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Activities

Hurricane Formation

Name: _____ Date: _____

Atlantic hurricanes strike often between August and October, but rarely between December and May. Why is that? You'll find out what heat transfer has to do with it in this Planet Diary activity.

Directions

- Start at NASA kids How are Hurricanes Created? page. Use the information to answer questions 1 through 3 in the Workspace.
- Hurricanes need warm ocean water. To see how Atlantic temperatures vary, go to the National Hurricane Center's Sea Surface Temperature (SST) Analysis. Click the *Daily Analysis* map for the Atlantic. Hurricanes in the Atlantic Ocean form between latitudes of 10 and 25 degrees North. Study the map and color code, then answer question 4.
- Scroll to *Monthly Mean Climatology Fields*. Click each month to see its long-term average sea surface temperature. Answer question 5.
- El Niño also affects Atlantic hurricane formation. Read this Planet Diary journal entry El Niño Quiets Atlantic Hurricanes. Then answer the last question.

Workspace

1. What is the first condition needed for hurricanes to form?

2. What is the second condition needed for hurricanes to form?

3. What is the third condition needed for hurricanes to form?

4. Are sea surface temperatures in the Atlantic favorable for hurricanes today?

5. Describe the relationship between monthly sea surface temperature and hurricane frequency.

6. How does El Niño slow Atlantic hurricane formation?

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