

Bulletin Board Theme Ideas: Grades 6-8

THEME IDEA: Guide to Weather Terminology

Make a bulletin board display to explain official weather- and natural disaster-related terminology relevant to the geographical region where you live. Use clip art as decoration or to serve as a visual reference for different categories of weather terminology.

Here's an example: Illustrate the difference between a weather watch and a warning. Make a large heading for the top of the board that reads: "National Weather Service Terms: WATCH vs. WARNING," and a smaller subhead that reads: "Knowing the difference saves lives!"

WATCH

A watch means "watch out!" Dangerous weather is likely to happen in your area, so watch for signs, listen to the weather radio, and be ready to act.

Severe thunderstorm watch = watch the sky

Tornado watch = watch the sky

Flood watch = water from river may overflow

Flash flood watch = watch nearby streams closely; flooding may occur 6 hours after end of heavy rain; be ready to flee the area

Coastal flood watch = possibility of flooding within 12-36 hours

Hurricane watch = hurricane conditions are expected in your area in 36 hours or less; follow weather broadcasts closely; stock up on emergency supplies; prepare to evacuate if you live on the ocean

Winter storm watch = follow weather broadcasts closely; stock up on emergency supplies, including firewood or alternate heating source

WARNING

A warning means that dangerous weather is already happening in your area.

Tornado warning = take shelter immediately just in case a tornado approaches your area

Flood warning = flooding is actually happening in the area

Flash flood warning = flash flood is imminent or actually happening; can be due to dam failure, ice jams or heavy rains

Coastal flood warning = areas along the coast are expected to be flooded by sea water



Hurricane warning = hurricane conditions expected in your area in 24 hours or less; evacuate or move to safe shelter

Winter storm warning = stay indoors; if already traveling in a car, head for the nearest shelter

For more information and ideas for your own bulletin board:

Visit the NOAA website for terms and information that is relevant to conditions in your area:

NOAA – Weather Terms and Warning/Advisory Criteria

<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/lot/severe/wxterms.php>

Hurricane Terms (FEMA)

http://www.fema.gov/hazard/hurricane/hu_terms.shtm

THEME IDEA: Guide to Weather Symbols

Weather symbols make for a visually intriguing bulletin board display, and serve as a useful reference for students learning about the science behind storms and natural disasters.

Symbols are used to represent weather elements such as rain, snow, and lightning, as well as the speed of the wind, types of clouds, air temperature, and air pressure.

- There are several reference charts available online, such as the National Weather Service guide (link below), which shows the 99 official symbols currently used in meteorology, divided into categories.
- Print out the National Weather Service symbol chart and mount the pages on brightly colored construction paper, before sticking on the bulletin board.

National Weather Service / NOAA – Surface Weather Plot Symbols

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/jetstream/synoptic/sfc_plot_symbols.htm#n

THEME IDEA: How Are Natural Disasters Measured?

- Use a colored printer to print pages from the following websites, mount them on colored paper, and post them on your bulletin board under category headings.
- These scales, ratings and warning systems are often referred to in weather forecasting, but many people do not know what they mean.



DiscoveryEducation.com/ReadyClassroom

Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale

<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutsshs.shtml>

Wildfire Warnings

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/boone/fire/wildfire/warning.shtml>

National Fire Danger Rating System

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/boone/fire/wildfire/levels.shtml>

Fujita Scale of Tornado Intensity

<http://www.fema.gov/kids/intense.htm#tornadoes>

Beaufort Wind Scale

<http://www.spc.noaa.gov/faq/tornado/beaufort.html>

Earthquakes - The Modified Mercalli Scale & The Richter Scale

<http://www.fema.gov/kids/intense.htm#earthquakes>

Volcanic Eruptions - The Volcanic Explosivity Index

<http://www.fema.gov/kids/intense.htm#volcanic>