

BE YOUR OWN FORECASTER



Sure, you can get the weather from an app or the radio. But when you pay attention to what's around you in nature, you're doing your own kind of weather research.

you may not realize it, but almost every day, you predict the weather. If you throw a hoodie in your backpack, you're predicting it will get cooler outside. If you say the buses will probably be cancelled tomorrow, you're predicting a snowstorm. (Okay, so maybe

you used someone else's forecast when you made those choices.) In the past, people relied on what they saw in the sky and the wind, the plants and the animals to tell them what kind of weather to expect. Here are some other ways you can help create your own personal weather outlook.



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LOOK UP

If the sky is clear and the sun is shining, well, the weather will probably be nice. The same is true if you see wispy cirrus clouds. Stratus clouds are like a blanket over the sky. They can mean light snow or rain, but if they're low and grey, the precipitation will probably last longer. Fluffy white lumps (nimbus clouds) high in the sky are mostly just decoration on a sunny day. But if they're low and dark, look out! Heavy snow or rain is coming.



WHERE'S THE WIND?

Next time you step outside, turn your face until you feel the wind. How hard is it blowing? Is it moving the clouds? And what direction is it coming from? This is the direction we use in the name of the wind. When you suddenly feel a cool breeze on a hot, humid day that often means the weather is changing and maybe bringing a rainstorm.



LORE AND LOGIC

There are all kinds of fun sayings about what different things you see in nature mean for the forecast. Some of them are true, some of them have a bit of truth and some are pretty questionable. For instance, there's rarely a calm before an actual storm, but when you see the undersides of leaves that often does mean rain is on the way.

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On your way to school, look around at the sky, the trees and other parts of your personal environment. What are they telling you about the weather?

