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Rainbows & Raindrops

Exploring weather
through play, movement
& wonder.



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Dear Gro Families & Friends,

This week in Petals & Play, we're exploring the wonders of weather through hands-on activities that invite children to observe, create, move, and discover. From rain and wind to clouds and color, weather gives children so many chances to ask questions and make meaningful connections to the world around them.

Today's activities encourage early science thinking, creativity, language, and sensory exploration while keeping play at the center. Below, you'll find a simple at-home activity you can try together using easy materials and everyday moments of wonder.

At The Gro Academy, we believe children learn best when they are invited to explore with curiosity, joy, and confidence. Thank you for bringing that spirit of discovery into your home.

Observing, Creating & Discovering the World Above Us

with shining hearts,
the gro  academy
team

All content created by The Gro Academy is aligned with WMEELS developmental domains and NAEYC developmentally appropriate practices to support whole-child learning.

Home Extension: Window Weather Watch

Objective:

Children observe and describe daily weather changes, building early science skills, language development, and awareness of their environment.

Materials:

- A window or outdoor view
- Paper
- Crayons or markers

Instructions:

1. Invite your child to look outside and observe the weather.
2. Talk about what they see: Is it sunny, cloudy, rainy, or windy?
3. Encourage your child to draw what they notice.
4. Add simple words to describe the weather (sun, rain, clouds, wind).
5. Repeat daily to notice how the weather changes over time.

Infant & Toddler Adaptation:

Hold your child near a window or step outside briefly to experience the weather together. Use simple language to name what they see and feel ("It's windy," "The rain is falling," "The sun is warm"). Encourage pointing, looking, and reacting rather than drawing. Caregivers can model language and describe changes over time.

Developmental Targets:

- **Approaches to Learning:** curiosity, engagement, persistence
- **Cognitive:** observation, comparison, early science concepts
- **Health & Physical:** fine motor skills through drawing
- **Literacy & Language:** describing, vocabulary building, conversation
- **Social & Emotional:** connection to daily routines and environment

Rainbows & Raindrops

Children will explore weather through hands-on experiences that invite them to create, observe, move, and discover. These activities support early science, creativity, and problem-solving while keeping play at the center of learning.

Rain Painting

Watching colors move like falling rain.

Objective:

Children explore cause and effect, creativity, and early science concepts by creating rain-inspired artwork.

Materials:

- White paper
- Washable markers or watercolor paints
- Spray bottles or droppers with water

Instructions:

1. Invite children to draw or paint on their paper using markers or watercolor.
2. Lightly spray or drop water onto the paper to create a rain effect.
3. Observe how the colors move and change as the water spreads.
4. Talk about how rain changes things in the environment.

Infant & Toddler Adaptation:

Provide pre-colored paper or lightly colored surfaces and allow children to explore water using droppers or supervised spray bottles. Focus on sensory experience and simple language such as “rain,” “wet,” and “drip.”

Developmental Targets:

- **Approaches to Learning:** Engaging in creative exploration • Trying different techniques
- **Cognitive:** Cause and effect through movement of paint and water
- **Health & Physical:** Fine motor control using brushes, droppers, or hands
- **Social & Emotional:** Cause and effect through movement of paint and water

Cloud Sorting & Matching

Exploring shapes, sizes, and sky patterns

Objective:

Children develop classification and observation skills by sorting and matching different types of clouds.

Materials:

- Cloud image cards (real or illustrated)
- Sorting mats or labeled spaces (optional)
- Paper and crayons (optional extension)

Instructions:

1. Introduce different types of clouds using images (fluffy, wispy, dark, etc.).
2. Invite children to describe what they notice about each cloud.
3. Ask children to sort clouds by similarities (size, shape, color).
4. Encourage matching identical or similar cloud types.
5. Extend by inviting children to draw their own clouds.

Infant & Toddler Adaptation:

Offer a few large, simple cloud images and focus on pointing, naming, and matching. Use descriptive language such as “big cloud,” “soft cloud,” or “gray cloud,” and allow children to explore freely.

Developmental Targets:

- **Approaches to Learning:** • Sustained attention • Flexible thinking when grouping items
- **Cognitive:** Sorting and classifying based on attributes • Observing similarities and differences
- **Literacy & Language:** Sustained attention • Flexible thinking when grouping items

Rainbow Color Mixing

Watching colors blend and transform

Objective:

Children explore color relationships and simple science concepts by mixing colors to create new ones.

Materials:

- Clear cups or trays
- Water
- Food coloring (red, yellow, blue)
- Droppers or spoons

Instructions:

1. Fill cups or trays with small amounts of water.
2. Add primary colors (red, yellow, blue) to separate sections.
3. Invite children to combine colors using droppers or spoons.
4. Observe and discuss what happens when colors mix.
5. Encourage children to name the new colors they create.

