

TEACHING NOTES

Book title: Awesome Forces of Nature

Series: Terrifying Tornadoes

What is a funnel cloud? What is the tornado's eye? Where do tornadoes most often occur? Terrifying Tornadoes answers these questions and explores other related topics, such as unusual tornadoes called waterspouts that form over water rather than land or an entire area that has become known as Tornado Alley.



Text Structure: Compare and Contrast

Ask students to read the text box on page 7. Explain that a compare-and-contrast text structure is used here. With this text structure, the author shows how tornadoes and hurricanes are alike and different. Tell students to use the reproducible graphic organizer to record these characteristics. Explain that they should write differences in the exterior of the ovals, and similarities in the area where the two ovals overlap. Draw a Venn diagram on the board and model how to record a similarity by writing *both have spinning winds* in the overlapping section.



Text Feature: Text Boxes

Sometime students skip over text boxes, thinking they are unimportant. Remind students that text boxes are important and that spending time reading and analyzing them can improve students' comprehension of a text. Have students read page 10, including the textbox. Explain that text boxes often expand on the information discussed in the main text. Point out that this text box includes a specific example of tornadoes and expands on the idea that tornadoes can happen anywhere.



Comprehension Strategy: Using Background Knowledge

Explain that using background knowledge means connecting to personal experience (from life) and knowledge (from study) to fully understand a text. Model for students how they could use background knowledge before and during reading.

Think Aloud:

"I know that tornadoes are like giant funnels that sweep over the land and that they destroy things in their path. I want to know how and why they form. I also know that tornadoes usually happen in flatter states, such as those in the Midwest. I want to know if they would form in areas where there are mountains."

Tell students that by thinking about what they know and what they want to learn, they can answer questions as they read and gain a better understanding of the text. Discuss any one section of the book, interviewing students about what they already know and what they want to learn about that section.



Word Study: Using Context Clues

Ask students to read page 24 and to pay attention to the boldfaced words. Explain that they can learn the meaning of these words by using context clues. Context clues can be found in the words and sentences that surround an unfamiliar word. Context clues often give examples, synonyms, or definitions for important terms in a text. Use the word *forecaster* as an example of using context clues to figure out a word's meaning. Point out that the text says that *forecasters* "can tell where storms are gathering" and can "predict where tornadoes may start." Ask students to use this information to guess at the word's meaning. Then verify the meaning with the glossary definition. Assign partners and have them use context clues to determine the meaning of *satellites* and *volunteers*. Students may verify their guesses by reading the glossary definitions.



Writing and Responding: Safety Cards

Have students make safety cards that use information from the text to explain what to do in case of a tornado and what types of disaster supplies should be kept ready. Remind students that a safety card should only contain the most important information. Suggest using bullets and numbering to summarize these tips.

 *Indicates a graphic organizer is linked to this activity.*

NAME

