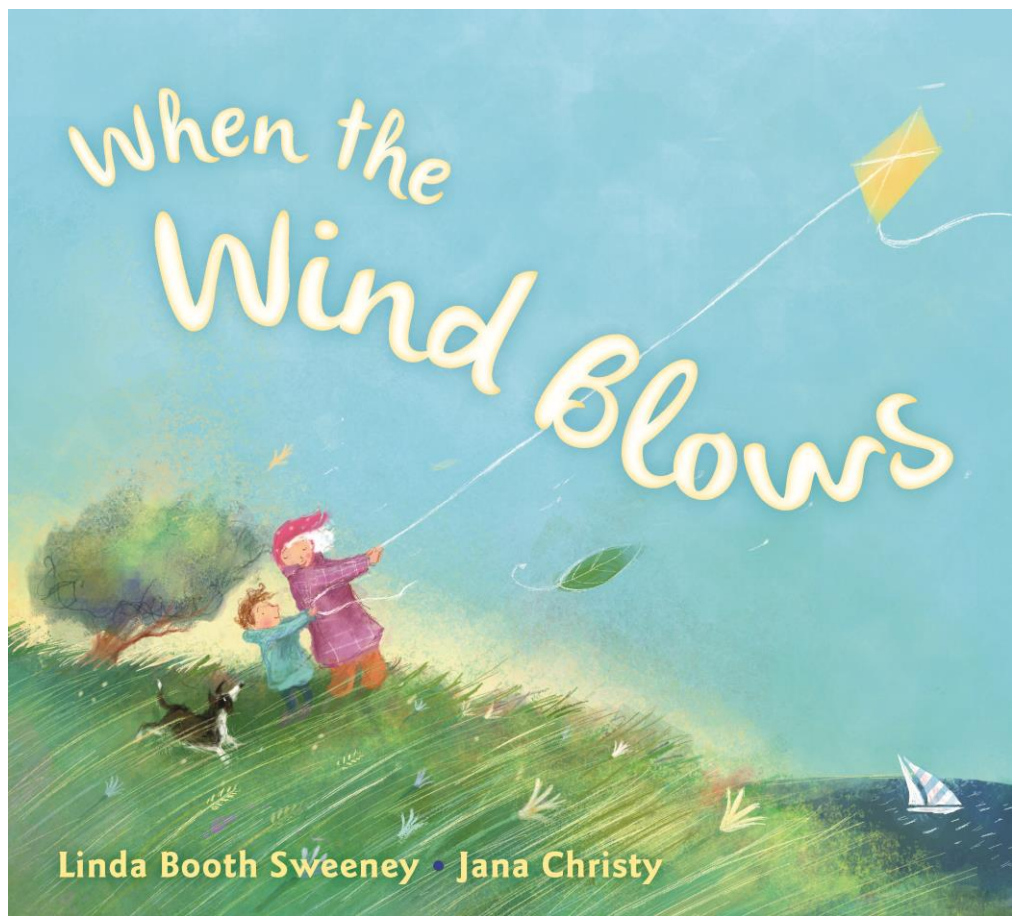


# When the Wind Blows

A teacher's guide created by Marcie Colleen  
based upon the picture book  
written by Linda Booth Sweeney and illustrated by Jana Christy



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An imprint of Penguin Group (USA)

**Linda Booth Sweeney**  
**Author, *When the Wind Blows***

Linda Booth Sweeney wrote this book after nearly floating away in a windstorm while on a walk with her then-toddler son. They both thought it was hilarious and have enjoyed wild and woolly storms ever since. Linda is the author of three nonfiction books: *The Systems Thinking Playbook*, *When a Butterfly Sneezes*, and *Connected Wisdom*. This is her first children's book. Linda lives near Boston with her husband, three children, Rugby the dog, Boo the parakeet, Cinnamon Bun the rabbit, and a gecko named Gregg. For more, visit her at [www.lindaboothsweeney.com](http://www.lindaboothsweeney.com).

**Jana Christy**  
**Illustrator, *When the Wind Blows***

Jana Christy did much of the art for this book during hurricane-force winds on a small island off the coast of Nova Scotia—flags flapped and walls shook in a house that looks remarkably like the house in this story. She loves drawing girls with attitude, boys with pluck, the chickens that wander around her garden, punks, robots, cavemen and zombies, bleak weather, windy days, sea creatures, and more. She loves creating handmade minibooks with her husband, exploring new places with her children, and letting her brain and brushes wander. She lives in North Adams, Massachusetts. Visit her at [www.janachristy.com](http://www.janachristy.com).

