

EXTREME WEATHER

Lesson Plan

Storm Similes

Lesson Plan for *Thunderstorms*

Grade 4

Objective

To help students practice recognizing similes and using them in their own writing.

Things Needed:

- *Thunderstorms* book
- Access to the “Thunderstorms” web page on the Pop! website: <https://popbooksonline.com/extreme-weather/thunderstorms>
- Whiteboard
- Paper and pencils

Before the Activity

Have students read the *Thunderstorms* book. Open the “Thunderstorms” web page in your internet browser and pull up the “Watch a Video” tab.

Activity

To start, review the key details from Chapter 1 (“How Thunderstorms Form”):

- What kind of air do thunderstorms need to form? (Answer: They form as a result of rising warm air and falling cold air.)
- What is a supercell? (Answer: It is a kind of thunderstorm with strong, spinning winds.)
- What kind of air does a supercell need to form? (Answer: It forms when the rising air has strong, wild winds that make the clouds spin.)
- What does the book tell us about a supercell’s shape? (Answer: It often looks like an anvil.)



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Next, watch the video on the Pop! website and read the caption, using these questions to review key details:

- What are cumulonimbus clouds? (Answer: They are the kind of tall cloud that can cause thunderstorms.)
- What kind of air do these clouds need to form? (Answer: They need warm, humid air.)
- What does the website tell us about the shape of cumulonimbus clouds? (Answer: They often look like mushrooms.)

Both in the book and on the website, the text uses a comparison to describe the cloud's shape.

Write the following sentences on the whiteboard:

- A supercell looks like an anvil.
- Cumulonimbus clouds look like mushrooms.

Explain that in each sentence, the author is using a simile. A simile is when a writer uses the words *like* or *as* to make a comparison between two things. Underline the word *like* in each sentence on the whiteboard. Then write two more examples (based on the text from page 22 of the book) using the word *as*:

- Hail can be as small as a pea.
- Hail can be as big as a softball.

Have students think about a time when they saw a thunderstorm. Students should write a paragraph describing what it was like. Their paragraph should include at least three similes. Students can use these comparisons to tell how the thunderstorm looked, sounded, or smelled. Or, they can use the comparisons to tell what they were doing, thinking, or feeling during the storm.

Evaluation

Collect the paragraphs and give students up to 5 points:

- 1 point for including each simile
- 1 point for focusing the paragraph on the assigned topic
- 1 point for using good spelling and grammar

Standards

This lesson plan may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' language standards, grade 4 (L 4.4).

