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Juvenile Nonfiction

The Kids' Book of Weather Forecasting
Kathleen Friestad
Mark Breen
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Weather is always something everyone can talk about. This fascinating introduction to weather, another title in the Williamson's Kids Can! series, is guaranteed to provoke interesting conversations. Breen, a meteorologist, began his career because of a snowstorm. As a child, he was intrigued by the snowdrift in his backyard that was so large he and his siblings spent days tunneling through it.

This fact-filled book is arranged in eight chapters, and guides the reader through the observation process. Instructions for keeping a weather log and the importance of detailed, accurate records is explained. Directions for making and using simple weather instruments are found throughout the text. Included are the anemometer, which measures wind speed; the barometer; the Beaufort scale spinner, measuring how hard the wind is blowing; and the hair hygrometer, which measures the humidity using a strand of hair. Instructions are also given for making the psychrometer, a rain gauge and a windvane.

Throughout the book are other features, such as "Quick-Take Forecasts" and weather questions and answers. Question: it's a beautiful sunny day, and a picnic is planned. The barometer is falling. Will it stay sunny? Answer: not likely. Falling pressure indicates a storm is approaching. "Ask Mark" includes questions that Breen answers, some personal, such as Breen's favorite season (all of them as they make his job interesting), others practical, such as why does a summer temperature of ninety degrees seem so much hotter in Tennessee than in Arizona (the relative humidity is the difference). "Weather Records" offers interesting facts about the weather, such as the longest drought on record lasted 400 years in Atacama, Chile. Charts showing wind chill, relative humidity, a key for cloudwatchers and the Beaufort scale are included.

This is an enjoyable book to read and difficult to put down. It is filled with information that keeps the reader interested. "The Weatherman's Song," words and lyrics by Breen, and

resources such as other weather titles, weather organizations, and Websites on the Internet devoted to weather are included.

Although written for children, anyone with an interest in weather will enjoy it. Teachers will find this book a welcome addition to the science program.

Tracy Fitzwater