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# Weather

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## National Geographic Readers: Weather

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What causes thunder and lightning? How do different clouds form? What makes a tornado twist?

<b>5-7</b>	<b>5-20 mins</b>	<b>330L</b>	<b>2.3</b>
Age Range	Length	Lexile <sup>®</sup> Measure	AR Level

The National Geographic logo, featuring a yellow square with a black border and the words "NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC" in white. Below the logo, the text "Washington, D.C." is written in white.

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# Look Up at the Sky

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The weather helps us know  
what to wear, and do, and grow.

It brings rain, wind, and sun.  
Let's go outside for some fun!



# What Is Weather?



Peek out your window at the sky. Is it sunny or cloudy? Rainy or windy? You are checking the weather!

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Weather is what it's like outside at one place, at one time. But keep a lookout. Weather can change fast!



# The Sun

Q

Why did the woman go outside with her purse open?

A  
She expected some change in the weather.

A

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The sun warms the land. It warms the air and water, too.

The sun's heat and light help things grow. Plants and animals need sunshine to live.



Sunny days are fun. You can play outside! Will you go to the park? Or ride a bike? The sun can make the air outside hot. You can cool off with a swim!



# Clouds

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Q

What does a cloud wear under its clothes?

Thunderwear.

A

White, fluffy clouds are called cumulus (KYOOM-yuh-lus) clouds.

Tiny water droplets float in the air. They group together. They make clouds of all shapes and sizes.

White, fluffy clouds mean good weather.

**Weather Word**

**DROPLET:** A very small bit of liquid

Flat, gray clouds  
bring rain.

Flat, gray clouds are called  
stratus (STRA-tuhs) clouds.

Some clouds are  
thin and wispy.  
They can look  
like curls of hair.  
These clouds float  
high in the sky.

Thin, wispy clouds  
are called cirrus  
(SIR-us) clouds.

# What Comes From Clouds?

Q

What did the cloud say to the lightning bolt?

You're shocking!

A

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*Drip, drop.* Down comes the rain!

Water droplets in clouds sometimes fall as rain. Rain falls in warm and cool weather.

Rain helps plants and animals live. It fills rivers and ponds. Rain forms puddles on sidewalks. *Splash!*





What falls and never gets up?

'mous



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### Weather Word

**FLURRY:** A light snowfall that barely covers the ground

*Brrr!* It's cold outside. Water droplets in clouds sometimes freeze. They can fall as hail or snow.

If it's hail, you'll see ice. If it's snow, you might get a flurry (FLUR-ee). Often, a lot of snow means a snow day!

# Lightning and Thunder

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Lightning is a super-hot stream of electricity (ee-lek-TRIS-uh-tee). It lights up the sky. *Flash!* It zips from the cloud toward the ground.

After lightning comes a *BOOM!* That sound is thunder.

## Weather Word

**ELECTRICITY:**  
Energy that can make heat and light

# Rainbows

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Q

What bow can't be tied?

A rainbow.

A

Have you ever seen a rainbow after a storm? Rainbows are made from sunlight and water droplets.

Rainbows paint bright stripes of color in the sky. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. Which color do you like best?

# 6 Ways Weather Is Wild

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1

Sometimes water flows where it is usually dry. This is called a flood.



2

Hail is ice that rains from the sky. It can be small. Or it can be bigger than a baseball!



4

Very strong winds sometimes twist. They form a tornado.



3

A hurricane brings heavy rain and strong winds.

Weather Word

**BLIZZARD:** A heavy snowstorm with wind



6

Sometimes it doesn't rain for a long time. This is called a drought (drowt).



5

It's hard to see in a blizzard!

# Wind

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Wind is moving air. A light wind is called a breeze. A strong wind is called a gale.

Wind has energy. It pushes clouds and rain across the sky. Wind can make kites dance.

# Weather and Me

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Q

What goes up when the rain comes down?

An umbrella.

A

The weather helps you plan your day. Should you wear sunglasses or rain boots? Will you swim or throw snowballs?

Wherever you go, the weather is always with you.



# What in the World?

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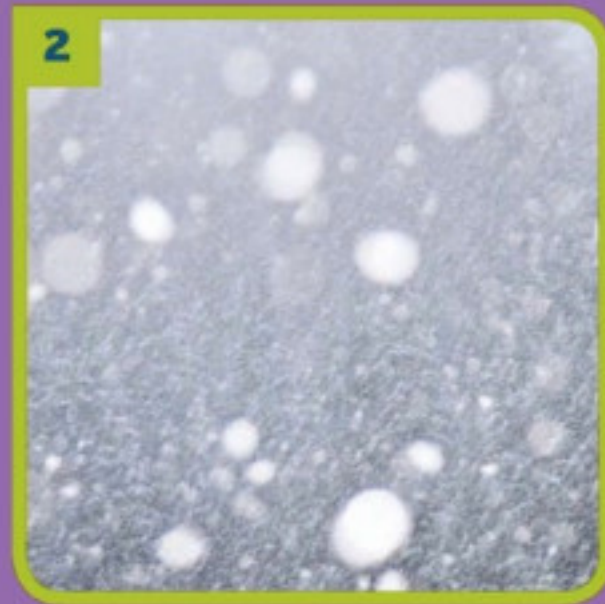
WORD BANK

raindrops snowflakes sunglasses umbrella clouds lightning

These pictures are close-up views of weather things. Use the hints to figure out what's in each picture. Answers are on page 31.



HINT: Wear these in sunny weather.



HINT: They fall as a flurry or as a blizzard.



HINT: This goes up when rain comes down.



HINT: A stream of electricity



HINT: They come in all shapes and sizes.



HINT: They fall from the clouds in warm weather.

Answers: 1. sunglasses, 2. snowflakes, 3. umbrella, 4. lightning, 5. clouds, 6. raindrops



**BLIZZARD:** A heavy snowstorm with wind



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**DROPLET:** A very small bit of liquid



**ELECTRICITY:** Energy that can make heat and light



**FLURRY:** A light snowfall that barely covers the ground