



The Sky That Started Spinning

A science story about tornadoes, storms, and staying safe



The Strange Afternoon

Maya and Leo were playing outside after school when the sky began to change. Tall dark clouds rose in the distance, and the air felt warm and sticky. Then a cool gust of wind rushed past them. ‘That cloud looks like it’s twisting,’ Leo said. Just then, Ms. Rivera called from the school door, ‘Everyone inside. There’s a tornado warning!’



What Is a Tornado?

Inside the classroom, Ms. Rivera showed the weather map on the screen. ‘A tornado is a spinning column of air that stretches from a storm cloud down to the ground,’ she explained. Leo imagined the wind twisting like a top. Maya listened closely. Tornadoes can be powerful and dangerous, so knowing what they are helps people stay safe.



Why Does It Spin?

Ms. Rivera drew arrows on the board. Warm, moist air rises from near the ground, while cooler, drier air stays above it. When winds blow in different directions or at different speeds, the air can begin to rotate. Inside a strong thunderstorm, that spinning air may tip upright and start forming a funnel.



Staying Safe

The class moved to an inside hallway away from windows. Maya and Leo sat against the wall while Ms. Rivera reminded everyone to stay calm. ‘During a tornado warning, we go to the safest inside place we can find,’ she said. The storm rumbled outside, but inside the hallway, the class felt prepared and protected.



After the Storm

After a while, the warning ended. The rain softened, and the sky slowly brightened. When Maya and Leo stepped outside, they saw wet sidewalks, broken leaves, and fast-moving clouds drifting away. 'The wind really has a story,' Maya whispered. Leo nodded. The storm had passed, but their questions had turned into understanding.

Science Element



What Maya and Leo Learned



A tornado is a spinning column of air that stretches from a thunderstorm to the ground.



Tornadoes often form when warm moist air rises, cooler air is above it, and changing winds make the air rotate.



Tornado warnings mean people should move to a safe inside place away from windows.



The End

Maya and Leo no longer thought of storms as only something scary. Now they knew that tornadoes begin inside powerful thunderstorms, and that learning about weather helps people stay safe. As the sky cleared, both kids felt a little braver—and a lot more curious.