

How are schools using the weather stations?

The weather station teaching ideas listed below come from teachers and administrators in Greater Victoria School District 61 who kindly agreed to participate in a survey we sent out in May 2006. We are extremely grateful to them for their time and for helping us collate some of their ideas here. We have grouped these ideas into three categories. Hopefully some of these teaching ideas will be helpful.

We Use the Weather Station Daily

- At our school we have daily announcements over the PA for the whole school & this builds weather awareness for everyone. Kids act as weather reporters and love doing it.
- We record the weather station information daily on a whiteboard in our classroom. Then we have a class discussion about changes in specific readings from previous days.
- Each day a different student collects and records the wind, speed, and direction, outside temperature, and barometer measures. We chart the conditions weekly and students use weekly data to predict weekend weather. On Monday we check the weather station data to see if our predictions were right.
- In our Gr.1 class we listen to weather announcements each day, observe the weather outside, and then integrate this information into our daily calendar activities (math & science).
- We record the daily temperature on a graph. Weather indicators are recorded on a weather graph with pictures and words (e.g. Cloudy).
- We do a daily computer check of temperature, humidity, and sometimes UV index or wind chill. We do math operations + or – each day's numbers compared to the previous day.
- In our school, several Gr.4 students collect weather data every morning and the information is given to our administrator who reads the weather news over our PA system during morning announcements.
- We have a daily weather report at our school. Monthly reports are printed out and students create graphs and use this information to make reports and do calculations. Families refer to the site for weather information for our local area. The weather station is on our school website.
- I ask students to check weather on www.victoriaweather.ca at home & report to the class in the morning.

More Ways to Use Weather Station Data

- I use the weather data to incorporate into math assignments related to graphing units. I also use the weather maps to discuss with students the variety of weather patterns found at any one time in Victoria.
- We used the weather station to watch the films of air pressure and precipitation to see how the two items are related. Students also compared our weather with weather at other schools. We were amazed at the microclimates found in Victoria.
- We compare weather from other schools using the website.
- We have daily reports of all available data; trends are discussed and children (Gr.5) are becoming more proficient in understanding weather patterns, in particular the often difficult “pressure systems.”
- We used the weather station to record weather daily on a classroom weather chart. We also learned about each individual weather instrument and used the weather station to show students a “real live” version of the instrument. We used information from different weather stations in the area by going on the website and having students find information from our station and others, such as the warmest temperature, windiest station, etc.
- We use the weather station data i) to verify data collected from student’s own weather instruments; ii) to help calibrate student’s instruments; iii) to look for trends in Victoria area weather by looking at data from different schools.
- Students in geography use the weather station for observations & to support the curriculum in the weather unit. On occasion students in other classes use the weather station for observation & class discussion.

Let’s Talk About Weather: Using the Weather Station for Discussion

- During “calendar” times, following morning announcements, we further discuss the weather report. We relate the weather to the seasons, and discuss whether this particular type of weather is typical for the season etc.
- We have discussed weather in general-causes, types etc. We have used the “weather centre” information to add to the general knowledge and to help the students become familiar with the “jargon” of weather and predictions. Good for graphs and info gathering and reporting.
- We looked at weather station models- learned to read them and what the different numbers meant to predict the forecast. We also looked at the different types of clouds and how weather affects people.