

# WIND IS A DANCE — TEACHING GUIDE

## About the Book

**Poetic text and ethereal illustrations combine with science facts about wind in this delightful informational picture book.**

“You can feel wind ... but you can’t see it. What *is* wind?” This exploration of different types of wind pairs lyrical descriptions of wind types with accessible, informational sidebars about each. The whimsical narrative uses metaphor to help readers visualize wind’s characteristics: “Wind is a butterfly – fluffing flower petals and ruffling riverbank grasses.” Informative bubbles on each page complement these descriptions with short explanations of each wind type, which range from a light breeze to a hurricane. Evocative illustrations further bring the text to life in this fascinating introduction to the ever-changing wind.

Author Debra Kempf Shumaker uses figurative language and metaphors to capture the imagination of readers as they learn about wind. Her imagery will inspire readers to find their own words to represent the world around them, and in particular to answer the question at the end of the book: “How would you describe the wind today?” The breezy illustrations by award-winning, bestselling artist Josée Bisailon help readers feel the movement of the air. With its easy-to-understand depictions of the types of wind, this is a perfect STEAM pick for lessons on daily and seasonal weather. More information about types of wind, the Beaufort scale and a list of resources for further learning are at the back of the book.



ISBN 978-1-5253-0875-8

Grades: Preschool–3

Ages: 4–8 years

“A series of pirouettes both airy and informative.” — *Kirkus*

“A worthwhile purchase.” — *Booklist*



## About the Author

**DEBRA KEMPF SHUMAKER** started reading at the age of four and hasn’t stopped since. She grew up on a small dairy farm in Wisconsin but now lives in the suburbs of Northern Virginia with her husband, three

sons and two cats. Debra is the author of *Freaky, Funky Fish*, *Peculiar Primates*, *Tell Someone* and *Wind Is a Dance*. When she isn’t reading or writing, she enjoys hiking, gardening and watching *Jeopardy*.



## About the Illustrator

As a young girl, **JOSÉE BISAILLON** loved drawing cats and houses. She really enjoyed school and always returned home full of stories to tell. She liked being in the classroom so much that she

pursued her education all the way to university, where she studied graphic design. It was there that she fell in love with illustration.

Since 2005, with scissors and brushes in hand, Josée has illustrated more than thirty children’s books, as well as magazines and newspapers for adults, all around the world. Josée lives just outside of Montreal with her spouse, their three children, one hairless cat and many paper characters.



**Kids Can Press**

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## About the Guide

This guide was created by Kari Allen, an educator with twenty years of education and classroom experience. Visit Kari's website, [www.kariallenwrites.com](http://www.kariallenwrites.com), for more information. All activities can and should be modified to best fit student needs. A sampling of Common Core standards are listed at the end of the guide. More connections than listed can be used for the book. All art in this guide was created by Josée Bisailon and has been used with her permission. Text excerpts are by Debra Kempf Shumaker. This guide is for use in classrooms and for educational purposes only.

## Discussion Questions

### BEFORE READING

- Take a look at the cover. What do you notice? Open the book and look at the whole cover spread. How does the front cover connect to the back cover?
- Think about the title, *Wind Is a Dance*. What do you picture when you hear the title?
- The endpapers are the part of the book that is glued down to the inside of the cover. What do you notice about the endpapers of *Wind Is a Dance*?

### WHILE READING AND AFTER READING

- Think about when you've experienced wind. How do we know it's windy out? What evidence might you see to support that claim?
- One of the first lines of the book asks, "What is wind?" What do you know about wind? Brainstorm a list of things you already know about wind and a list of questions you have about wind.
- How does the author use verbs and dance words to describe wind?
- Look closely at the illustrations. How does the illustrator show wind even though we can't see wind?
- The main text has two parts. How are they different? What do you notice about the sidebars? Compare and talk about the styles of writing. Why do you think there are two parts of the text?
- Back matter comes at the end of a book. It is information that does not fit into the main text. Look at the extensive back matter for *Wind Is a Dance*. What questions do you have after reading it? Make a list of the questions you still have about wind. **Extension:** Research and find out the answers to your questions.



## Craft of Writing

Alliteration is when the same sound starts words that are next to each other or very close to each other. Look for places where the author uses alliteration. What effect does it have when you hear it? In what other alliterative ways could you describe wind? Here are two examples of it:

- fluffing flower
- ruffling riverbank

**Extension:** Look at a piece of your own writing. Are there places you could use alliteration?

**Extension:** The author also uses assonance where the vowel sounds repeat. Where do you see this in the text? Look at your own writing. Is there a place you could try including assonance?

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The author uses a metaphor to describe wind as a dance. Metaphors are when we say something is something else to help explain a complex idea or to create a vivid image. Do you agree with the metaphor that wind is a dance? Why or why not? Look at all the ways wind is described as dancing. How else can you describe wind? What else is it like? Use the Wind Metaphor printable to experiment with writing metaphors.