Infant & Toddler Adaptation:

Offer larger, safe materials and encourage children to touch, explore, and notice differences while caregivers model simple descriptive words like “big,” “small,” and “smooth.”

Developmental Targets:

- **Approaches to Learning:** Exploration and experimentation
- **Cognitive:** Cause and effect • Changes in materials
- **Health & Physical:** Hand control when using tools (droppers, spoons)
- **Literacy & Language:** naming colors • describing changes

Wind Movement Play

Feeling and watching how wind moves

Objective:

Children explore movement, direction, and environmental awareness through wind-based play.

Materials:

- Scarves, streamers, or ribbons
- Paper fans or handheld fans
- Lightweight objects (feathers, tissue paper)

Instructions:

1. Invite children to hold scarves or streamers and move them through the air.
2. Use fans or breath to create "wind."
3. Observe how different materials move in the air.
4. Encourage children to move their bodies like the wind (fast, slow, swirling).
5. Talk about how wind can be strong or gentle.

Infant & Toddler Adaptation:

Provide soft scarves or ribbons and gently move them near the child to create visual and sensory interest. Use simple language such as "wind," "blow," "fast," and "slow."

Developmental Targets:

- **Cognitive:** understanding movement and environmental forces
- **Health & Physical:** gross motor movement • coordination • body control
- **Literacy & Language:** describing movement (fast, slow, strong, gentle)
- **Social & Emotional:** Cooperative play and expressive movement

Weather Patterns & Sky Designs

Creating patterns inspired by the sky

Objective:

Children create and extend patterns using weather symbols, building early math and problem-solving skills.

Materials:

- Weather cards (sun, cloud, rain, snow, wind)
- Optional: counters or small manipulatives
- Paper strips or pattern mats

Instructions:

1. Introduce weather symbols and name each one.
2. Model a simple pattern (sun–cloud–sun–cloud).
3. Invite children to continue the pattern.
4. Encourage children to create their own patterns.
5. Extend by exploring more complex patterns (AAB, ABC).
6. Invite children to describe their pattern.

Infant & Toddler Adaptation:

Use large, simple weather images and focus on matching and naming rather than pattern creation. Offer two-item repetition patterns and support hands-on placement.

Developmental Targets:

- **Approaches to Learning:** creativity • persistence • flexible thinking
- **Cognitive:** patterning • spatial awareness • design
- **Health & Physical:** fine motor control • hand-eye coordination
- **Literacy & Language:** describing • storytelling • expressive language
- **Social & Emotional:** confidence • pride • self-expression

Facilitator Focus

Theme *Children explore weather through observation, movement, creative expression, and hands-on discovery.*



Overview

This week invites children to engage with weather as both a scientific and sensory experience. Through art, movement, sorting, and patterning, children build foundational skills while exploring natural phenomena. Each activity supports whole-child development by encouraging curiosity, expression, and active participation.



Facilitator Tips

- Encourage children to observe before acting (What do you notice about the clouds? the colors? the movement?)
- Allow for open-ended exploration rather than focusing on “correct” outcomes
- Support children in describing their thinking, even if their words are simple
- Model curiosity by wondering out loud (“I wonder what will happen if...”)
- Use movement and sensory experiences to support self-regulation and engagement



Vocabulary to Emphasize

weather • cloud • rain • wind • mix • pattern • sort • same • different • fast • slow • drip • splash

Short Sentence Prompts (for modeling language):

- “Tell me about what you made.”
- “What happens when we mix these?”
- “How does it move?”

Developmental Connections (WMELS Alignment)

Approaches to Learning:

- Children demonstrate curiosity, sustained attention, and flexible thinking through exploration, experimentation, and problem-solving during hands-on activities.

Cognition & General Knowledge:

- Children build understanding of weather concepts, classification, cause and effect, and patterning through observation, sorting, and active investigation.

Health & Physical Development:

- Children develop fine motor control through manipulation of tools and materials and strengthen gross motor skills through movement-based exploration.

Language & Literacy Development:

- Children use language to describe observations, compare ideas, and communicate understanding of weather concepts and relationships.

Social & Emotional Development:

- Children express ideas creatively, build confidence through participation, and engage with peers during shared learning experiences.



Reflection for Educators

- Which activities sparked the most engagement or curiosity?
- How did children express their understanding of weather concepts?
- Where did children demonstrate problem-solving or persistence?
- How did movement or sensory experiences support regulation and participation?
- What opportunities could extend this learning further?

