



# Weatherlands forecast

## Overview

“Ah!” said Forecaster Flurryweather with a knowing smile. “My name is Forecaster Flurryweather and I am the head of the Council of Forecasters from the City of Celestia. Would you mind if we had a little chat about the weather...?” (*Rainbow Grey: Battle for the Skies* pg265).



## Time required

60 minutes



## Materials required

- Internet access to YouTube
- Weather forecast word mat (pg4)
- Weatherlands forecast pdf-weather symbols (pg5) and map of the Weatherlands (pg6)
- [Forecast script](#)
- [Rainbow Grey slide deck](#) from Laura Ellen Anderson
- Rainbow Grey books (optional)

We discover through reading the stories that Rainbow Grey lives in the Weatherlands with her Weatherling friends and family. Knowing what weather is happening is important throughout the story, if only to keep an eye on those pesky Rogues causing trouble!

Just like the Council of Forecasters who provide weather updates every day in the Weatherlands, Meteorologists at the Met Office provide weather forecasts to keep us safe. They inform us when it might rain, snow, or be the perfect weather for a delicious ice cream! Rainbow Grey and Meteorologists at the Met Office love learning more about the weather.

In this activity, become a Weatherling and create your own forecast with the help of the Met Office and the creator of the Rainbow Grey series, Laura Ellen Anderson.

## Activity Steps

### 01 What is a weather forecast?

Start the activity by reading a section of the stories from Rainbow Grey.

“Ray, Snowden and Droplett joined the crowd of Weatherlings bustling into the higgledy-piggledy school building. Sky Academy had been around for so long that it had almost become part of the forest: a mishmash of roofs, observatories, masts and balconies, all intertwined within the ancient tree trunks. Here, young Weatherlings learned all they needed to know about weather magic and how to use it.” (*Rainbow Grey* – pg24)

Explain to the group that we discover from reading the stories that Rainbow Grey attends Sky Academy with Snowden and Droplett who are “Ray’s best friends in the entire sky” – pg4. In the UK we have an organisation called the Met Office which helps people learn more about the weather and keep us safe, just like Sky Academy.

But what is weather? Discuss with the group that weather is what is happening outside of the window of your classroom or home right now. For example – it might be clear, cloudy, stormy or rainy. The weather is different in different places across the world. In some places it might be sunny, while in other places it might be snowing! Many things affect weather across the world.

Ask the group if they know how to find out what the weather is going to be like tomorrow in the UK? Take a few suggestions. Tell the group that we can find out weather information by watching



Illustration from Rainbow Grey: Eye of the Storm, © Laura Ellen Anderson, 2023



10 minutes



Groupwork

a [weather forecast on TV or by using a weather app](#). The Met Office have scientists called Meteorologists who study the weather and provide us with a forecast every day.

A weather forecast tells us what is likely to happen in a few hours, tomorrow, or next week. It can help us make decisions on what to wear or how we spend our day. If you look out of your window at home or at school, you might think you can tell what the weather is like, you might see bright sunshine and clear skies. But when you venture outside, it could be icy and feel very, very cold! Brrrr! Looking at a weather forecast can help keep us safe.

## 02 How we forecast the weather

Ask the group if they know how scientists at the Met Office can predict what the weather is going to be?

Explain to the group that Meteorologists can't forecast what the weather is going to do in the future if they don't know what it is doing now. So to help them make predictions, they make measurements of the current weather. These are called observations.

The Met Office takes lots of weather observations using different types equipment (show slide 2). These observations measure all sorts of weather, including how strong the wind is, how warm it is, or how much rain is falling.

We also find in the story of Rainbow Grey that she has her own Weatherstone Circle of weather magic.

Read the excerpt from the story:

“Ray was in the centre of the Weatherstone Circle. She had always felt a strong connection to it... The six Weatherstones had been there for as long as anyone could remember, covered in bright pink moss and tiny white flowers. Each had a unique symbol carved into its front, representing a type of weather magic and the instrument used to channel it.” *Rainbow Grey* (pg12)

Sadly, the Met Office equipment is not covered in pink moss!

