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Activities

El Niño's Wild Weather

Name: _____ Date: _____

El Niño can bring some wild weather. Some places are swamped with buckets of rain and floods, while others get drought and forest fires. In this Planet Diary activity, you'll learn why El Niño happens and see its effects on the planet's weather.

Directions

- Go to NOAA Ocean Currents. Click *El Niño* in the Activities column on the right. Read *Introduction*, then answer Workspace questions 1 and 2.
- Scroll to the *Sea Surface Conditions* tab. Read the text above the two pictures. Look closely at the pictures comparing Normal Conditions and El Niño Conditions. Read the captions, then click *Questions About Sea Surface Conditions*. Read the answers to the onscreen questions, then answer questions 3 and 4 below.
- To find out more about how El Niño affects weather, click *Weather* to the right of the *Sea Surface Conditions* tab. Compare the graphics and read the captions. Continue to *Questions About Weather*. Use the information to answer question 5.
- Read this Planet Diary journal entry El Niño Rains Will Continue. Answer the last question.

Workspace

1. Contrast El Niño's affects on weather in California and Australia.

2. What is the scientific definition of El Niño?

3. How is the Pacific Ocean different on the sea surface topography maps in El Niño years?

4. How do winds and currents cause El Niño conditions?

5. Compare the "normal" (non El Niño) and El Niño weather patterns around the equatorial Pacific Ocean? How do ocean currents influence it?

6. How did El Niño of 2009–2010 affect weather in the United States?

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