



I teach in a distance learning program for people trying to get their high school equivalency credential in Massachusetts. Although they may go to other face-to-face classes, my students never need to “attend” my class in person. And a good thing, too, because as you may have heard on the news, the Boston area had a bit of snow this winter!

Here’s how the National Weather Service described it:

January 27: record daily snowfall, 22.1 inches. Previous record 8.8 inches in 2011.

February 2, record daily snowfall, 16.2 inches. Previous record, 11.1 inches in 1974.

February 9, tied record daily snowfall, 14.8 inches, also set in 2013.

How do they measure it? Here's how Charlie Neese, an Emmy Award-winning television meteorologist and severe weather safety expert based in Nashville, Tennessee, describes the methods:

We hardly had time to dig out from one record snowfall before there came another. There were days when even opening the front door was a trial – a friend could only get out of her house at one point by climbing out a window. Once outside, there were days when there was nowhere to go and no way to get there: cities imposed not only parking bans but driving bans as well; schools, public offices and businesses closed for days; Boston’s public transit system shut down completely twice and only promised to restore full service by the end of March.

Unshoveled sidewalks pushed people to walk in the streets, already narrowed by towering snowbanks. Even staying inside could be dangerous – roofs began to collapse from the weight of nearly 100 inches of snow (fortunately the only fatalities were two horses that couldn’t be rescued from a damaged barn). Many people went up on their roofs to dislodge the heavy snow -- take a look at the picture on the right side, "Up on the Roof," taken by one of my students!

Each storm made the problem worse: where were we to put the new snow? Throwing a shovelful onto a bank already over one’s head was no mean feat. Governor Charlie Baker finally called in the National Guard, and bulldozers and front loaders began moving the storms’ leavings to snow farms.

On these farms and on the streets of Boston, huge snow melters did their best to reduce the stuff to water.

Thanks to technology, my students were able to continue learning and working – at least as long as they had power. And we all faced our notorious New England weather with fortitude – and a sense of humor!

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Boston-s-Snow-Waterloo>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Boston-s-Snow-Waterloo>



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Sidewalk tunnel

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1 of 3 Pedestrians make their way along a snow-covered street during a winter storm in Cambridge, Massachusetts February 9, 2015.
CREDIT: REUTERS/BRIAN SNYDER

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Humor helps!

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