare and contrast the impact of the poem or story’s setting on its events. How are similar settings portrayed similarly and differently? Look back for specific lines or paragraphs in order to find explicit details from the stories and poems we’ve read. What would happen if the story or poem’s setting were changed? (SL.4.1, RL.4.2)

**Informational Text Graphic Organizer**

As a class, we will keep a chart of information with the categories listed below learned about seasons and weather, at home and far away. As the chart is filled in, we will use the information to talk about what we learned from nonfiction books and/or <http://www.theweatherchannelkids.com/>, either explicitly read or inferred.

* + - Type of weather
    - How is it caused?
    - What positive effects does this weather have?
    - What negative effects can this weather have?
    - What do we need to do to prepare for this kind of weather?
    - What parts of the world experience this weather?
    - What are the “weather” words we should know? (e.g., meteorology, prediction, forecast, etc.)

Write your own response on a Post-It note, on a white board, or in your journal and share it with a partner before each section of the class chart is filled in. (RF.4.4a, RF.4.4b, RI.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.4.4, RI.4.9, L.4.4a)

**Journal Response**

Following a class discussion of weather and climate, be prepared to write an in your journal about the positive and negative effects of this weather on real life and life in literature. (SL.4.1, W.4.2a, W.4.2b, W.4.4, W.4.7, L.4.1a, L.4.1c, L.4.1d, L.4.1g, L.4.2a, L.4.2b)

**Reading Fluency**

Here is a page from *W is for Wind* by Pat Michaels. Find the highlighted line on your page—this is your “cue” line. When you hear that line read by a classmate, it is your cue to read the next passage aloud. Take two minutes to practice your passage to yourself, and then we will read the text as a class and discuss the information learned from it. (RI.4.3, RI.4.9, RF.4.4a, RF.4.4b)

**Class Discussion**

How is reading a book similar to, and different from, predicting the weather? Write your own response on a Post-It note, on a white board, or in your journal and share it with a partner. Cite specific examples from the text and from the experience of reading stories. (SL.4.1, RL.4.3)

**Literature Response**

What impact does weather have on stories such as *The Long Winter* (Laura Ingalls Wilder), *Time to Wonder* (Robert McCloskey), or *Hurricane Book* (David Wiesner)? What if the setting were changed (i.e., from winter to summer, from the sea to the desert, or from a hurricane to a snowy day)? How would that change the story? Turn and talk about your ideas with a partner, then write a first draft of a scene for a modified story of choice. (RL.4.3, W.4.3)

**Poetry/Literature Response**

Read *It Figures!: Fun Figures of Speech*by Marvin Terban as a class, and talk about the sections on similes and metaphors. Then, use Post-It notes to mark where you find examples of similes and metaphors about weather in poems and stories from this unit. Continue the T-chart started in the first unit (name of the technique and examples of each). (RL.4.4, RL.4.5, L.4.5a)

**Class Discussion**

After studying meteorology and weather (specifically clouds) in informational texts, read the poems "Clouds" by Christina Rosetti and "Fog" by Carl Sandburg. How does your understanding of cloud formation increase your appreciation for these poems (or not)?Write your own response on a Post-It note, on a white board, or in your journal and share it with a partner before discussing as a class. (SL.4.1, RL.4.1, RL.4.3)

**Dramatization/Fluency**

Choose one of the poems from this unit, such as“Dust of Snow” by Robert Frost,to read and discuss with a partner. Recite the poem for your classmates. (RF.4.4a, RF.4.4b, RL.4.5)

**Research Project/Write a Weather Forecast (Option 1)**

Read a variety of informational texts, in print and online, about a specific season in a geographical region of choice. Watch a meteorologist presenting a weather forecast [online](http://www.weather.com/outlook/videos/a-national-look-at-the-next-3-days-364#364) or on TV, and describe what makes that style of presenting unique. Then, write a weather forecast for the area of choice. Include visual displays in your presentation, as appropriate, and share your report with your class in the style of a meteorologist. (RI.4.1, RI.4.3, RI.4.4, RI.4.7, RI.4.9, W.4.2, W.4.7, SL.4.4, SL.4.5, L.4.1a,c,d,g, L.4.2a,b)

**Research Project/Q&A Report (Option 2)**

Read a variety of informational texts, in print and online, about a season or weather phenomenon of choice. Write a [report in question and answer format](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/question-answer-books-from-840.html) where you write the questions and find the answers. Include audio or visual displays in your presentation, as appropriate. Share your report with your class. (RI.4.1, RI.4.3, RI.4.4, RI.4.7, RI.4.9, W.4.2, W.4.7, SL.4.4, SL.4.5, L.4.1 a, L.4.1c, L.4.1d, L.4.1g, L.4.2a, L.4.2b)

**Class Discussion**

Look at the variety of maps available in books such as*Let's Investigate Marvelously Meaningful Maps* by Madelyn Wood Carlisle. Why is it helpful to use different types of weather maps? How is reading a map similar to and different from reading a book? Write your own response on a Post-It note, on a white board, or in your journal and share it with a partner before discussing as a class. (RI.4.7, SL.4.1)

**Word Study**

As an individual and as a class, keep an index card file of new words learned in this unit (i.e., meteorology, prediction, forecast, catastrophic, catastrophe, etc.). How does the context of the word help you understand its meaning? Keeping the words on index cards will allow you to use and sort the words by meaning and spelling features. (Note: This will be an ongoing activity all year long.) In addition, you may be asked to create an individual [semantic map](http://chs.smuhsd.org/learning_community/content_literacy/semantic_word_map.html) of related words in order to help you explore understanding of the interconnectedness of weather and story events. (L.4.4a, RI.4.6)