**Marcie Colleen**  
**Curriculum Writer**

This guide was created by Marcie Colleen, a former teacher with a BA in English Education from Oswego State and a MA in Educational Theater from NYU. In addition to creating curriculum guides for children's books, Marcie can often be found writing picture books of her own at home in Brooklyn, NYC. Visit her at [www.thisismarciecolleen.com](http://www.thisismarciecolleen.com).

## **How to Use This Guide**

This classroom guide for *When the Wind Blows* is designed for students in kindergarten through third grade. It is assumed that teachers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *When the Wind Blows* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies curricula.

All activities were created in conjunction with relevant content standards in ELA, math, science, social studies, art, and drama.

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# English Language Arts

## **Reading Comprehension**

Before reading *When the Wind Blows*,

Look closely at the Front Cover ~

- Describe what you see. Who are the characters? What are the characters doing?
- Stand up and pretend to be the boy in the illustration. How does this pose make you feel?
- Now in pairs, one student poses as the boy and other poses as Grandma. How does this make you feel? What kind of relationship do you think these characters might have?
- Can you guess what the story might be about? What are some clues you can find in the cover illustration?

The Back Cover~

- The back covers says, "*When the wind blows...look for surprises!*"
  - Do you see any surprises in this illustration? If so, what?
  - Does this make you want to read the book? Why or why not?
  - Do you think you can look for surprises while the book is being read?
  - Have you ever seen anything surprising blowing in the wind? If so, what?

Now read or listen to the book.

Help students summarize in their own words what the book was about.

- Where is the boy when the wind first starts to blow? How might he know it is windy outside? Look closely at the illustration.
- Why do you think the boy and Grandma want to be outside?
- What happens to the kite?
- What are some things they see as they chase the kite along the beach?
- How do they get the kite back?
- What makes the boy and Grandma "zoom" home?
- Once inside, what are some of the cozy things the family does together?

Let's talk about the people who made *When the Wind Blows*.

- Who is the author?
- Who is the illustrator?
- What kind of work did each person do to make the book?

Now, let's look closely at the illustrations.

- Jana Christy uses several different techniques to show the blowing wind. Look closely at the illustrations. What are some of those techniques?

In the style of Jana Christy.

- Choose a stanza from *When the Wind Blows*. Illustrate the stanza.
- Display the finished pieces in the classroom.

Look closely at the following spreads:

The "Jackets jumble. We fly!" spread

- Can you find
  - Two sailboats?
  - A curious kitty?
  - A sleeping kitty?
  - A seashell?
  - Three pairs of green shoes?
  - A checkerboard?
  - A knitting basket?

The "Strollers stroll. Kites glide" spread

- Can you find
  - The boy's house?
  - Two seagulls?
  - A hiding puppy?
  - Three kites?
  - A barn?

The "Puddles splosh. We giggle" spread

- Can you find
  - Three cupcakes?
  - A lighthouse?
  - A church?
  - The kite?

The "Skies clear. Stars gleam" spread

- Can you find the top hat?

## **Create a Windy Library**

Gather fiction and non-fiction books, newspaper articles, internet clippings, videos and any other form of media about the wind.

Pair *When the Wind Blows* with any of these books:

*Feel the Wind (Let's Read-And-Find-Out Science 2)* by Arthur Dorros (HarperCollins 2000)

*I Face the Wind* by Vicki Cobb, illustrated by Julia Gorton (HarperCollins 2003)

*Wind (Weather Basics)* by Erin Edison (Capstone 2011)

*I Wonder Why the Wind Blows* by Anita Ganeri (Kingfisher 2011)

*Blue on Blue* by Dianne White, illustrated by Beth Krommes (Beach Lane 2014)

*Wind (Whatever the Weather)* by Carol Thompson (Child's Play International 2014)

*Wind (Weather Wise)* by Helen Cox Cannon (Heinemann 2014)

## **Writing Activities**

### **Everyone Has a Story**

A community, such as the seaside town in *When the Wind Blows*, is made up of many diverse people and each person has a story to tell.

