

Wind – worksheet

Activity 1 – What wind?



Hurricanes

Often people wonder what the difference is between hurricanes, typhoons and tornadoes. Well, here's a simple guide. The term hurricane is used to describe a storm that occurs in the Atlantic and starts over the ocean. To be classified as a hurricane, and not a storm, the wind must be at least 75mph. Hurricanes are categorised using the Saffir-Simpson scale (similar to the more famous Richter scale for Earthquakes) with 1 being the first category, or weakest hurricane with winds of around 75mph up to 5 with wind speeds over 175mph. Most hurricanes happen between August and October – Hurricane season – and at the start of this season they are likely to begin in the Gulf of Mexico.



Typhoons

Often people wonder what the difference is between hurricanes, typhoons and tornadoes. Well, here's a simple guide. The term typhoon is used to describe a storm that occurs on the Western side of the Pacific around the coasts of Japan, China, the Philippines and Vietnam. Like hurricanes the wind must be above 75mph for the storm to be considered a typhoon. Typhoons are classified in the same way as hurricanes with 1 being the weakest and 5 the strongest. And, like hurricanes they occur from late summer to early autumn.



Tornadoes

Tornadoes differ from hurricanes and typhoons in two significant ways: firstly, they occur over land and not over water; secondly they occur when airstreams collide rather than when there is a difference in temperatures between the air and the surface. However, despite the differences, tornadoes can be just as destructive. Where the funnel (the centre of the storm) touches the ground heavy objects like animals, cars and even houses can be sucked up and flung around. And, surprisingly, the most likely place to see a tornado is the UK with around 33 every year!

Wind - question sheet

Read the sentences below. Write H for Hurricane Ty for Typhoon and To for Tornado next to each sentence according to the information you read in the texts. Be careful! Sometimes there are two possible answers.

1. A category 1 storm is when the wind is around 75mph.
2. Both of these are measured using the Saffir-Simpson scale.
3. Objects are sucked into the centre of this kind of storm and flung around.
4. There are lots of these in the UK.
5. These storms are likely to start in the Gulf of Mexico.
6. These two kinds of storm usually occur in late summer or early autumn.
7. This kind of storm happens over land, not sea.
8. This kind of storm is common near Japan.
9. This occurs in the Atlantic.
10. This storm starts when warm and cold airstreams collide.

Activity 2 – Up in the air!

Both hurricanes and typhoons are created in the same way. Here are the stages that lead up to a full-blown hurricane or typhoon. Unfortunately, the stages have been mixed up! Can you put them in the correct order?

- a) This mix of storms and warm air from the ocean creates low pressure at the surface.
- b) Air rises faster and faster to fill this low pressure high up.
- c) Strong storms drift over warm ocean water.
- d) As the storm moves and picks up more air from the ocean the speed of the wind increases.
- e) Once the air has started spinning, rising warm air causes pressure to decrease at higher altitudes leading to more low pressure.
- f) The air from the strong storms and the ocean surface mix and begin to rise.
- g) This movement of air upwards draws more warm air off the sea and sucks cooler air downwards.
- h) Winds blowing from the opposite direction cause this combination to start spinning.