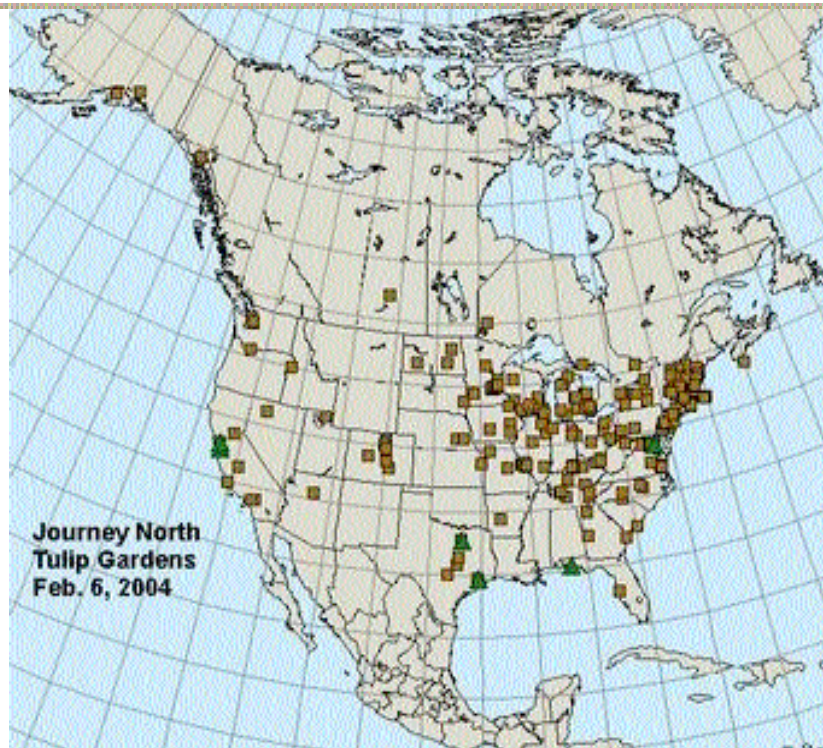


## The Microclimate Challenge Exploring Garden Sites



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[www.learner.org/jnorth/](http://www.learner.org/jnorth/)

by Mary Hosier



When does spring come to your community? This fall, you will plant an Official Journey North Tulip Garden to share this great news. The garden location will represent the climate of your region. Students across North America will be watching to learn when spring comes to you! This year dig a little deeper: Try the **Microclimate Challenge!**

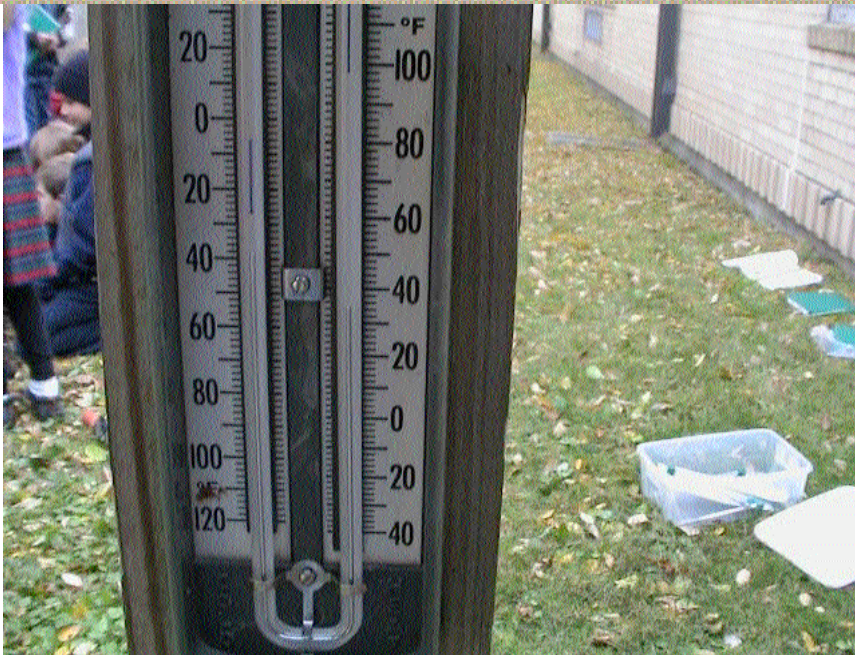
1



Here's the **Challenge:**  
**Cause 2 tulip bulbs to bloom as many days apart as possible.**

You will plant your Official Journey North Garden in the place that **BEST** matches your general climate. For the Microclimate Challenge, look for two places that **LEAST** represent your general climate.

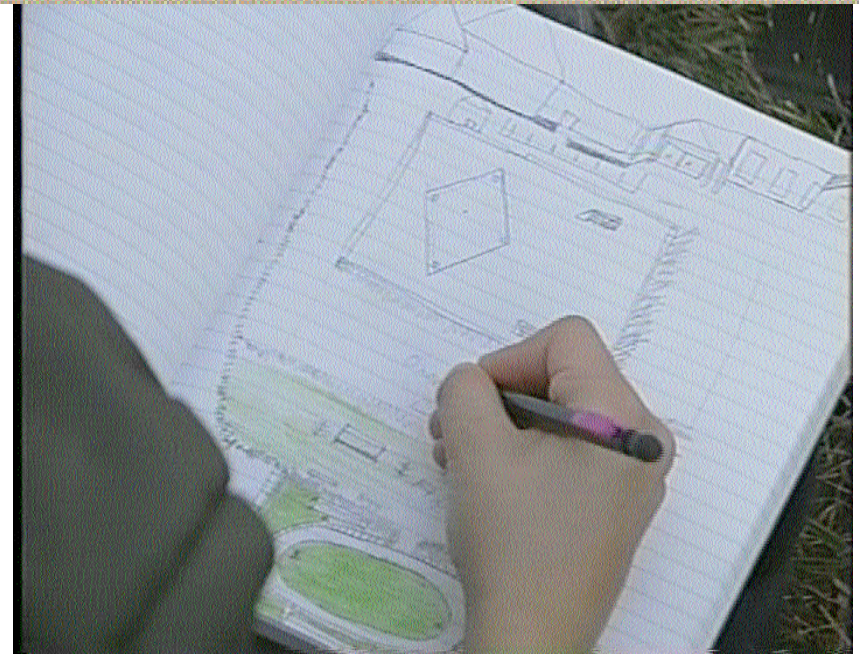
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## Define Microclimate

Look around your schoolyard. Are any places wide open? Can you find other places that are protected from sun, wind and rain?

These small places are called Microclimates: little "pockets" where the climate is unlike your general climate.



## Find 2 Microclimate Gardens

Think about ALL of the factors that might affect the rate of tulip growth as you search for your two sites. Draw a map of your schoolyard with the buildings. Predict areas where there might be different microclimates. Go out and explore.

Find the: warmest place, coldest place, driest place, and wettest place.



## **Dig In!**

1. Dig and plant some tulip bulbs in your two Microclimate Gardens. Plant them the same way in each garden.

2. Share with Journey North! Where did you plant your two "Microclimate Gardens?"

*Describe your experiment.*

Predict how many days will be between the blooming of tulips at your two sites.



Follow your gardens all winter and into spring. Visit them often to collect data. How do the Microclimate Gardens compare to your Official garden? What did you discover about each garden site? Need to change your predictions? Discuss your data. What have you learned? Do you need to change your predictions?

**It's fun seeing what's up with the Microclimate Garden Challenge!**