



Children's Corner

Talking About the Weather Is Not Just For Circle Time

We experience weather every day. It affects what we can do outside, what we wear, what we eat and drink. For too often, in many programs, the weather is a brief topic at circle time. Every day, the same discussion, the same pictures. But weather is so much more interesting than this. Let's focus instead on children experiencing weather and coming to have a real understanding of the importance of weather in their lives while having fun.

Let's talk about the weather using positive terms. Even rainy days are beautiful, and we couldn't survive without them. Snow is not an inconvenience, but beautiful and so a different way to play outside.

6 BETTER WAYS TO TALK ABOUT THE WEATHER



WHAT WE SAY

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD

It's freezing out there!



We'll need to put on an extra layer today and bring out some hot chocolate.

Rain again? Looks like we're not going outside today.



Looks like it's a muddy puddle day!

What a dreary day.



Seems like the sun needed a break today. Let's go check out those cool clouds!

It wouldn't be so bad out today if the wind wasn't blowing.



Let's make a little fort or den and howl with the wind!

I don't mind the heat, I just can't stand the humidity.



You know what would be nice right now, a glass of cold lemonade!

This weather is ruining our plans!



Let's try to brainstorm something else that would be fun to do and work with the weather today.



Learning about the weather is as much fun as it is educational.

"Learning about the seasons helps children understand the passage of time and teaches them about change. While some seasonal changes are more obvious (like changes in the weather), there are many important subtle differences related to each season, like changes in the type of food that is available. For example, in some parts of the world, winter means shorter days, cooler temperatures, and little or no plant growth. In contrast, spring is full of new life with flowers budding and gardens beginning to grow." (<http://www.leapfrog.com/en-us/learning-path/discussions/why-is-it-important-to-learn-about-the-seasons>)

What is the climate where we live? What if we lived somewhere else? Hint: there are no snowmen or snowwomen in the deserts of Arizona.

Weather is interesting because it is always changing. "If you don't like the weather, wait a minute." Weather can be observed and measured.

Talk about the weather - As children come to fully understand what they mean, their vocabularies will grow as will their understanding of the world.

- Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall
- Hot and Cold
- Freezing
- Humid
- Sunny
- Storm and stormy
- Wind and Windy
- Clouds and Cloudy
- Partially sunny or cloudy
- Rain and Rainy
- Snow and Snowy
- Blizzard
- Fog and Foggy
- Thunder
- Lightening
- Rainbow
- Drought or dry spell
- Flood
- Hurricane
- Tornado
- Climate
- Forecast
- Weather clothes – boots, coats, mittens/gloves, snow suit, hood, hat, jacket, heavy and light and MORE

Read books about the weather –

- <https://www.amazon.com/Best-Sellers-Books-Childrens-Weather/zgbs/books/3280>
- <https://buggyandbuddy.com/childrens-books-weather/>

Set up a classroom weather station where children can track each day's weather and temperature. It should be near a window where the children see a large outdoor thermometer. Of course, first when setting up the station, there had to be an exploration of what a thermometer is. How will children record their observations? Is there a chart or graph? There should be a variety of art materials, so that children can document what they are observing. Find time each day to discuss what the children are seeing.

Don't just watch the weather! Go outside and experience the weather! "There is no bad weather – only bad clothing." If it is not too cold, too hot, or too stormy, children can be outside. It may be more work to get everyone into snow suits, but it is worth it. What is more fun than puddle stomping after a rain storm? Have extra warm coats, snow suits or snow pants, and boots if some children do not have them. Lie on your backs and observe the clouds. What words can children use to describe them? What shapes do they see?

Have an outdoor weather center. Measure the rain and the snow! Observe the changes that weather brings. What is the difference between a cold winter rain and a warm spring rain? Worms, anyone?

How do you know if it is safe to go outside? Use the weather watch guide!

Inside weather activities – Weather is all around us and should be all around us inside as well.

- Dramatic play area – weather dress-up clothes
- Sensory/Science area – when there is snow on the ground, fill the water table with snow and experiment on it. Freeze water in different sized and shaped containers. Put the ice in the water table or on trays. What can we learn? Use prisms to create rainbows. Look for them after a rainstorm.
- Art – Paint with ice cubes. Have many choices of art materials to create rainbows.

Talking To Children About Severe Weather

Sometimes the weather has a serious impact on our area and on the lives of the children in our care. These events can frighten children and affect their sense of safety and security. Their homes may have been damaged. They may have needed to evacuate. Or because of a weather event somewhere else, relatives may now be living with them. Children wonder if this event could happen here.

Our goal is to assure children who have these questions that it is the responsibility of the adults in their lives to keep them safe. We must respond to their questions and concerns with age appropriate answers. We need to listen to them express their fears. Encourage families to limit children's exposure to television and other media. Children don't need to know about events happening somewhere else that will have no impact on them.

No matter what we think about weather, it is going to happen. Let's see weather as another opportunity for learning about our world!

Resources –

- <https://www.kaplanco.com/ii/educating-children-about-weather-climate>
- <https://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/e-family-news/2011-talking-to-children-about-severe-weather>
- <http://www.leapfrog.com/en-us/learning-path/discussions/why-is-it-important-to-learn-about-the-seasons>