**Extension:** How can you use metaphor in your own writing?

**Extension:** Use metaphor to describe other types of weather or weather phenomena. See the Weather Metaphor printable.

## Activities:

- Create a piece of art that moves in the wind. What materials do you think would work best? Some materials that might work well are ribbons or streamers.

**Extension:** Make a wind chime with found materials.

- Go outside and observe the wind. Use the first Wind Observation printable and record what you see that shows there is wind. Then use more of your senses. Record your observations on the second Wind Observation printable.  
**Extension:** Record observations over several days. How does the wind change over time? Create a class book out of a week's worth of wind observations.

- Use the Beaufort Scale in the back of the book or on the Beaufort Scale Exercise printable. Go outside and discuss what Beaufort rating you would give the wind today. Write about why you chose that number and support it with your observations.
- Explore the Windy website ([www.windy.com](http://www.windy.com)). What do you notice about the wind patterns around the world?
- Wind Experiment: Gather a variety of objects (e.g., paper, leaves, rocks). Set up a portable fan and make predictions about whether each object will be moved by the air from the fan.
- Wind STEM Challenge: Design a structure out of paper cups that can stay standing in front of a portable fan. What design seems to work the best? Revise and redesign as needed.
- Create wind art!

**Materials:** watercolors, paper, straws, covering for work surface (optional)

### Directions:

- Place a drop of watercolor on your paper.
- Blow gently at the drop through the straw, watching what happens.
- Add more colors!

**Extension:** Turn your wind drops into something else. What could each one become?

- Put the wind terms from the Wind Strength Order printable in order from weakest to strongest by cutting out the terms and gluing them onto another piece of paper. Then, check to see if you are correct by referencing the back matter of *Wind Is a Dance*.
- Using the glossary for the different types of wind and their definitions, make drawings (or paintings) for each kind of wind using several Draw the Wind printables. How can you show the variability of the winds? Add labels to your drawings.
- Act out passages or pages from the story. Use scarves or ribbons to mimic the wind. How could you move or dance like the descriptions in the text? How does your dance vary with the different passages?
- Create a wind poem using your senses. See the Wind Poetry template to help guide you or write your own without the template.
- When you think of wind, what words do you think of? Brainstorm a list of wind words and write them on the Wind Vocabulary printable.



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## Resources on Wind, Wind Energy and Weather

U.S. Energy Information Administration <https://www.eia.gov/kids/energy-sources/wind/>

Britannica Kids <https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/wind-power/574607>

National Weather Service <https://www.weather.gov/learning/>

Canada Weather Information <https://weather.gc.ca/>

National Geographic Kids <https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/teacher-category/weather/>

## Next Generation Science Standards Connections

### **K-ESS2-1 Earth's Systems**

Use and share observations of local weather conditions to describe patterns over time.

### **K-ESS3-2 Earth and Human Activity**

Ask questions to obtain information about the purpose of weather forecasting to prepare for, and respond to, severe weather.

### **2-ESS2-1 Earth's Systems**

Compare multiple solutions designed to slow or prevent wind or water from changing the shape of the land.

## Common Core Literacy Connections

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.1**

With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.6**

Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.7**

With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing or idea in the text an illustration depicts).

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.4**

Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.5**

Know and use various text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.6**

Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.3**

Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.6**

Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain or describe.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.7**

Explain how specific images (e.g., a diagram showing how a machine works) contribute to and clarify a text.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.8**

With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.1.B**

Continue a conversation through multiple exchanges.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.2**

Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.5**

Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Wind Metaphor

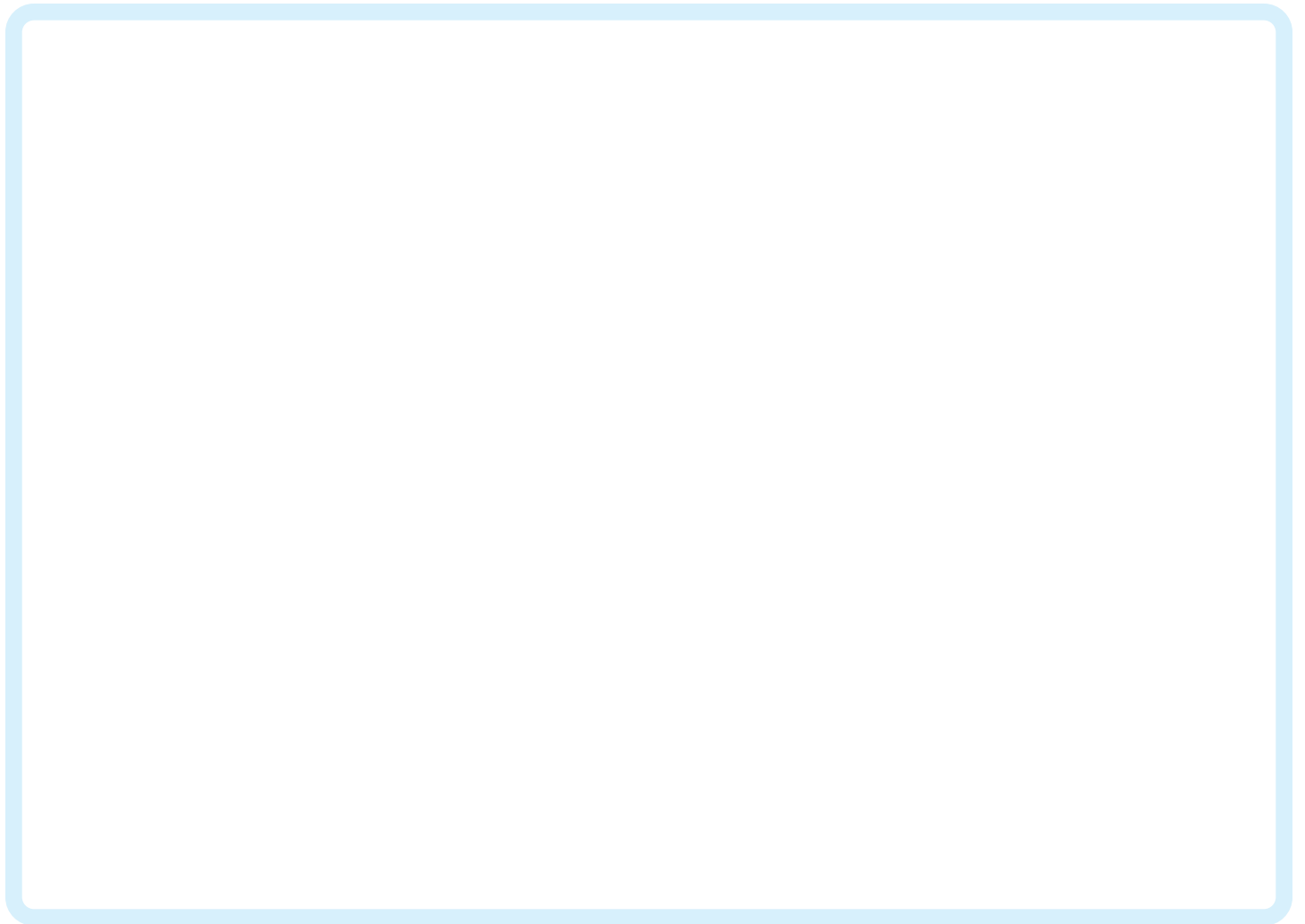
Get inspired by *Wind Is a Dance* and think about how you can describe the wind. Is the wind a song? A whisper? A shout?

Draw a picture to go with your description.

Today the wind is a \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Weather Metaphor

Get inspired by *Wind Is a Dance* and the metaphor in the title and think about how you can describe other kinds of weather.

For example:

Rain is a \_\_\_\_\_. Snow is a \_\_\_\_\_.

What can you come up with?

\_\_\_\_\_ is a  
(kind of weather)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(metaphor description)

\_\_\_\_\_ is a  
(kind of weather)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(metaphor description)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Wind Observation

How can you see the wind?  
Record things you see that show there is wind.

**I see**

**I see**

**I see**

**I see**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Wind Observation

Using your senses, record the different things  
you notice about wind.

**I see**

**I hear**

**I feel**

**I smell**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Beaufort Scale Exercise

Today the wind’s Beaufort Number is

Because ...

Beaufort Number	Wind Speed per hour		Description	Sea Conditions	Land Conditions
0	<1 km	<1 mi.	Calm	Flat	Calm
1	1–5 km	1–3 mi.	Light air	Ripples without crest	Wind motion visible in smoke
2	6–11 km	4–7 mi.	Light breeze	Small wavelets	Leaves rustle
3	12–19 km	8–12 mi.	Gentle breeze	Large wavelets	Smaller twigs in constant motion
4	20–28 km	13–18 mi.	Moderate breeze	Small waves	Small branches begin to move
5	29–38 km	19–24 mi.	Fresh breeze	Moderate longer waves	Smaller trees sway
6	39–49 km	25–31 mi.	Strong breeze	Large waves form with foam crests	Large branches in motion
7	50–61 km	32–38 mi.	Near gale	Sea heaps up and foam begins to streak	Whole trees in motion
8	62–74 km	39–46 mi.	Gale	Moderately high waves with breaking crests	Twigs broken from trees
9	75–88 km	47–54 mi.	Severe gale	High waves with dense foam	Light structural damage
10	89–102 km	55–63 mi.	Storm	Very high waves. The sea surface is white.	Trees uprooted. Significant structural damage.
11	103–117 km	64–72 mi.	Violent storm	Exceptionally high waves	Widespread structural damage
12	118+ km	73+ mi.	Hurricane	Sea completely white with driving spray	Massive and widespread damage to structures

# Wind Strength Order

Cut out these wind terms and place them in order from weakest to strongest.