- Show several illustrations from *When the Wind Blows* and have students point out the people.
- Make a list of the various people (or animals) found throughout the book.
- Ask students to choose one person (or animal) from the list and answering the following questions:
  - Who are they?
  - Where do they live?
  - How did they come to live in this town?
  - What is their typical day like?
  - Why are they out in this storm?
  - How do they feel about the storm?

- What do they hope to do when the storm is over?
- Using the answers to the questions above, write a creative story about this character. As in *When the Wind Blows* the story can start before the storm, continue when the character is out in the storm, and end once they are safely at their destination.

## **“Who Said That?” ~ Narrative and Dialogue**

*When the Wind Blows* is a book told in rhyme, yet without a traditional narrative or dialogue. Each rhyme works with the illustrations to tell the story. This provides a great springboard to discuss narrative and dialogue in a story.

Narrative ~ An account of the connected events. Often through a narrator who gives information on the feelings and actions of the story.

Dialogue ~ The written conversational exchange between two or more characters.

Advanced classes will be able to fully re-write *When the Wind Blows* with a combination of narrative and dialogue. However, if the class is less-advanced, simply have them create captions and thought and/or speech bubbles for each spread.

*Additional Challenge:* Introduce the idea of 1<sup>st</sup> person point-of-view and re-write *When the Wind Blows* from one character’s point-of-view. First person point-of-view narrative should include the word “I”.

## **Pay Attention ~ observing nature**

Linda Booth Sweeney wrote *When the Wind Blows* inspired, in part, by this stanza from Mary Oliver’s poem, *Sometimes*:<sup>1</sup>

*"Instructions for living a life.  
Pay attention.  
Be astonished.  
Tell about it."*

As a class, discuss the poem.

- What might the poem mean, in your own words?
- Do you think the characters in *When the Wind Blows* might be inspired by Mary Oliver’s poem, too? Why or why not?
  - Show examples of “paying attention” in *When the Wind Blows*.

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<sup>1</sup> From Mary Oliver’s, *A Thousand Mornings: Poems*. Penguin Books. 2013



- Show examples of being astonished.
- How can the characters share their experience by telling about it?
- In what ways can you follow Mary Oliver's advice?

#### Create a Nature Journal:

- Gather together 6-8 pieces of paper (some can be lined for writing, others blank for drawing).
- Add on top a piece of blank paper for the cover.
- Punch three holes through the pieces of paper and the cover sheet.
- Cut a piece of cardboard just a bit larger than your paper.
- Punch three corresponding holes in the cardboard.
- Place the papers on top of the cardboard and top everything with the cover sheet.
- Line up the paper and cardboard holes. Then tie together with yarn or string.
- Copy Mary Oliver's poem onto the cover sheet and decorate.
- You are now ready to head outside and observe nature.

#### Observing nature.

- Find a "sit spot" outside where you can sit quietly and observe. Be sure to have your Nature Journal and something to write with. You may use colored pencils, crayons or markers if you prefer.
- Sit for at least thirty minutes. You may set an alarm.
- Look all around you. What do you see? What do you hear? What do you smell? What do you feel?"
- Find something you want to write about or draw and record it in your Nature Observation notebook.
- Continue to observe nature in the same spot, thirty minutes at a time, for a whole week. Every day, take care to notice something different to write about or draw.

#### *"Tell about it."*

- Share your notebook with the class.
- What did you find when you paid attention?
- What did you feel? What did you smell? What did you hear? What do you see?
- Did the weather ever change? How was it different? How did the weather (wind, rain, snow, etc.) affect nature?
- What astonished you?
- If you were to continue observing nature, what spot would you choose? Why?

For further nature exploration, check out *The Nature Connection: An Outdoor Workbook for Kids, Families, and Classrooms* by Clare Walker Leslie (Storey Publishing 2010)

### **Biomimicry Extension**

Keen observation of nature is a “habit of mind” in Biomimicry, a framework and method for learning from nature’s adaptations to design solutions to everyday challenges.

If you have access to an outdoor setting, even just a garden, encourage students to look at ways that organisms adapt to and use the wind.

Observe the trees and plants:

- What happens to a tree when a strong wind blows?
- What happens to plants?
- Ask children to find two different leaves -- a large leaf and a small leaf from two different trees.
- How is each designed for the wind? Some large leaves along windy coastlines (palms, for example) are "pre-torn". Why would that design make sense? <sup>2</sup>



Take students outside to find wind-blown seeds from trees such as maples, sycamores, pines. If these trees aren’t available, they could look at other plants like dandelions.

