

Fun Weather Activity

This week on Food Dudes Fun at Home we are looking at the impact that the weather has on growing fruit and vegetables. Weather plays an important part in growing fruit and vegetables because they both need sun and rain to grow. This weeks activity is a great opportunity to get out into the garden and have some fun with your family learning about the weather and growing plants.

Guidelines:

The following activity sheets can be printed or completed in a copy book.

Sheet A: Making a rain gauge

- ✓ Children can do this with their family or on their own. One old plastic bottle is needed for the exercise.
- ✓ Materials: An old recycled bottle, pen, marker, ruler, tape, pebbles.

Sheet B: Measuring heat and temperature

- ✓ No materials required

Note: This activity is best completed in conjunction with a grow your own exercise, such as the one outlines in the Food Dudes video. If you already have a plants growing in your house or garden, you can complete these activities monitoring the growth of your existing plants.



Growing your own fruit and vegetables is really fun, especially when the weather is nice. Show us your plants and don't forget the hashtag **#FoodDudesFun**



Fun Weather Activity

Making a Rain Gauge

Can you help Tom to understand the weather, and how it can help him to grow his own fruit and vegetables?

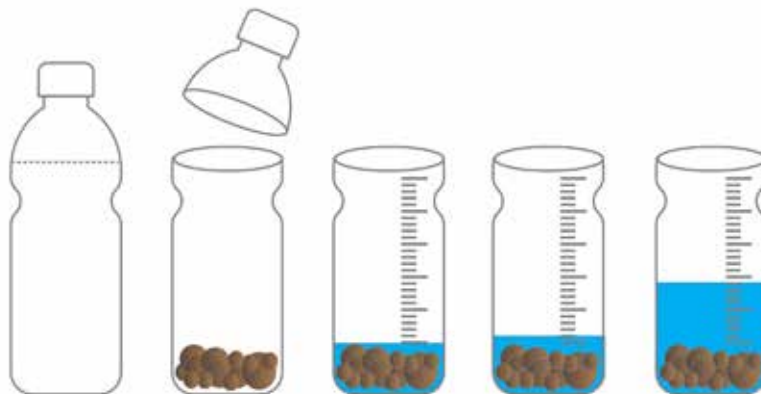
Name _____

We are going to make a rain gauge!

This will measure how much rain falls in your garden or outdoor area. Rain is important to help plants grow!

Step 1: Take an old plastic drinks bottle and, with help from your parent/guardian, cut the top off the bottle.

Step 2: Place some small stones or pebbles inside the bottom of your rain gauge. This will help to keep it upright and stop it from blowing over in the wind! Then, using tape, stick the top of the bottle back on – only this time, stick it on upside down, so that the mouth is inside the bottle.



Step 3: Using a marker pen and a ruler, draw a scale on the side of your bottle. Rain is measured in millimetres (mm). These should be marked on your ruler. A good way to remember it, is that 10 millimetres (mm) = 1 centimetre (cm). You can start your scale near the bottom of the bottle and go as close to the top as you can.

Step 4: Pour water into the bottle until it reaches the bottom strip on your scale. Congratulations, you have finished your rain gauge!

Step 5: Put your rain gauge outside where it can collect water when it starts raining.

After a rain shower has finished, check to see how far up the scale the water has risen.

Record the reading on your rain gauge here: _____ mm

You can measure rainfall like this every day for the next 4 weeks, and record each day's figures below:



Fun Weather Activity

Measuring Rainfall



Fun at Home

Week One	
Day of the Week	Rainfall (in mm)
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

Week Two	
Day of the Week	Rainfall (in mm)
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

Week Three	
Day of the Week	Rainfall (in mm)
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

Week Four	
Day of the Week	Rainfall (in mm)
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

Which day, in which week, had the most rainfall overall? _____

Fun Weather Activity

Measuring Plant Growth

This is a really good exercise to do each term, because Ireland's rainfall levels are different in Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. Sometimes, when it is very cold, rain will fall in the form of snow or hail. When the snow or hail melts, this will turn to water and will water your plants too!

If you have a fruit or vegetable plant at home, you can measure how tall it is.

Measure how tall the plant is, and write its height in centimetres (cm), here: _____ cm

Keep a record of how much your plant grows every week for the next 4 weeks, by measuring it and recording its height below:

Week	Height (in cm)
End of Week 1	
End of Week 2	
End of Week 3	
End of Week 4	

Has your plant grown in the last 4 weeks? How much has it grown by? _____ cm

Now, compare it to your rainfall chart for the last 4 weeks. Do you think that rainfall has affected your plant's growth? Can you see a pattern between the amount of rain that fell and the amount your plant has grown?

Rainfall is very important, because it keeps our soil moist and this helps our plants to grow. If we don't get enough rainfall, or if we get too much rainfall, this can affect our plants and crops, meaning that sometimes they don't grow as big or tall as we would like.

Alongside rainfall, sunshine is also very important in helping our plants to grow. Often when it is raining, this means it isn't very sunny either, because rain clouds can cover the sun and block lots of it's light from reaching the earth. If our plants become too cold, or don't get enough sunshine, they won't grow like they should. If you can, you should try to keep your plants in a warm, sunny place.

How do you think your plants will change from this season to the next?

Fun Weather Activity

Sunlight

Can you help Charlie to understand heat and sunlight, and how it can help her to grow her own fruit and vegetables?

Name _____

Charlie is sad because she has tried to grow a tomato plant, but it hasn't got any bigger and she is worried that she is doing something wrong. She needs your help to find the best place for her tomato plant to grow – can you help her?

Which areas in your home do you think get lots of sunshine? Write down 3 places. At least one of these should be indoors:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Which areas do you think are quite dark, or shady? Write down 3 places. Again, at least one of these should be indoors:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Fun Weather Activity

Sunlight

Draw a map of your home and surrounding outdoor area. Mark on your home map where all of the sunny places are and where all of the shady places are. You might like to do this with two different colours.

My Home Map:



We know that it is important for plants to stay warm and get lots of light in order to help them grow. This is how plants produce energy, which helps them get bigger and stronger – just like us, when we eat our fruit and vegetables!

Different plants need different amounts of sunlight to survive but without sunlight, our plants wouldn't grow at all. This would mean that humans and animals wouldn't have any food either, so sunlight is one of the most important factors in the proper function of life itself.

Based on your map, where do you think Charlie should put her tomato plant to get the most heat and light?
