

Lesson 1: Weather on the Farm (2 Days)

Getting Started

? Questions to Explore

- Why does the weather change?
- How does the weather affect people, plants, and animals?
- What makes an environment safe or unsafe?



Facts and Definitions

- Tornado Alley is the part of the United States where tornadoes are most likely to occur.
- Tornadoes can be dangerous.

⦿ Skills

- Make predictions about events in a story. (LA)
- Locate information about a topic. (LA)
- Read expository materials for answers to specific questions. (LA)
- Compare similarities and differences between oneself and another. (LA)
- Analyze environmental issues and their impact on culture. (SS)
- Describe weather. (S)

✂ Materials

- *Tornado* by Betsy Byars, Doron Ben-Ami
- blue construction paper
- crayons or colored pencils
- crayons or colored pencils* (Activity 3 - Option 1)
- journal
- U.S. map

Introduction

Cover up the title of the book, *Tornado*, and ask your child to look at the cover. Ask him to think of three or four book titles, based on the cover. Then let him read the real title.

Explain that this book is going to be about a real tornado and a dog named Tornado.

Activities

Activity 1: What Is a Tornado?

Ask your child to describe a tornado and draw a picture of a tornado on a piece of blue construction paper. Then ask him to describe what kind of damage a tornado can cause. If your child is not familiar with tornadoes, read about them in a weather book or on the Internet. Ask your child to write three factual sentences about tornadoes beneath his picture. Discuss the difference between factual information and nonfactual information.

Activity 2: Tornado Alley

Explain to your child that Tornado Alley is the part of the United States that is the most likely to experience tornadoes. Give your child a U.S. map and then show him the map on the "Tornado Alley" page. Ask him to label the states that are shaded (For 1950-1984- this included parts of South Dakota, Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. For 1984-2019, "Tornado Alley" shifted east to include

parts of Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama). Then he can color the shaded part red. Explain to him that this part of the U.S. is Tornado Alley. Encourage him to color Canada blue and the Gulf of Mexico green. Then encourage him to draw the Rocky Mountain range and Appalachian Mountain range on either side of Tornado Alley.

Explain that the land included in Tornado Alley is relatively flat, which allows cold, dry air from Canada to meet warm, moist tropical air from the Gulf of Mexico. When this cold dry air meets the warm moist air, a tornado can form.

Talk about the location of your home in relation to Tornado Alley.

Day 2

Activity 3: Farm Life

Review with your child the definition of *setting* — the time and place where a story occurs. Explain to him that the setting of *Tornado* is a farm. Ask your child what he knows about life on a farm. Read about life on a farm and look at pictures of farm life in books or on the Internet. Discuss the different jobs that farmers and their families have — plowing crops, milking cows, gathering eggs, and feeding the animals. Explain that farm families must get up early in the morning and must work very hard to take care of the crops and animals.

Ask your child what he would enjoy and what he would not enjoy about living on a farm and then ask him to complete one of the following options.

Option 1

For this option, give your child the "Farm Life" (Option 1) page and ask him to draw a picture of himself working on a farm. At the bottom of the page he can write a short paragraph describing what he enjoys about the farm.

Option 2

For this option, your child can use the "Farm Life" (Option 2) page to create a Venn diagram that compares life in his own home to what his life might be if he lived on a farm. Ask him to think of two examples of things he does that are different from what people on a farm do, two things that people on a farm do that are different from what he does, and then one way that life on a farm is similar to his own life. If your child is able to think of more ideas to include on the Venn diagram, encourage him to do so.

Activity 4: Daily Schedule

Review what your child has learned about life on a farm. Tell him to pretend that he lives on a farm. In his journal, ask him to write a schedule that outlines what he does each day — chores, fun, family time, learning, etc. He can pretend to live on a farm in the present or he could pretend to live on a farm in the later 1800s or early 1900s. Discuss the difference between life on a farm today and life on a farm many years ago. Some ideas might include tractor vs. plow, machines that milk cows vs. hand milking, chemicals for crops vs. often losing crops to insects.

He can start with 6:00 a.m. and continue through 8:00 p.m. Each hour he should list what activity he would engage in on the farm. Remind him that he needs to include three meals each day in his schedule. Discuss

whether girls' chores on a farm are different from boys' chores.