- How does the shape and attachments of the seed enable movement in the wind?
- What if you changed the shape?
- Would that change the seed’s movement in the wind? They can also observe how organisms are shaped to better withstand winds, such as how the shapes of jonquils (or daffodils) and cattails help them to swivel in the wind.

For more seed-related inspiration, see the wonderful book by Rob Kessler and Wolfgang Stuppy entitled SEEDS: <http://www.amazon.com/Seeds-Time-Capsules-Rob-Kessler/dp/1554072212>

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<sup>2</sup> Photo of Leaf Fan from: AskNature: <http://www.asknature.org/strategy/3aa92f051bc3f185594fb1d902e886d2#.VQHKl2bboYY>

(Thanks to Sherry Ritter, Colleen Mahoney and Kathy Zarsky of the Biomimicry Education Network for their contributions to this activity. For more ways to bring Biomimicry into your teaching practice, see the Biomimicry Educators Network, <http://ben.biomimicry.net/>)

## **Speaking and Listening Activities**

Picture books are written to be read aloud. Here are some ways to bring *When the Wind Blows* to life in the classroom and have fun with speaking and listening skills.

### **Choral Reading**

- Using the text of *When the Wind Blows*, take the role of the narrator while students chime in with the nature sounds.
- Turn *When the Wind Blows* into a script. Read the script out loud together. Emphasize memorization of the students' parts as well as good vocal expression.

### **Mime**

- Ask students to silently act out a page from the book, exaggerating body motions and facial expressions. See if others can identify the page that goes along with the mimed action.

### **Drama**

- Create a TV commercial to encourage people to experience the wind or to read *When the Wind Blows*.
- In small groups, act out *When the Wind Blows* as an opera, a western, a "breaking news" story, a thriller, etc. The rest of the class guesses what "style" is being presented.
- Make and record a radio version of *When the Wind Blows*. Students decide what to use for the sound effects to create a mental picture of the story.

## **Language Activities**

### **It's Rhyme Time**

*When the Wind Blows* is written in rhyme. Here are some activities to help introduce rhyming to your class.

### **Engine and Caboose**

Introduce the concept of producing rhyming words with train engines and caboose pictures or objects. Explain that when you make rhyming words, the caboose will

always stay the same but the engines will be different. Pick a sound for the caboose (e.g., "at") and place many different engines in front to make rhyming words (e.g., h-, m-, c-).

### "I Spy"

Start the activity by sitting with the children in a large circle. Provide the children with a sentence containing two rhyming words, e.g. "I spy a chair and a bear." The first object name is something in the room and the second object name doesn't have to be visible in the room. Have the child on your right create her own "I Spy" sentence. You may want to place objects around the room that are easy to rhyme so you can point them out to the children if they need suggestions.

### Fill in the Blank

Re-read *When the Wind Blows* aloud. When you get to the end of a rhyming sentence, pause and have the children raise their hands and give the correct rhyming word to complete the sentence.

For example:

*"Strollers stroll.*

*Kites glide.*

*Bells clang.*

*Puppies \_\_\_\_\_."*

Offer opportunities for the children to make up silly sentences using other words that rhyme but don't make sense.

Continue with the rest of the book until all the children have had opportunities to rhyme.

This can be done with other rhyming books, as well.

### Rhyming Sounds Cube

For this activity, you'll need several cubes made from wood blocks or foam. Write a different consonant on each side of the cubes. On a piece of paper (or blackboard) write a two-letter combination beginning with a vowel and ending with a consonant, such as "it," "un" or "ed" six times. Have the student roll a cube to reveal a consonant. Have the student write the consonant from the cube in front of one of the two-letter

combinations. For example, if the student rolls a "B," she can place it in front of "ed" to create "bed." Repeat the procedure until the student creates six rhyming words.

### **Rattle, Jiggle, and Clang! ~ learning about verbs**

*When the Wind Blows* is packed with many juicy verbs. Read the story aloud slowly. Every time the students hear a verb, they are to make a wind howling sound.

Once identified, define each verb. Can the students demonstrate how to stroll or drop or bobble? Take turns trying.