Explain to the group that all of the weather observations that the Met Office makes around the UK, alongside data from all over the rest of the world, gets sent to its amazing SUPER computer. The supercomputer then makes lots of calculations to give the Met Office scientists an idea of what weather is likely to happen tomorrow and over the next few days.



15 minutes



Slide deck



Groupwork



Illustration from *Rainbow Grey*  
© Laura Ellen Anderson, 2023

### Extra activity:

If possible, take the group outside to make some weather observations.

Suggested questions:

- What do you see? – is it raining, snowing or dry etc..?
- How does it feel? – warm, cold, freezing?
- I wonder if you can tell me any other types of weather?
- Is the weather the same all year? Why/why not?
- Do you know what season we are in?

## 03 Making your forecast for the Weatherlands

Ask the group if they have seen a Meteorologist on TV provide a forecast in front of a map of the UK. In the stories of Rainbow Grey, the Weatherlands has the Council of Forecasters who tell Weatherlings what weather is happening, just like Meteorologists from the Met Office when they give us our weather forecasts for the UK.

Read the excerpt from *Rainbow Grey: Battle for the Skies*:

“Ray LOVED school and learning about how all the different weather worked in the world: how the Council of Forecasters planned each and every drop of rain, flurry of snow or the zip-zap-grumble-rumble of thunder and lightning; or how the mighty SunKeepers used their magic to keep the big, glowing Sunflower in the sky glowing brightly.” (*Rainbow Grey: Battle for the Skies* - pg2)

I wonder what the weather forecast is for The Weatherlands. Let's find out with the creator of the Rainbow Grey series and honorary member of the Council of Forecasters, Laura Ellen Anderson.

Tell the group to take note of the words that she uses so that they can use them in their forecasts later.

[Watch the forecast video](#)

After watching the video, split the group into pairs and give each pair a selection of weather symbols, a weather word mat, and a map of the Weatherlands. Using the materials, get the pairs to practice making a forecast, putting their weather symbols on the map. They might want to choose a particular area on the map. Read the excerpt:



25 minutes



Slide deck



Video



Groupwork

“Just a bit faster, Nim!” said Ray as they soared across the Weatherlands, zipping past the snow-covered Flurry Mountains... Ray gripped Nim’s back a little tighter as they approached the Valley of Winds, where they were buffeted around rather ungratefully... Finally, the wind died down and the hills opened up to reveal the City of Celestia. Odd-shaped houses, a mishmash of quirky shops and higgledy-piggledy streets wound their way around the Forest of Fahrenheits. In the centre of the forest stood the pointiest and shiniest building – the Sun Citadel, where the mighty SunKeepers powered the BIG glowing Sunflower in the sky and gave the Earth its light.” (*Rainbow Grey*, pg2)

Extension: Why not write your own weather forecast script to use when presenting information to the group or create your own weather symbols!

## 04 Present your forecast

Ask each pair to present their Weatherlands forecast to the rest of the group or their family/guardians. Encourage them to think about what message they want to tell the audience who are watching and listening. Are there any Weather Rogues causing mischief that we need to be aware of? Or is Rainbow Grey using her staff to create a rainbow in the sky?

Why not try writing a forecast for the UK. You can find more information on our [Met Office for Schools page](#).

If you’d like to learn more about the career of a Meteorologist at the Met Office, take a look at our [day in the life video](#)

Share your forecasts with [@MetOfficeLearn](#) and with Laura Ellen Anderson [@lillustrator](#)



15 minutes



Groupwork

The Met Office provides free education content to support young people aged 5-14 to be prepared for the effects of weather and climate change on them and their communities. Find out more at [www.metoffice.gov.uk/schools](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/schools)

© Crown Copyright 2023, Met Office 02259

Rainbow Grey text and illustration copyright © Laura Ellen Anderson, 2023. Published by HarperCollins Publishers Limited.