

Construct a Weather Spinner

Tracking the weather serves as a perfect educational—and entertaining—introduction to the natural sciences. Your child will learn to see details and patterns in atmospheric conditions. A simple weather spinner provides an accessible tool for your child to improve her observation and analysis ability, important scientific skills she will use for the rest of her life.

What You Need:

- White tag board or poster board
- Pencil
- Crayons, makers, or colored pencils
- Metal brad

What to Do:

1. Help your child brainstorm about different types of weather. Your goal is to expand her language beyond calling the weather "hot" and "cold" to descriptive adjectives such as rainy, sunny, snowy, windy, cloudy, and humid. Keep a list or picture cues of the descriptors to help jog her memory.
2. Cut a square piece of tag board or poster board to use as the base of the weather spinner. Then, cut out an arrow shape to use as the spinning tool.
3. Have your child divide the square into sections. The sections do not need to be exactly equal sizes, but they should all radiate from the center of the square. Tell her to fill each section with the name and picture of each specific type of weather that she brainstormed. Keep one section of the square blank.
4. Carefully puncture a hole through the center of the tag board arrow as well as the center of the spinner's base and fold the edges of the metal brad down to attach it. Make sure to attach it loosely enough so that you can still spin the spinner with ease.
5. Hang the weather spinner by the door or a window in your entryway so that your child can easily check on the weather and adjust the spinner.
6. When a day arrives with a type of weather that she did not foresee, such as a lightning storm or thick fog, have your child add that type of weather to the blank section.



To get the most out of this activity, have her record her daily observations in a notebook. At the end of a month or season, she can create a graph or tally chart of the different types of weather that she examined.

Consider extending this activity even further by encouraging your child to orchestrate a nightly weather report discussing the day's weather and making predictions for the following day. This printable weather log is handy.