Name: _____ Date: _____

Dust Devils Dance Across Hot Fields

Circle group

On a hot, sunny day in a dry place, you may see a little whirl of dust. It spins across a field. It looks like a tiny twister, but it is not. It is a dust devil.

A dust devil starts with the ground. The sun heats bare soil or pavement. It gets hotter than the land nearby. The air touching it gets warm and rises. Cooler air rushes in along the ground. If the wind is just right, the moving air starts to spin.

The spinning air lifts loose dust, dry leaves and bits of paper. That is how we can see it. With no dust, we could not see the whirl.

Most dust devils are small. They last about a minute. They are not tornadoes. A tornado forms under a big storm cloud. A dust devil forms on a clear day.

If you see one, watch from far away. Keep dust out of your eyes.

Questions

1. What kind of day can make a dust devil?

_____

_____

2. What happens to air that touches very hot ground?

_____

_____

3. What lets us see a dust devil?

_____

_____

4. How long do most dust devils last?

_____

_____

5. How is a dust devil different from a tornado?

_____

_____

6. What would a whirl of air look like with no dust?

_____

_____

Words to know

whirl: a fast spinning motion
pavement: a hard road surface made for walking or driving
twister: another name for a tornado

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Dust Devils Dance Across Hot Fields

Triangle group

On a hot, sunny day in a dry place, you may see a little whirl of dust spinning across a field. It looks like a tiny twister, but it is not. It is a dust devil.

A dust devil starts with the ground. The sun heats bare soil or pavement until it is hotter than the land nearby. The air touching that hot ground gets warm and begins to rise in a stream. Cooler air hurries in along the ground to fill the space. If the wind is just right, this moving air starts to spin.

The spinning air lifts loose dust, dry leaves and bits of paper. That is why we can see it. Without dust, the whirl would be invisible.

Most dust devils are small and last only a minute or so. They are not the same as tornadoes. A tornado grows beneath a big storm cloud, while a dust devil forms on a clear day with no storm at all.

If you see one, the best choice is to watch from a safe distance and keep dust out of your eyes.

Questions

1. What kind of day is likely to make a dust devil?

_____

_____

2. What happens to air that touches very hot ground?

_____

_____

3. What makes a dust devil easy to see?

_____

_____

4. How long do most dust devils last?

_____

_____

5. How is a dust devil different from a tornado?

_____

_____

6. What would a whirl of air look like without any dust?

_____

_____

Words to know

whirl: a fast spinning motion
pavement: a hard road surface made for walking or driving
twister: another name for a tornado
invisible: not able to be seen

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Dust Devils Dance Across Hot Fields

Square group

On a scorching, sunny afternoon in a dry region, you may notice a small whirl of dust spinning across an open field. It resembles a miniature twister, but it is not one. It is called a dust devil.

A dust devil begins with the ground itself. The sun heats bare soil or pavement until it becomes much hotter than the surrounding land. The air touching that hot surface warms up and begins to rise in a steady stream, while cooler air hurries in along the ground to fill the empty space. If the wind conditions are just right, this moving air starts to rotate.

The spinning air picks up loose dust, dry leaves and scraps of paper, which is why we are able to see it at all. Without any dust, the whirl would be completely invisible.

Most dust devils are small and last only about a minute. They are quite different from tornadoes, which develop beneath enormous storm clouds, whereas a dust devil forms on a clear day without any storm.

If you encounter one, the wisest choice is to observe from a safe distance and keep the dust out of your eyes.

Questions

1. What kind of afternoon is likely to produce a dust devil?

_____

_____

2. What happens to air that touches a very hot surface?

_____

_____

3. What allows us to see a dust devil?

_____

_____

4. How long do most dust devils last?

_____

_____

5. How does a dust devil differ from a tornado?

_____

_____

6. What would a whirl of air look like if there were no dust in it?

_____

_____

Words to know

whirl: a fast spinning motion
pavement: a hard road surface made for walking or driving
twister: another name for a tornado
invisible: not able to be seen

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: Dust Devils Dance Across Hot Fields

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: Dust Devils Dance Across Hot Fields

Easier · 157 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1.5

1. A hot, sunny day in a dry place.
2. It gets warm and rises.
3. The dust, leaves and paper it lifts.
4. About a minute.
5. A tornado forms under a big storm cloud, but a dust devil forms on a clear day.
6. We could not see it.

Triangle: Dust Devils Dance Across Hot Fields

This passage · 184 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.3

1. A hot, sunny day in a dry place.
2. It gets warm and rises.
3. The dust, leaves and paper it lifts.
4. About a minute or so.
5. A tornado grows under a big storm cloud, but a dust devil forms on a clear day.
6. It would be invisible.

Square: Dust Devils Dance Across Hot Fields

Harder · 194 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.8

1. A scorching, sunny afternoon in a dry region.
2. It warms up and rises.
3. The dust, leaves and scraps of paper it picks up.
4. About a minute.
5. A tornado develops beneath an enormous storm cloud, but a dust devil forms on a clear day.
6. It would be completely invisible.