#### Simon Says Verbs game

The Simon Says Verbs game is a fun verb activity that will help students both identify verbs from other parts of speech and distinguish action verbs from state of being verbs. The students will also get some healthy exercise while playing this game.

Have the children all stand up in an area large enough for each child to move around safely such as in the school gym or outside on the playground. The teacher will stand in front of the class and say, "Simon says..." followed by a verb. The students should then do or be what Simon said. For example, if the teacher says, "Simon says dance," then all the children should dance. If the teacher says, "Simon says be excited," then the students should be excited. The teacher can also include some words that are not verbs. For example, if the teacher says, "Simon says table," the students should stop moving because table is a noun, not a verb.

Use verbs and nouns from *When the Wind Blows* to help build vocabulary and connect to the story.

Optional: Instead of the teacher making all the commands, individual students can take turns playing Simon. Each child should get a chance to stand at the front of the class and say, "Simon says."

## Math

**Word Problems** *For younger students, the use of pictures or props might be needed to figure out word problems.*

- 1) 5 men are wearing top hats. 1 top hat blows away. How many men are wearing top hats?

$$5 - 1 = ?$$

- 2) The little boy listens carefully and hears the wind chimes ring 4 times. The wind blows and the chimes ring 3 more times. How many times do the wind chimes ring?

$$4 + 3 = ?$$

- 3) 6 cows are grazing in a field. 1 cow gets scared of the storm and heads back to the barn. How many cows are left grazing in the field?

$$6 - 1 = ?$$

- 4) The little boy spots 2 sailboats out to sea. He then spots 1 more sailboat. How many sailboats does the little boy spot?

$$2 + 1 = ?$$

- 5) A flower has 9 petals. When the wind blows, 7 petals fly away. How many petals are left on the flower?

$$9 - 7 = ?$$

### **Under Where? Spatial Sense**

Look at the “strollers stroll” spread in *When the Wind Blows*.

Describe where the cows are grazing.

[examples: on the grass, behind Grandma, next to each other]

Describe where the puppy is hiding.

[examples: on the grass, behind the tree, in front of Grandma]

Describe where the mother and baby are strolling.

[examples: on the path, under the kite, behind the couple]

Have students choose another spread in *When the Wind Blows* and discuss where things are spatially within that illustration.

Now look around your classroom.

- Describe where your desk sits.
- Describe where your teacher is sitting or standing.
- Describe where the chalkboard/whiteboard is.

- Describe where the clock is.
- Describe where the door is.
- Can you describe where anything else is?

## **The Math of Building a Kite**

Kids can make their own kites using the skills of math, measurement, and following instructions.

You will need:

- Two 3 foot long dowel rods
- A stool of string or ribbon
- Sturdy paper (old shopping bags are perfect)
- Strong tape (such as duct tape or reflective tape)
- Art supplies for decorating

What to do:

1. Using a tape measure or ruler, measure the dowels.
2. On one of the dowels, make a mark at 2 feet.
3. Get an adult to help you cut the one dowel at the 2 foot mark.
4. Discard the foot long piece of dowel.
5. You now have one 3 foot long dowel and one 2 foot long dowel.
6. On the 3 foot long dowel, measure and make a mark at 1 foot.
7. Take the short dowel place it across the long dowel at the 1 foot mark.
8. Measure and cut one foot of string.
9. Tie the rods together into a cross shape with the string, making sure the rods stay together.
10. Place the rods on the paper.
11. With a ruler, measure and make a mark two inches from the end of each dowel.
12. With a pencil and ruler, draw a line to connect the marks and form a kite shape.
13. Cut out a paper kite shape.
14. Using a ruler, measure 2 inches around the inside of the kite shape. Make a mark.
15. Make a fold on each diagonal side of the kite at the 2 inch mark to create an edge. Secure with tape.
16. Tape the paper portion of the kite to the cross.
17. Decorate the kite, however, do not use anything heavy or attach anything to the kite (beads, feathers, etc.) It's best to stick with markers, colored pencils and light paint.

18. Tie stool of string to the point where the bars cross, leaving the end attached to the spool.

BONUS: How do you measure the wind? Through observation and estimation, students can figure out the speed of the wind.