**derecho**

**tornado**

**hurricane**

**breeze**

**blizzard**

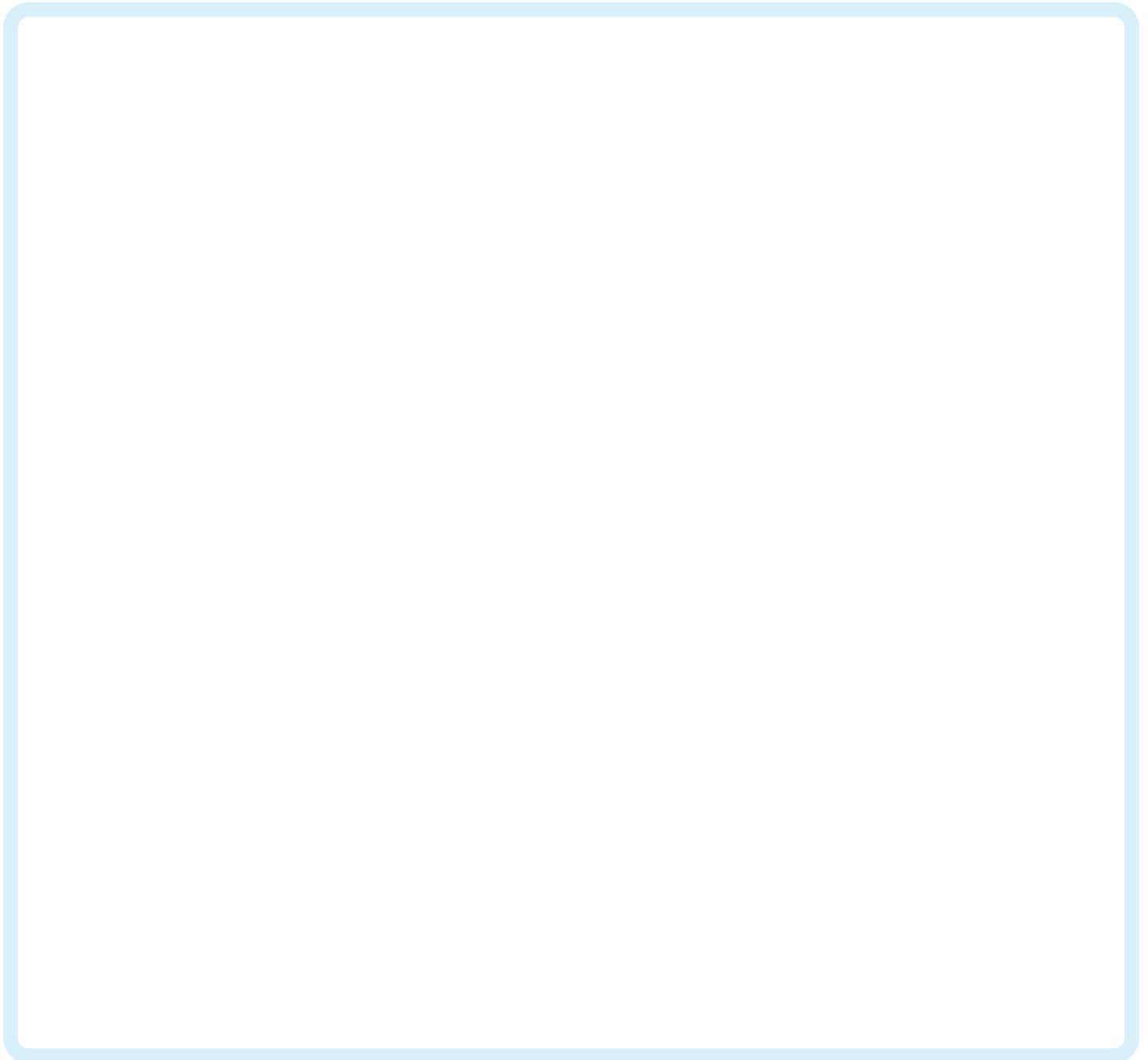
**gale**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Draw the Wind

Draw the type of wind using the glossary from  
*Wind Is a Dance* for terms and definitions.

Type of wind: \_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Wind Poetry

Create a wind poem using your senses.

I see \_\_\_\_\_

I feel \_\_\_\_\_

The wind is \_\_\_\_\_

I wonder \_\_\_\_\_

The wind is \_\_\_\_\_

I feel \_\_\_\_\_

I see \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Wind Vocabulary

How many windy words can you think of?  
Write them on the wind lines!

