

Trend Task: Weather Map



Approach: One to one

Focus: Understanding weather map symbols

Resources: 2 weather maps, picture

Year: 4 & 8

Questions / instructions:



[Interislander-Arahura.jpg. Retrieved from: <http://www.discovernewzealand.com/default.aspx?DN=bf19d0e0-b400-4ba9-b158-e63da447c2> Tourism Holdings Ltd (May 2008)]

Show picture.

Here is a picture of a ferry boat that goes from the North Island of New Zealand to the South Island across Cook Strait. People who travel on the ferry are always keen to know what the weather will be like when the boat is going.

Show map one.

This map shows the weather for one day. There is a red dotted line to show you where the boat will be going from the North Island to the South Island.

- What do you think the weather will be like on this day for going on the ferry boat?

% response
2007 ('03)
year 4 year 8

Weather Map One



calm	3 (4)	16 (10)
clear, fine/sunny	25 (29)	28 (38)
hot, warm (and/or cool at night)	55 (50)	51 (47)
a good day	13 (17)	25 (20)
'H': means high pressure/anticyclone	0 (1)	4 (6)
means high	15 (21)	27 (27)
related to temperature/hot	44 (39)	37 (33)
no relevant comment	41 (39)	32 (34)
no close-together circles/lines (isobars) mean little wind	1 (3)	7 (7)

- How does the map tell you that the weather will be like that?

% response
2007 ('03)
year 4 year 8

Weather Map Two



Show map two.

This map shows the weather for another day.

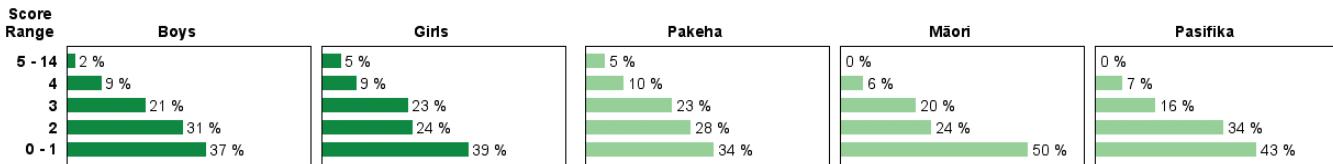
- What do you think the weather will be like on this day for going on the ferry boat?
- | | | |
|------------------------|---------|---------|
| windy | 43 (50) | 67 (67) |
| southerly | 1 (1) | 3 (5) |
| (relatively) cool/cold | 31 (31) | 41 (41) |
| a bad day | 9 (16) | 19 (15) |
| cloudy/rainy/stormy | 31 (25) | 24 (30) |

- How does the map tell you that the weather will be like that?

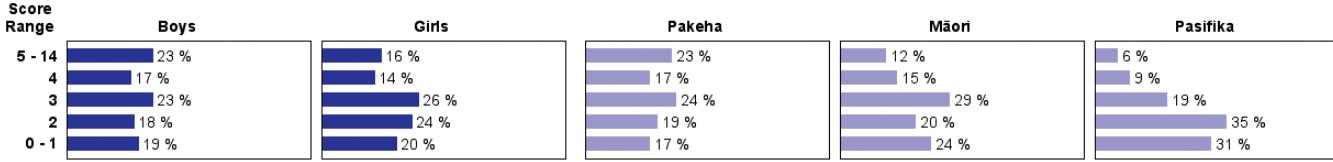
'L': means low pressure/depression	1 (0)	5 (7)
means low	11 (8)	32 (39)
related to temperature/cold	29 (29)	12 (12)
no relevant comment	59 (63)	51 (42)
circles/lines close together (isobars) mean wind	16 (16)	35 (26)
location of lines, front, 'L' – all suggest southerly (at least one mentioned and that it suggests southerly)	2 (2)	6 (7)
cold front symbol supports cold temperature	2 (0)	9 (11)
Total score:	5–14	3 (9)
	4	9 (6)
	3	22 (22)
	2	24 (24)
	1	28 (23)
	0–1	20 (22)
	38 (40)	20 (13)

Subgroup Analyses:

Year 4



Year 8



Commentary:

Students at both year levels showed quite limited understanding of the meaning of the symbols H and L on weather maps, tending to associate them with temperature rather than air pressure. In fact, an H is not always associated with warm weather or an L with cold weather. Overall, performance was quite low, with little evidence of change between 2003 and 2007.