Weather Vane

If we know the direction the wind is blowing, we can sometimes locate a low pressure system and forecast the bad weather that usually comes with it. A weather vane shows wind direction.

**What to do:** Make a 1 inch (2.5 cm) vertical slit in one end of the drinking straw. Using the index card or other piece of cardboard, cut out an arrow tail and glue it into the cut end of the straw, as in the illustration. Mark the other end of the straw with the red marker or crayon. Insert the straight pin through the straw about 2 inches (5 cm) from the arrow. Push the pin into the eraser end of the pencil. Be sure the straw can move freely. Form the letters N, S, E, and W from pieces of wire. Wind them around the pencil, 1 inch (2.5 cm) below the arrow. Prop the pencil up by its point in a lump of earth in a shallow flower pot or in a lump of clay.

Put the weather vane in a place where the wind is not blocked by buildings. Use a compass to make sure your letters are set up correctly.

**What happens:** As the wind blows, the weather vane moves.

**Why:** When the wind blows, it pushes away the larger surface (the arrow). As a result, the other end points into the wind, in the direction from which the wind is blowing.

In the northern hemisphere, a wind that shifts in a counterclockwise direction usually brings a low pressure system and stormy weather along with it. East winds generally bring rain, west winds bring clearing. North winds mean cold weather, and south winds heat. In the southern hemisphere, it is exactly the opposite for every direction.

**YOU NEED**
- drinking straw
- scissors
- index card
- straight pin
- pencil with an eraser
- red marker or crayon
- compass
- thin wire
- straight pin
- shallow flowerpot full of earth or a lump of clay