1-3 mph	Smoke drifts lazily, branches are still, flags hang limp
4-7 mph	Tree leaves rustle, flags move slowly
8-12 mph	Flags fly, bushes shake, leaves move
13-18 mph	Small branches shake, grass moves
19-24 mph	Large branches sway, flags flap noisily
25-31 mph	Trees shake, dust and sand flies

The best time to fly a kite is when the wind is between 4 and 12 miles-per-hour. If the wind is less, then most kites have problems flying. If the wind is more, then most kites will lose control. So watch the trees, bushes, flags and grass to know when the wind is just right.

## Science

### **Wind is a Weather "System"**

Lead students in a discussion.

- Where have you heard the word "system"? (i.e., transportation system, digestive system, gaming system, etc.)
- What do you think system means?

Author Linda Booth Sweeney offers a easy-to-understand explanation of systems in the following video. <http://sintspl3.wgbh.org/en-us/lesson/syshit-il-pdsystems/3>

- Watch the video on systems.
- Did you know that wind and weather are systems? People often say, "its windy outside" as if wind itself is just an event. But wind is actually a system. There are many parts or aspects that need to be in place to create wind. Wind is more than the sum of its parts.
- Can you guess what the parts of a \*wind system are?

*\*Teachers: In a nutshell, as the sun warms the Earth's surface, the atmosphere warms, too. Some parts of the Earth receive direct rays from the sun all year and are always warm. Other places receive indirect rays, so the climate is colder. Warm air, which*



weighs less than cold air, rises. Then cool air moves in and replaces the rising warm air. This movement of air is what makes the wind blow.

<http://www.weatherwizkids.com/weather-wind.htm>

Divide students into research groups of 2-3 students.

- Using the library and the Internet, groups will research what the parts of a wind system are.
- Set an alarm for thirty minutes.
- Once the alarm goes off, groups must report back to the class with their findings.
- As groups report, create a master list on the board to document their research.

Have students break into their groups again.

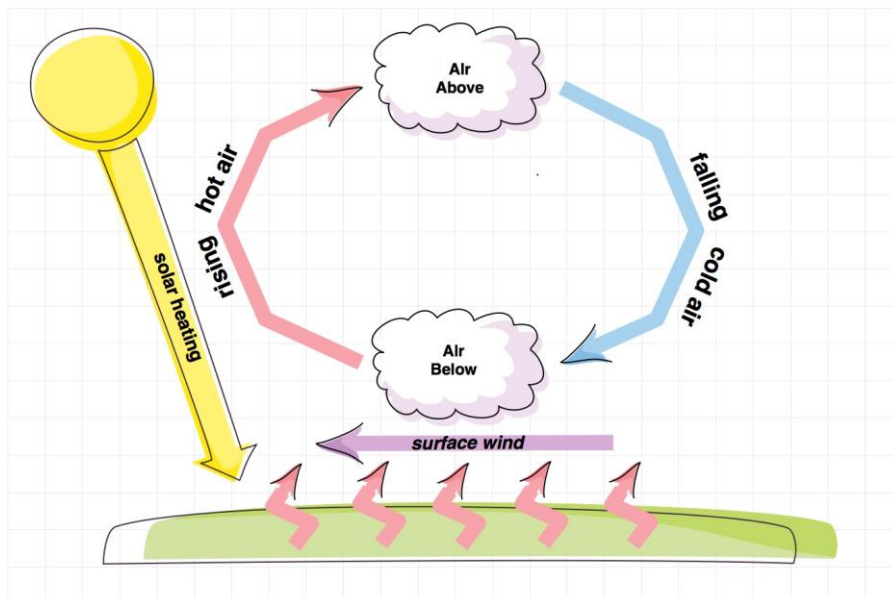
- Using the master list on the board, students should create a "connection circle" to explain how wind weather system is created.

*\*Teachers: For a "How To" on connection circles, see:*

<http://www.clexchange.org/ftp/documents/x-curricular/CC2010-11Shape10FriesConnexnSF.pdf>. And see Linda Booth Sweeney explain Casual Loop

Diagrams here: <http://lsintspl3.wgbh.org/en-us/lesson/syslit-il-pdsystems/11>.

- Once each group is finished with their Casual Loop Diagram, share them with the class.
  - Do the groups' diagrams share any similarities? Explain.
  - Do the groups' diagrams differ in any way? Explain.
  - Looking at the following Simple Wind diagram, can you explain how wind is created?



