

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Cause & Effect

Read the short story and answer each question.



How a Tornado Forms

Tornadoes are fast-spinning columns of air that stretch from a storm cloud to the ground. They can cause damage in just minutes. But how do tornadoes form?

It all begins with a thunderstorm. Warm, moist air from the ground rises into the sky. At the same time, cold, dry air moves down from above. When these two air masses meet, the warm air rises quickly through the colder air. This can create a strong spinning cloud.

If the spin becomes faster and stretches downward, it can form a funnel cloud. When the funnel touches the ground, it becomes a tornado.

Tornadoes usually move across the land for only a few minutes, but they can tear down trees, damage buildings, and toss cars.

After the storm passes, weather scientists study what happened. They use special tools to track where the tornado went and how strong it was. This helps them understand tornadoes better and warn people faster in the future.



Name:

How a Tornado Forms

1. What is the first step in forming a tornado?

- A. Warm, moist air rises and meets cold, dry air.
- B. A funnel cloud touches the ground.
- C. The tornado moves across the land.
- D. Trees and cars are blown away.

2. Why do scientists study tornadoes after they happen?

- A. To understand them and help warn people in the future.
- B. To make videos of storms.
- C. To fly into the tornado.
- D. To stop all rainstorms.

3. Fill in the blank:

When a funnel cloud touches the ground, it becomes a _____.

4. What are two steps that happen before a tornado touches the ground?

5. How does understanding each step help scientists keep people safe?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: M

Lexile Level: 425L-575L

Grade Level: 3rd Grade, Beginning of the Year

Genre: Informational / Earth Science

Introducing the Text

"Today we're reading a nonfiction science passage about how tornadoes form. As we read, we'll look closely at the order of events and what causes each step to happen. We'll also think about how scientists use this information to protect people."

Vocabulary: moist, funnel, tornado, scientist, warning

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you know about tornadoes or other big storms?
 2. What kind of damage can tornadoes cause?
 3. How might scientists study weather?
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During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What happens when warm and cold air meet?
 2. What causes a funnel cloud to become a tornado?
 3. Why do tornadoes only last a few minutes?
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After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What is the cause of a tornado forming in the sky?
 2. How do scientists help people after a tornado?
 3. Why is it important to understand each step in a storm?
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Activity Idea

Have students create a "Tornado Flow Chart" using four boxes: 1) storm begins, 2) spinning starts, 3) tornado touches ground, 4) scientists study it. They will draw each step and write one sentence explaining what happens at each point using sequence words like "first," "next," "then," and "finally."

