Weather Watchers: Junior Meteorologist Training!

Get ready to become a scientist who studies the weather, called a meteorologist! Today, we'll learn how to track the rain and observe the sky like a pro.

Activity 1: Build Your Own Rain Gauge

Let's measure how much rain falls!

1. Ask an adult to help you cut the top third off a clear plastic bottle.
2. Turn the top part upside down (like a funnel) and place it into the bottom part. If using a jar, you can skip this, but you'll need an open space for rain collection.
3. Place a few small stones in the bottom of the bottle/jar to keep it stable and prevent it from blowing over.
4. Use a ruler and permanent marker to make measurement marks (inches or centimeters) on the side of the bottle/jar, starting from the bottom just above the stones. Make the '0' mark first, then add water up to the '0' line. This way, any rain collected will show above the zero mark.
5. Place your rain gauge outside in an open area away from trees or roofs.
6. Check it each day, especially after it rains! Record how much rain (if any) collected above the '0' mark. Empty the gauge after measuring or if it gets too full.

Activity 2: Cloud Gazing

Clouds tell us a lot about the weather. Let's learn about three main types:

- **Cumulus Clouds:** Puffy, white clouds that look like cotton balls. They usually mean fair weather.
- **Stratus Clouds:** Flat, gray clouds that cover the sky like a blanket. They often bring drizzle or light rain.
- **Cirrus Clouds:** Thin, wispy clouds high up in the sky, often looking like feathers. They are made of ice crystals and can mean a change in weather is coming.

Cloud Craft: Use cotton balls and glue on blue construction paper to make your own pictures of cumulus, stratus, and cirrus clouds. Label each type!

Activity 3: Start Your Weather Journal

Let's be official weather watchers! In your notebook:

1. Write today's date.
2. Record the temperature (if you have an outdoor thermometer). You can also just describe if it feels hot, warm, cool, or cold.
3. Draw the types of clouds you see in the sky. Write down if it's sunny, cloudy, partly cloudy, etc.
4. Note if it's windy (Are the trees moving? A little or a lot?).
5. Record the rainfall measurement from your rain gauge (if it rained).
6. Try to do this every day for a week! What patterns do you notice?

Wrap-up Discussion

Why is it important for people (like farmers, pilots, and even us!) to know what the weather might be

like? How did tracking the weather yourself help you understand it better? What was your favorite part of being a junior meteorologist today?