*Diagram created by Warren Farr, 2015. Thanks to Warren Farr, George Richardson and Michael Skelly for their thoughtful commentary on this systems activity.*

## **Wind Isn't Just Wind research project**

Wind isn't just wind—its so much more. In fact there are lots of kinds of wind. Assign students a type of wind to research. A list of 12 are below, but do not feel limited to those on the list.

- Gust front
- Down burst
- Derecho
- Jet Stream
- Monsoon
- Santa Ana winds
- Global wind patterns
- Trade winds
- Doldrums
- Prevailing westerlies
- Polar easterlies
- Sea breeze/land breeze

Possible sources for information:

- Nonfiction books
- Encyclopedias
- The Internet

Take notes and gather as much information as possible.

Once the information is gathered, create an illustrated poster defining and explaining what the topic of research is.

Present the poster to the class and hang them around the classroom.

## **DIY Wind Chimes Challenge**

This challenge allows students to experiment with wind, while they problem solve a way to build wind chimes that really work! Of course, a little imagination is going to go a long way here, too!

- Set up an electric, non-oscillating fan.
- Provide a variety of objects and hang on the end of a string.
- Have students sharpen their skills of prediction and observation by testing the objects to see if they are moved by the wind from a box fan at a distance of three feet.

Once the students *conclude* that the item blows or not, categorize each in a chart.

Try pieces of cork, metal and plastic bottle caps, toy boats, seashells, small sponges, feathers, paper, pebbles and empty and full containers.

- Explain to students that they will be working in groups of 2-3 to create wind chimes.
- Provide the students with several craft items (rulers, paper, cardboard tubing, empty boxes, tape, glue, etc.) Check the recycling for other ideas of materials.
- Each group's bridge must:
  - Move in a breeze from a box fan at three feet distance.
  - Be an original construction.
  - Create a sound when moving.

Once all wind chimes have been built, test them out one by one as a class. Did they work? Retest? If they didn't work, head back to the drawing board like a real inventor.

Often up awards to increase the competition.

- Most Attractive wind chimes
- Most Materials wind chimes
- Least Materials wind chimes
- Most Soothing Musical wind chimes

## **DIY Windy Movie**

The book trailer for *When the Wind Blows*, created by author Linda Booth Sweeney and animator Xin Xin captures the spirit of book, while also exploring what happens when the wind blows.

View the book trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MxA5cMD0GmY>.

Discuss:

- On a windy day, what blows in the wind?
- What does not move in the wind?
- What impact does the wind have?

Using a stop animation or simple video, students can create their own movie interpretations of the wind.

For stop animation apps, visit <http://www.educatorstechnology.com/2013/03/8-great-ipad-apps-for-creating-stop.html>.

# Social Studies

## **All About Me; All About My Family**

At the heart of *When the Wind Blows*, is the story of a family and their community.

As a class discuss the family in the story.

- Who are they?
- Where do they live?
- Who do they live with?
- What kinds of things do they like to do together?

This multi-book project allows the students the opportunity to get to know one another, and serves as an introduction to community. Students make books that contain pages with answered questions and pictures. Yarn is used to bind the pages together. The first book features the student, and each student should have a special day that he reads his book to the class. Separate books (done in the future) can feature siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and even pets.

- Pages in each book include:

A portrait

I am called \_\_\_\_.

My first and last name is \_\_\_\_.

My address is \_\_\_\_.

I live in \_\_\_\_\_. (the country, a city, etc.)

I live with \_\_\_\_.

I am good at \_\_\_\_.

I like to \_\_\_\_\_.

I do not like to \_\_\_\_\_.

## **“Wind Doesn’t Always Scatter” Mural**

Often weather can bring a community together. Whether sharing a shelter under a shop awning in a summer downpour or helping neighbors shovel out their driveway after a blizzard.

Throughout history, art also brings about tighter community.

Look up examples of public art on the Internet: examples in subways, under bridges and in parks. Be sure to find examples of traditional murals painted on walls, but also sculptures and knit-bombing.

How can art be used to foster community?

- Bring people together to create it
- Reflect all people in the community in the artwork
- Create a space that people will want to visit and hang out in

Make your own piece of public art for your school community focused on the theme of how weather can bring us together.

1. Choose a space within the school that could use some brightening or some inspiration.
2. Brainstorm a mural or other piece of temporary art called "Wind Doesn't Have to Scatter" that can be created in this space.
3. Brainstorm how this mural can build community.
4. Involve as many people as possible in the creation.