

**Project FOCUS  
Best Lessons  
FIRST GRADE**

**Title of Lesson:** Tornadoes

**Theme:** Earth/Space Science

**Unit Number:** 1      **Unit Title:** Weather and the Seasons

**Performance Standard(s) Covered (enter code):**

S1E1

S1CS4

S1CS1

**Enduring Standards (objectives of activity):**

**Habits of Mind**

- Asks questions
- Uses numbers to quantify
- Works in a group
- Uses tools to measure and view
- Looks at how parts of things are needed
- Describes and compares using physical attributes
- Observes using senses
- Draws and describes observations

**Content (key terms and topics covered):**

Tornadoes, weather, severe weather safety

**Learning Activity (Description in Steps)**

**Abstract(limit 100 characters):** This lesson teaches students how a tornado forms and what it looks like.

**Details:** Show students a large tornado in a bottle. This is made by fitting two 2-liter bottles together by their necks. One bottle is filled with blue water. Turn the bottles upside down, and watch as a tornado shape within the water appears.

**Discuss the students' responses to this demonstration. Explain that today they are going to learn about tornadoes and what one should do in case one occurs.**

• After discussing the answers to each of these questions, explain that students are now ready to make their own tornado in a jar. This is an activity that works well if done at tables with 4–5 students per table.

**Have students fill their jars with 1/3 cup of water.**

**Next students add one teaspoon of salt to water.**

**Using a toothpick, students add one drop of liquid soap to water.**

**Students then need to place and tighten lid to jar.**

**Instruct students to shake or turn their jars in a circular motion, while holding on to the top of their jar. Students should then observe a tornado shape within their jar.**

- **Make sure you conclude the activity by reviewing the properties of a tornado. I thought it was effective to have print outs of a lot of different pictures of tornadoes that I found on the internet and also pictures of the damage done by tornadoes. This could possibly be presented in a power point if you have a projector.**
- **At the end of the lesson I read a book about tornadoes that I found in the library (there are lots of them to choose from).**

**Materials Needed (Type and Quantity):**

**Two 2-Liter empty bottles**

**Blue food coloring**

**Water**

**Two sided top (they have these in the science trailer)**

**Salt**

**Soap**

**One clear baby food jar with a lid per child**

**One toothpick per child**

**One teaspoon-sized measuring spoon per child**

**Notes and Tips (suggested changes, alternative methods, cautions):**

**Make sure you have enough little jars for each student and I would go ahead and fill them 1/3 of the way full with water ahead of time, to save the extra trouble. Then make sure you have enough salt and soap for each table to share.**

**Sources/References:**

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)