

Ed Extras

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Beat the Heat with Your Weather Page

Some days are just too hot to be outside! Summer's temperatures often send kids and parents inside to cooler air. Use these hot afternoons and the weather section from your newspaper for some literacy and math fun. Don't get the paper? Websites like accuweather.com and weather.com provide the same information to get you started.

Graphs

Most weather pages offer at least one or two different types of graphs. Take some time to talk with your child about how to "read" graphs. There is often a graph title, at least two axis, and the graph information to interpret. Ask your child to "read" the information from the graphs. Then, make your own graph to track the heat. How many lemonades did it take to keep cool? How many minutes did it take your dog to cool off from her walk?

The big picture

Most weather pages include temperature information from around your region and around the country. The temperatures provide an opportunity to use vocabulary words like highest, lowest, coolest, and weather extreme. Discuss why certain parts of the country may experience cooler temperatures than other parts. Why might some areas have more humidity than others? See if your child can put five cities in order by temperature from hottest to coolest.

Maps

Most weather pages include a map of the area and a map of the country. Talk about the key, the legend used on the map, and the compass rose that indicates North, South, East and West. Then, create a map of a familiar area together. You may want to map out your favorite park, your child's bedroom, or an imaginary "dream playhouse." Encourage your child to include his own key or legend on the map. What symbols will he choose? Why?

Take a virtual trip

Use the information from the weather page to choose one city or country to visit on a virtual vacation. Use the Internet or books from the library to research the weather there this time of year. What type of clothing will you need to pack? Will you need a passport? What currency does your destination use? Spend some time researching your vacation spot.

No matter the weather, spending some time with the weather page provides some cool and fun relief for you and your child.

For ideas on selecting good children's books about weather, see "Mother Nature shows off: shake, rumble, and roll" at www.ReadingRockets.org/blog/24618

