



**Satellites, Weather and Climate**  
**Lesson plan summary: Paths of hurricanes**  
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Grade Level: 9  
Curriculum Target Benchmarks:  
Subject keywords: hurricanes

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This activity was created to highlight some important facts about hurricanes that hit the southeastern United States: they form over the warm waters of the Atlantic Ocean or Caribbean Sea, when pushed along by the Tradewinds they travel in an easterly direction, they normally curve to the right due to the coriolis effect, they often travel far enough north to be influenced by the Westerly winds, they die out when they reach land or travel over colder waters.

After the students have received an overview on hurricanes, they are asked to google the National Hurricane Center. In the column to the left, under Hurricane History, they click on Seasons Archives. Under the Atlantic, Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico, they choose a year other than the current year and click Go. They enlarge the map that appears by clicking on it. Students are asked to choose a hurricane, not a tropical storm, and record its path on their copy of the hurricane tracking map. Students are to use the same color code system that is used by the NHC.

Once everyone had a hurricane recorded, they mingle and share their hurricane map with class members and answered a few general question. Our questions consisted of: What similarities do you see in the paths of the hurricanes? What similarities do you see in their sites of origin? Do the hurricanes spend most of their time over land or over water? Explain why. Do the hurricanes tend to bend to the left of to the right in the northern hemisphere? Why? Although this is a quick activity, students really enjoyed viewing the maps of the hurricane paths. I found it to be a great hand-on activity to highlight the basics of hurricane movement.



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