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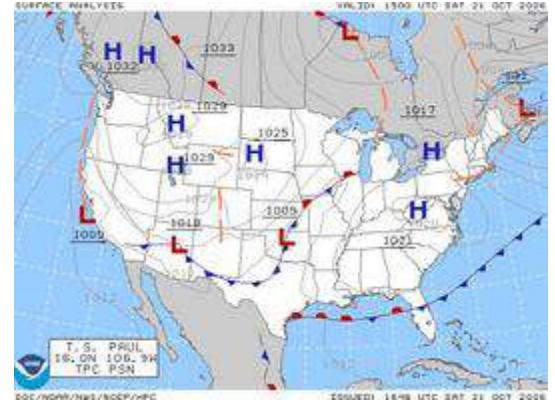
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What Is a Weather Map?

By Cindy Grigg

Maps give us a picture of a part of the Earth. They show us facts about a place. A weather map shows facts about the weather at a place. A weather map can show what the temperature is. A weather map can show if rain or snow might be coming to that place. Weather maps can show us many different things!

Most maps use symbols. The symbols stand for different things on different maps. Most maps have a legend. The map legend shows you what the symbols mean. On a weather map, different colors, letters, lines, and symbols are used. Cold temperatures are usually shown in blue. Hot temperatures are shown in red. A place that has high air pressure is marked with a capital "H." Places with low air pressure are marked with a capital "L."



Giant masses of air move with the wind. The air mass may have warm, moist air. The air mass may have cold, dry air. When two different masses meet, it is called a front. Lines are shown on a weather map to mark warm and cold fronts. A blue line with blue triangles shows a cold front. The triangles point to where the cold front is moving. A red line with red half circles shows a warm front. When two different kinds of air masses meet, it causes a change in the weather. These lines show where major weather changes will be.

Some weather maps show snow as little snowflakes. Some maps may use "SN" for snow. Rain may be shown as little dots or by the letter "R." Wind speed and direction may be shown with arrows that have numbers on them. The arrow points in the direction the wind is blowing. The number tells how fast the wind is blowing.

Weather maps are used to forecast the weather. People who study weather use weather maps to see what is happening in different places. Using all the information found on the maps, people can tell what the weather might be like in a place over the next few hours or few days.

What Is a Weather Map?

Questions

- _____ 1. What does a weather map show?
- A. facts about the weather at a place
 - B. if rain or snow might be coming to that place
 - C. the temperature is
 - D. all of the above

2. What does a map legend show?

- _____ 3. What does a capital "H" mean on a weather map?
- A. a place that has high air pressure
 - B. a place that has low air pressure
 - C. snow is coming
 - D. a place where it is hot
- _____ 4. A place where two different masses meet is called a _____.
- A. front
 - B. temperature
 - C. weather
 - D. forecast

Look at a weather map. You can find one in a newspaper, on the Internet, or on TV. Make a list of all the symbols you see on the map. Then tell what each symbol means. You may have to use a book or the Internet to look them up.

[illegible]

Tell five facts about a weather map.