Wrapping Up

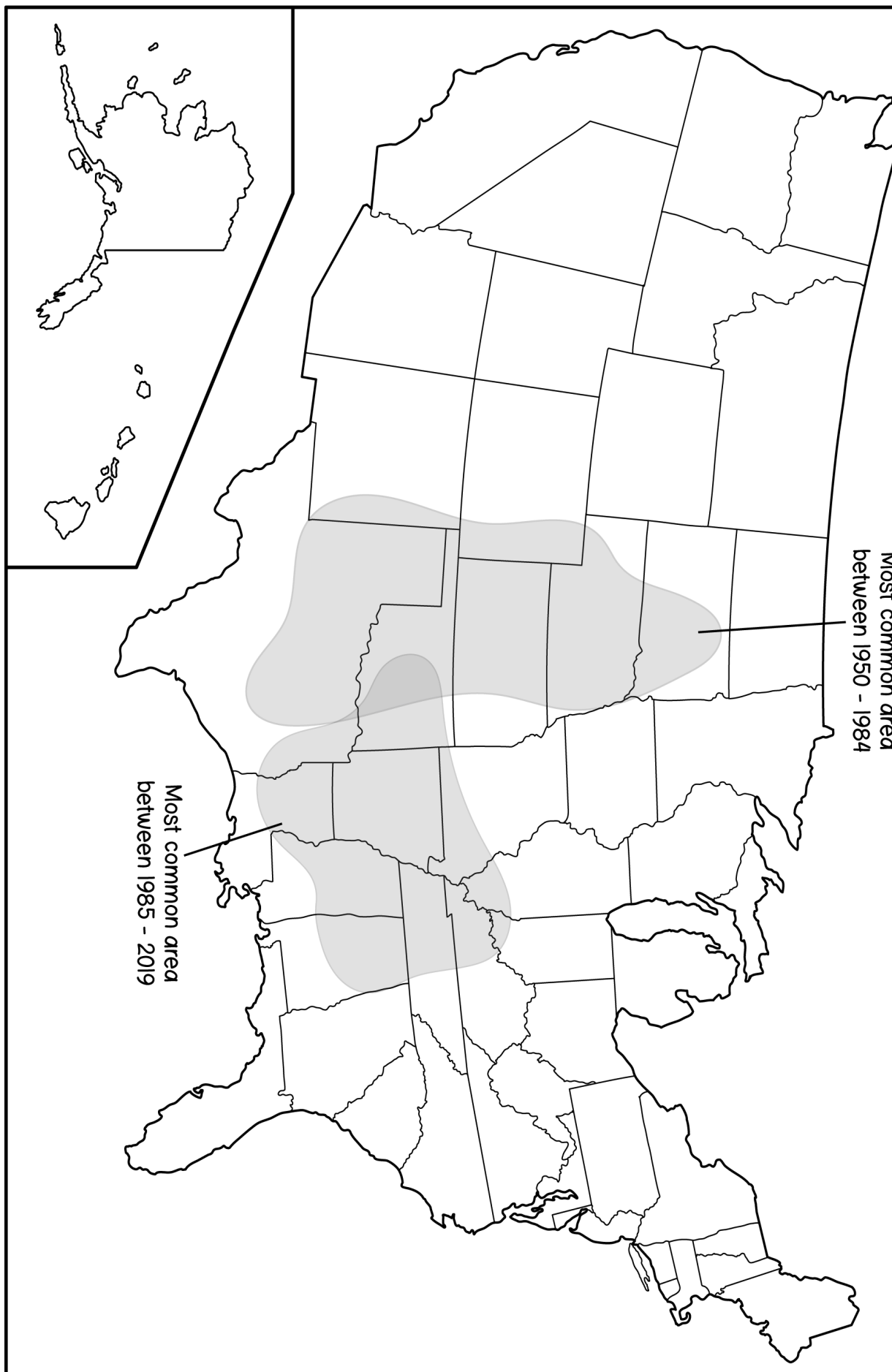
Ask your child to describe a tornado and why it can be dangerous. Then ask your child to describe what life on a farm might be like.

Life Application

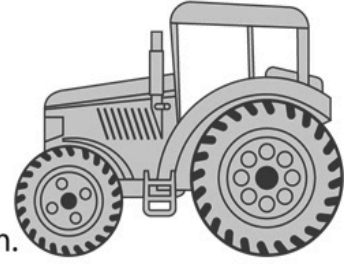
At some point during the unit of study, take your child to visit a local farm and then let him write about his visit to the farm. If your family already lives on a farm, visit a farm that is different from your own.

Tornado Alley

Directions: Look at the map and color the shaded part red. These states make up Tornado Alley.



Farm Life



Directions: Draw a picture of yourself working on a farm. Then write a paragraph to describe what you would most enjoy about working on the farm.

Farm Life

Directions: Create a Venn diagram to compare your life now to what your life would be like if you lived and worked on a farm. Think of two differences for each side and one similarity.

