



# Weather Gone Wild

Grade 4

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Read the passage carefully. Then answer each question in a full sentence, using evidence from the text where asked.

## Twisters Over Harmony Plains



The sky over Harmony Plains had a strange, greenish tint, and the air felt thick and heavy, almost electric. A warm breeze had been blowing all morning, but now a sudden chill was creeping in, making the hairs on arms stand up. Dark, swirling clouds gathered on the horizon, moving faster than any storm the people of Harmony Plains had seen before. A low rumble started, not like distant thunder, but a deep, vibrating sound that seemed to come from everywhere at once. Pets grew restless, and a sense of unease settled over the town as everyone knew to watch the news for updates when the weather turned so unusual.

Tornadoes are powerful, spinning columns of air that connect a thunderstorm to the ground. They form when warm, moist air rises quickly into the atmosphere, often after a period of high humidity. This warm air, full of water vapor from evaporation, meets cooler, dry air that is sinking. When winds at different altitudes blow in different directions and speeds, it creates a spinning effect, like a rolling tube. As the warm air rises, the air pressure drops sharply, pulling this spinning air upwards into a vertical funnel cloud. This intense interaction of air masses, where cold and warm air collide, is what makes these storms so dangerous.

These violent storms can cause incredible damage in just minutes. One of the most devastating tornadoes struck Joplin, Missouri, in 2011, with winds estimated to be over 320 kilometers per hour. This immense power can flatten buildings and throw cars. Scientists use advanced Doppler radar systems to track these storms and issue warnings, helping communities prepare for the worst. Understanding how tornadoes form



and behave is crucial as we study changes in our planet's climate and work to keep people safe from extreme weather events.

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**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

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**(1) What color was the sky over Harmony Plains?**

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**(2) Based on the story, what does "humidity" refer to?**

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**(3) What is the main idea of this story?**

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**(4) What effect does it have when winds at different altitudes blow in different directions and speeds?**

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**(5) What kind of system do scientists use to track tornadoes?**

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**(6) According to the text, what is one important thing communities can do to stay safe from extreme weather events like tornadoes?**

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