FireSmart™ BC Education Program

BRITISH COLUMBIA
FireSmart™ (Grades K–1)

Lesson One

In this lesson, students will think about the possible weather conditions that can be experienced in each of the four seasons. They will use their understanding of these conditions to explore connections between certain weather patterns and the likelihood of wildfires happening.

Lesson Question:

Which season are wildfires more likely to happen?

Lesson Challenge:

Decide which seasons have the highest and lowest chance of wildfires.

Big Ideas

- Daily and seasonal changes affect all living things (K)

- Observable patterns and cycles occur in the local sky and landscape (1)

Suggested Materials

- **Activity Sheet A:** Which Things Burn? (either displayed for class use or one copy for each pair of students)

- **Activity Sheet B:** When Are Wildfires Most Likely? (either displayed for class use or one copy for each pair of students)

- **Season Images:** Winter, Spring, Summer, Autumn
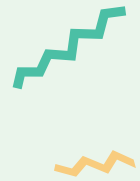
Start the Thinking

1. Display the images from Which Things Burn? Activity Sheet. Invite students to think about each of the materials, in picture form. Guide students in thinking about how the dryness of a material can affect how likely it is to burn. Prompt their thinking with questions such as:

   - Will paper burn if it gets wet?
   - Will logs burn more quickly if they are dry or wet?

2. Encourage students to share their ideas with the class. As they share, circle any items that students suggest will burn more easily when dry.

3. Introduce the lesson question and challenge to the class.

4. Display the images from When Are Wildfires Most Likely to Happen? Activity Sheet B. Invite students to rank the seasons according to when wildfires are most likely to happen, encouraging them to use ideas from the discussion about how the dryness of a material can affect how likely it is to burn. With older students, consider providing each pair of students with an activity sheet and asking them to note their rankings and reasons in the "Our First Thoughts" section of the activity sheet.

Grow the Thinking

1. Display the images from the Season Images. Guide students in examining each image. Ask students what words come to mind when they think about the weather in each season. They might suggest words such as cold, hot, cool, warm, cloudy, partly cloudy, foggy, rain, snow, hail, freezing rain, sunny, windy (you may need to prompt them with some of these words where necessary). As students share their ideas, write the words around the related picture.

2. Review each of the words noted around the pictures, asking students to find details in each picture of the weather conditions. Invite them to point to and describe details in the images that match the words noted around the picture. If a student is unable to describe what they're pointing at, consider providing a description for the students and emphasize important vocabulary related to the seasonal changes. For example, a student may point to the sun in the sky in one picture as evidence that the weather in that season is hot.

3. Briefly describe the weather conditions that can make the vegetation (e.g.,trees, branches, twigs, leaves, underbrush) dry so that wildfires are more likely to happen. Be sure to highlight the words hot, sunny, windy, and dry (ensure students understand the difference between dry vegetation–vegetation that lacks moisture–and dry weather conditions–low precipitation levels) in your description.

4. Guide students' attention to the four pictures of the seasons. Draw a circle around the words hot, sunny, windy, and dry wherever they appear. Remind students that these are the weather conditions that make vegetation dry and make wildfires more likely to occur .

5. Invite students to count the number of circled words for each picture. Ask the students which picture has the most circled words, the second most circled words, and so on.

6. Guide students' attention to the When Are Wildfires Most Likely? Activity Sheet and the "Our Final Thoughts Section." Then, show students how they can use the number of circled words for each picture to decide which season is most to least likely to have wildfires happen, based on the season's weather conditions. Record students' rankings on the activity sheet.

   With older students, ask them to note their rankings and reasons in the "Our Final Thoughts" section of the activity sheet.

Reflect on the Thinking

1. Encourage students to revisit the seasons they initially suggested as likely to have wildfires happen. Ask students to share if they have changed their minds and if so, why.

2. Invite students to use their rankings and collections of words to complete the following prompt:

3. The season that is most likely to have wildfires is: _____ because the weather is...._____.

With older students, consider having them use prompts at the bottom of the When Are Wildfires Most Likely? Activity Sheet to describe their decisions.
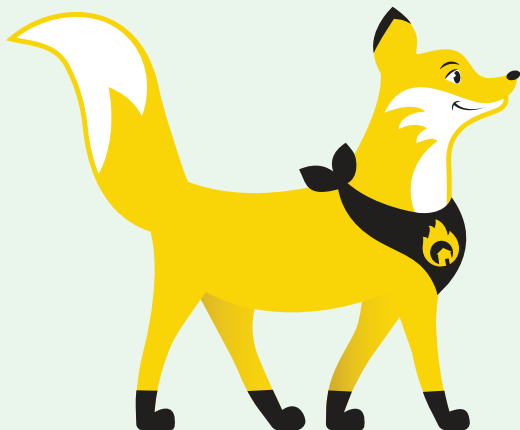
Activity Sheet A: Which Things Burn?

Will it burn if it's dry? Will it burn if it's wet?
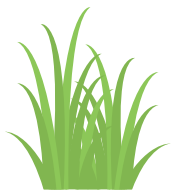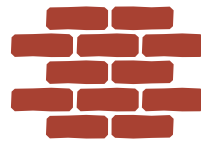
Image Handout: Spring

Image Handout: Summer

Image Handout: Autumn

Image Handout: Winter

Activity Sheet B: When Are Wildfires Most Likely?

Our First Thoughts

Rank the four seasons from most to least likely to have wildfires.

High

1.

Reasons for our decisions

2.

3.

Low   4.

Activity Sheet B: When Are Wildfires Most Likely?

Our Final Thoughts

Rank the four seasons from most to least likely to have wildfires.

High

1.

2.

3.

Low

4.

Reasons for our decisions

Activity Sheet B: When Are Wildfires Most Likely?

The season with the highest chance to have wildfires is

- ☐ spring
- ☐ summer
- ☐ fall
- ☐ winter

→

because the weather is

- ☐ hot
- ☐ cool
- ☐ wet
- ☐ dry

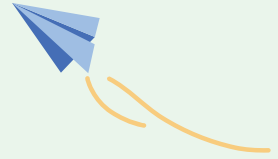The season with the lowest chance to have wildfires is

- ☐ spring
- ☐ summer
- ☐ fall
- ☐ winter

→

because the weather is

- ☐ hot
- ☐ cool
- ☐ wet
- ☐ dry

Assessing Your Students' Thinking

Success Criteria	How are my students doing?
They used words that fit well with the description of the weather conditions in each season.	1 2 3 4 They've still working on it They've got it
They used details in the pictures as appropriate evidence of each weather condition.	1 2 3 4 They've still working on it They've got it