



The Mini Page

Next Week:
Spring equinox

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Founded by Betty Debnam



photo courtesy NOAA

How's the Weather?

Are you a weather-watcher? It's helpful to know what the conditions will be outside when we're making plans. With smartphones and weather apps created by weather experts, it's easier than ever to check the forecast.

How do the experts know what the weather will be like? This week, The Mini Page looks at weather forecasting.

Meteorology

Meteorologists (MEE-tee-or-ALL-uh-jists) are scientists whose job it is to let us know all about the weather.

Meteorology is the study of the atmosphere and all the conditions that produce our weather.

Weather matters

The forecasts that meteorologists make affect people's lives and well-being. For example, forecasts tell:

- pilots what flight plans to make.
- farmers when to plant crops.
- families to evacuate their homes when a hurricane is coming.
- kids when they need to bundle up to go outside.

Most meteorologists work for the National Weather Service, an agency of the U.S. government. Other meteorologists work for private companies that provide special reports or for TV stations.

The weather service has people at work every hour of the day and night at 122 weather-forecasting offices around

the country. Each office is responsible for reporting what is going on in its own area. Experts use powerful supercomputers that can create weather maps.

Weather clues

Meteorologists forecast the weather in the **troposphere** (TROP-uh-sfeer), or the layer of air closest to us. It is the air we breathe and where most of our weather takes place. This layer goes up 5 to 10 miles. It varies in different parts of the world.

Meteorologists are interested in:

- The **temperature**, or how cold or hot the air is.
- The **humidity**, or how much moisture is in the air.
- The **wind**, or how fast the air is moving.
- **Air pressure**, or the weight of the air around us.

These conditions are collected by **doppler radar**, **radiosondes** (packages of equipment attached to balloons), weather satellites, buoys and other instruments. This information is processed by computers and analyzed by meteorologists.

Mini Fact:

The GOES-16 weather satellite launched in late 2016.



A typical NWS regional office.



An NWS meteorologist in Norman, Oklahoma.

Want to be a meteorologist?

Are you intrigued by weather? Most meteorologists have a college education. They study:

- **Math**, so they can figure out what computer-generated figures mean.
- **Science**, so they can observe what is happening and use this information to make predictions.
- **Computer science**, so they can tell computers how to interpret the weather data they receive.
- **Chemistry**, so they will know how gases in the atmosphere (such as carbon dioxide) affect the weather.
- **Physics**, so they can understand the movements of the Earth's air.

Meteorologists' predictions are not always right, but technology and weather forecasting techniques continue to improve.

Resources



On the Web:

- noaa.gov/jetstream

At the library:

- "Weather Watch: Forecasting the Weather" by Ellen Labrecque
- "Weather Prediction" by Clara MacCarald

Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of meteorology are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

AIR, APPS, ATMOSPHERE, DOPPLER, EXPERT, FORECAST, HUMIDITY, MATH, METEOROLOGIST, OFFICE, PRESSURE, RADIOSONDE, SCIENCE, SERVICE, TEMPERATURE, TROPOSPHERE, WEATHER, WIND.

A P P S A Q E R U S S E R P R
S E R V I C E O F F I C E I E
M H U M I D I T Y K U H A D H
A E R E H P S O P O R T C O T
T W P R T S A C E R O F C P A
H I V X J E C N E I C S J P E
K N T E M P E R A T U R E L W
N D T S I G O L O R O E T E M
R A D I O S O N D E J Q S R X
T R E P X E R E H P S O M T A



Cook's Corner

Jelly-Filled Triangles

You'll need:

- 1 (8-ounce) package refrigerated crescent rolls
- jelly of your choice

What to do:

1. Open package and lay rolls flat on a cookie sheet.
2. Place 1 heaping teaspoon of jelly in the center of each of four crescents.
3. Place remaining four crescents on top and seal all around with a fork to make triangles.
4. Cook in oven according to package directions.
5. Remove from oven. Serve warm. Makes 4 triangles.



* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

Mini Jokes



- Wilson:** What happens when it rains cats and dogs?
Wynona: You have to be careful not to step in a poodle!

Eco Note



With around 57 million people engaging in bird feeding in the U.S. each year, new research is exploring how the activity not only benefits the birds, but improves human well-being too. Ashley Dayer of the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation at Virginia Tech said people participating in the new study, FeederWatch, "are not only reporting what they see at their bird feeders, but also their emotional responses to it." She adds that feeding birds is a great way to maintain a connection to wildlife.

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For later:

Find the weather report in your local newspaper.

Teachers: Follow and interact with The Mini Page on Facebook!



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1. To think that something will probably happen (6-letter verb)
[][][][][][]

2. With strong air movement or rapid air flow (5-letter adjective)
[][][][][]

3. Ice crystal layer that covers surfaces (5-letter noun)
[][][][][]

4. Areas of water or ice in the sky (6-letter plural noun)
[][][][][][]

1. The weather is so cold that forecasters _____ it will snow.
2. People who call Chicago home live in a _____ city.
3. _____ on the ground looks as if a light snowfall occurred.
4. _____ in the sky suggest that it might rain soon.

ROOTONYM®

by Jan & Carey Orr Cook



Study the definition. When you know the missing word, fill in the letter boxes and the sentence blanks.

Answers: Expect, Windy, Frost, Clouds.

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