**Art Appreciation**

Look at how weather is portrayed in the various art selections (see Art, Music, and Media). What adjectives would you use to describe the weather? Are there any similes, metaphors, or figurative language that you think work best? Write your own response on a Post-It note or on a white board, and compare your answer with others in the class. Choose your favorite photograph and find a partner who chose the same photograph as you. Together, write an opening scene from a story that would have that would have that weather as its setting, using at least one metaphor or simile. (RL.4.7, W.4.3b, L.4.5a)

**Class Discussion/Reflective Essay**

As a class, summarize what was learned in this unit as it relates to the essential question (“How does setting impact a story?”). Write your own response on a Post-It note, on a white board, or in your journal and share it with a partner before discussing as a class. Following the class discussion, write your response in your journal and share it with your teacher. (W.4.9a, W.4.9b, W.4.4, L.4.1a, L.4.1c, L.4.1d, L.4.1g, L.4.2 a, L.4.2b)

**Class Discussion / Art Connection**

Select several works of art in which the subject’s choice of clothing clearly shows the weather being represented. Have students discuss how viewing the clothing helps us understand what the weather might be like in the work of art.

**Class Discussion / Art Connection**

Select several works in which color plays a key role in the representation of the weather. Students will discuss color choices and their relationship to the weather being shown.

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**Additional Resources**

* + - [Weather Detectives: Questioning the Fact and Folklore of Weather Sayings](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/weather-detectives-questioning-fact-775.html) (ReadWriteThink) (W.4.7)  
      Note: This lesson explores the truth and reliability of weather-related sayings such as, “Mare’s tails and mackerel scales make tall ships take in their sails.”
    - [Literature as a Jumping Off Point for Nonfiction Inquiry](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/literature-jumping-point-nonfiction-845.html) (ReadWriteThink) (RL.4.2)  
      Note: This lesson uses text sets and collections of multiple text genres with a single focus to facilitate student inquiry inspired by a fiction book they have read.
    - [The tropical storm that became Katrina formed over the Bahamas in 2005](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/calendar-activities/tropical-storm-that-became-20283.html)(ReadWriteThink) (RI.4.3)  
      Note: Explore the weather-related and other natural disasters that your geographical area is prone to; then review your school's emergency procedures with students.
    - [Exploring Cause and Effect Using Expository Texts About Natural Disasters](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/exploring-cause-effect-using-925.html) (ReadWriteThink) (RI.4.5)  
      Note: Expository texts are a key component of literacy, but often do not get introduced to students until the later grades. This lesson helps third- through fifth-grade students explore the nature and structure of expository texts that focus on cause and effect.
    - [Using *Snowflake Bentley* as a Framing Text for Multigenre Writing](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/using-snowflake-bentley-framing-774.html) (ReadWriteThink) (RI.4.9)  
      Note: In this lesson, students examine and sort multiple texts about snow, discuss the multiple genres represented in the *Snowflake Bentley* text, and develop a working definition of the term multi-genre. Using that definition, they then work in pairs or small groups to create their own multi-genre piece about winter using the Multi-genre Mapper interactive (explained in the link) and related resources for guidance.
    - [Using Picture Books to Teach Setting Development in Writing Workshop](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/using-picture-books-teach-a-107.html) (ReadWriteThink) (W4.3)  
      Students work as a class to chart the use of the three elements of setting (place, time, environment) in the story, using specific words and examples from the text. Students then discuss the techniques that the book’s author used to develop the setting, making observations and drawing conclusions about how authors make the setting they write about vivid and believable.
    - [How To Read Weather Maps](http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/programs/weathermaps/) (Discovery Channel, Discovery Education)
    - [Strawberry Girl Lesson Plan](http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/lessonplan.jsp?id=995) (Lesson plan for *Strawberry Girl* by Lois Lenski)(Scholastic)
    - [Weather Channel for Kids](http://www.theweatherchannelkids.com/)
    - [Weather Metaphors](http://knowgramming.com/weather_metaphors.htm) (Knowgramming.com)
    - [Idioms Category: Weather](http://www.usingenglish.com/reference/idioms/cat/4.html) (UsingEnglish.com)
    - [Music Meteorology](http://www.wxdude.com/guide.html) (Weather Dude)
    - Photographs of storms
      * <http://www.extremeinstability.com/>
      * <http://www.weatherpictures.nl/>
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**Terminology**

* + - (review of) poetic devices: rhyme scheme, meter, simile, metaphor (continued)
    - (review of) poetic terms: stanza, line, verse (continued)
    - context
    - explicit information
    - inference
    - prediction
    - setting
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**Making Interdisciplinary Connections**

* + **This unit teaches:**
    - **Art:** John Constable, Claude Monet, Thomas Hart Benton
    - **Geography:**
      * United States/local geography (e.g., coastal areas, plains, mountains, etc.)
      * African geography (e.g., Sahara Desert, tropical rain forests, coastal plains, grassy flatlands, etc.)
    - **Science:**
      * Weather: (e.g., snow, fog, wind, wind, cold and warm fronts, air movement and air pressure, affects of altitude on weather, hurricanes, tornadoes, etc.)
      * Meteorology and weather prediction (e.g., cloud formation, weather maps, weather stations, satellite maps, etc.)

**This unit could be extended to teach:**

* + - **Geography:** Map reading (e.g., climate, physical, political, topographical, etc.)
    - **Science:** Weather prediction tools and how to read them (e.g., barometer, anemometer, psychrometer, thermometer, rain gauge, Doppler radar, etc.)