Wild Weather Reporting



Meet meteorologists from The Weather Channel

Sharon Parsons

Nelson Literacy Directions

WILD WEATHER Reporting

For teachers' inspection ONLY



My sincere thanks to the team at *The Weather Channel*, Sydney, Australia for their time, information, images and enthusiasm for this book.

Dear Reader

Everyone is affected by the weather. I wanted to write a book about the people who dedicate their time and skills to forecasting and reporting on the weather. These people ensure we can all stay informed about weather events.

> "... AN EERIE HAZE OF RED DUST IN THE DARKNESS."

One television channel committed to providing people with a reliable 24-hour weather service is *The Weather Channel*. In this book, you'll read about what it's like to be a meteorologist at *The Weather Channel*, and the extreme weather those who work there experience and report on.

I hope you will also enjoy reading about the amazing range of weather conditions that affect us from season to season.

Sharon Parsons

NELSON CENGAGE Learning
For learning solutions, visit **cengage.com.au**

Contents

WILD WEATHER Reporting

For teachers' inspection ONLY

1 **A Weather Reporting Channel**

The Weather Channel reports on the weather 24 hours a day. page 4

2 **Magdalena Is a Weather Presenter**

Meet Magdalena, a meteorologist who presents on *The Weather Channel*. page 6

3 **Magdalena on Location**

Magdalena and her team report live from around Australia. page 8

4 **Presenting in Front of a Blue Screen**

Learn the secrets of presenting a weather report. page 10

5 **Wild Stormy Weather**

"Live" reporting sometimes means "wet" reporting. page 14

6 **Bizarre Beachside Foam**

Sometimes weather conditions produce unusual results. page 16

For teachers' inspection ONLY

7 **Extreme Dust Storms**

What event caused Sydney to look like a city from an alien world? page 18

8 **A Career Begun with a Weather Balloon**

How a chance discovery led to a career for senior meteorologist Dick Whitaker. page 20

9 **Indigenous Weather Forecasting**

Modern technology is not the only reliable way to predict the weather. page 22

10 **Weather Warnings**

Up-to-date information is important, especially during severe weather! page 24

11 **From Droughts to Fires to Floods to Cyclones!**

Want wild weather? Australia has it all! page 26

12 **El Niño and La Niña**

How do these two climate patterns affect our weather? page 28

Index and Glossary page 32



1 A Weather Reporting Channel

For teachers' inspection ONLY

24 **Hours** of Weather



The Weather Channel is an Australian television channel that reports on the weather 24 hours a day. During the day the channel completes live and recorded weather updates. During the night, if there are no significant changes to the weather, the channel repeats weather reports on a loop. But their meteorologists and weather presenters are always on call during emergency weather conditions because the media and the public need the most up-to-date information.



Magdalena Roze and Dick Whitaker are meteorologists who work at The Weather Channel.

Physical Science

Weather or Climate?

"Weather" refers to what is happening in the atmosphere in a particular place during a short period of time.

"Climate" refers to the weather conditions of a region over an extended period of time.

The weather gives an immediate description of atmospheric conditions and can change from day to day, whereas the climate gives a more long-term picture and can take years to change.

For teachers' inspection ONLY

Weather Technology Aids

Meteorologists use a variety of technological aids to gather the most up-to-date weather information before forecasting weather, such as satellite images, radar images and synoptic charts.



A satellite image shows cyclonic weather.

Weather Widgets



Widgets are small computer applications that people can put on their websites, blogs, desktops or smartphones. They look like graphics, but the information they display is dynamic, which means that it changes so it's always up to date. There are many designs and formats for weather widgets. Try designing one for your school's weather. Look at the designs above to get some ideas.

"SEEING EXTREME WEATHER FORMING ON A SYNOPTIC CHART MAKES ME FEEL AWFUL BECAUSE I KNOW IT WILL BRING TRAGEDY TO SOME COMMUNITIES."

MAGDALENA,
The Weather Channel

2 Magdalena Is a Weather Presenter

For teachers' inspection ONLY



Magdalena Roze is a meteorologist who works as a weather presenter for *The Weather Channel* in Sydney, Australia. Her job is very important because she provides accurate reports about the weather now and weather forecasts for the days ahead. The weather affects everyone – everywhere – at all times.

For teachers' inspection ONLY

Magdalena Before *The Weather Channel*

1 Behind the Camera

"Originally, I worked in television production jobs on travel shows in Australia and in London.

One day, my boss encouraged me to work in front of the camera. I love television as a medium so I was very excited about this new opportunity."

2 In Front of the Camera

"My first job in front of the camera involved involved researching and reporting a range of stories for *The National Geographic* channel. I visited many places around Australia. But it was the stories about climate change, volcanoes and other natural events that got me interested in the weather because it affects people, animals and the environment. I knew I had to find a weather reporting job!"

Magdalena Joins *The Weather Channel*

"When I started work at *The Weather Channel* I enjoyed being trained by their meteorologists and I completed an Atmospheric Science degree at university. I knew I had made the right decision because I loved learning everything about the weather – its history, the science and technology of weather analysis and how to forecast weather."



a still taken from television footage of Magdalena presenting the weather in the studio

Why Magdalena Loves Her Job

"A lot of my live weather reports are on location, often in extremely wild weather conditions – I love it! It's much better than being inside a studio all the time. Every day is different because the weather is always changing. In one week, I may report on heatwaves, cyclones and floods. I don't care if I get wet and cold or extremely hot – it's a great job!

"I also feel a lot of responsibility because extreme weather affects many people's lives. Often, I'm filming near their homes or their work so I always respect people during these difficult times."

3 Magdalena on Location

For teachers' inspection ONLY



Magdalena's workday begins at 4.00 am in the television studio. First, she switches on her computer to check the latest radar reports and satellite images of the atmosphere. If there is some severe weather approaching that she can get to, she investigates immediately.

The severe weather might be heavy snow, a tropical cyclone, flooding or a heatwave. The team heads to the area affected so that when the weather hits, they can make live reports to the viewers and keep people updated.

Once Magdalena is on location with her team, she continually monitors the radar and keeps updated on the latest forecasts and statistics using her laptop.



Magdalena reports from Wagga Wagga during the 2010 New South Wales floods.



"IT'S IMPORTANT TO REPORT ON LOCATION – DESPITE THE FLOODS RISING AND SWIRLING AROUND ME."

MAGDALENA

For teachers' inspection ONLY

Storms and Floods

When the storm hits, Magdalena and her crew stay and continue to make live reports so that people around Australia are always up to date with the weather conditions and how they may be affecting people, homes, businesses and animals.

Reporting Weather Statistics

Magdalena needs to know a lot of weather statistics so that she can refer to them when she's doing live piece-to-camera (PTC) reporting. For example, it is better to report, "This storm is the heaviest on record and the rivers are rising at a rate never seen before in this region", if that is the case. Her report would not be as informative or as newsworthy if she said, "This storm is heavy and it's causing the rivers to rise very high".



"IT'S A TEAM EFFORT THAT INVOLVES THE CAMERA OPERATOR AND THE SOUND RECORDIST GETTING WET, TOO."

MAGDALENA