Name: _____ Date: _____

Science Handout · Grade 7

The Water Cycle

Learning goals

- I can name the four main steps of the water cycle.
- I can explain how the sun moves water from Earth into the air and back again.
- I can use the words evaporation, condensation, precipitation, and collection correctly.

The water cycle in four steps

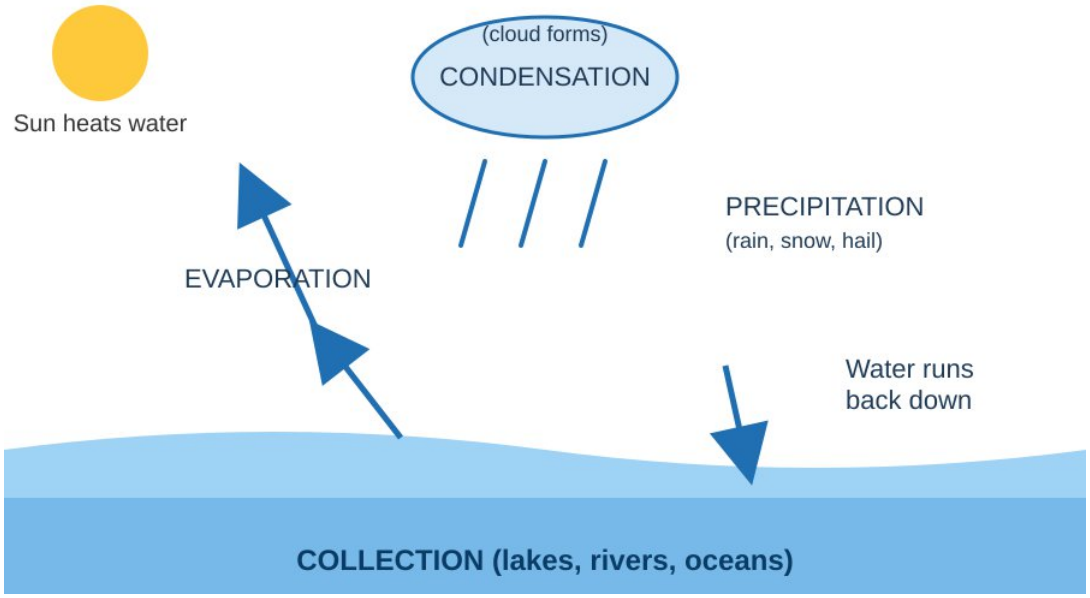
Evaporation: The sun heats water in oceans, lakes, and puddles. The water turns into water vapor and rises into the air.

Condensation: As the vapor rises, it cools and turns back into tiny droplets. Billions of droplets together form clouds.

Precipitation: When droplets in clouds grow heavy, they fall as rain, snow, sleet, or hail.

Collection: Precipitation gathers in lakes, rivers, oceans, and underground. The cycle then starts again.

Diagram of the water cycle



Vocabulary

Word	Meaning (in your own words)
Evaporation	Liquid water turns into water vapor (a gas) when it is heated by the sun.
Condensation	Water vapor cools and changes back into tiny liquid droplets that form clouds.
Precipitation	Water falls from clouds as rain, snow, sleet, or hail.
Collection	Water gathers in lakes, rivers, oceans, and underground, ready to evaporate again.
Water vapor	Water in the form of an invisible gas in the air.

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Check your understanding

1. What powers the water cycle? Name the energy source.

2. What is the difference between evaporation and condensation?

3. Why do clouds look gray before it rains?

4. Name two forms of precipitation.

5. Where does the water that evaporated from a puddle end up after it rains?

Mini experiment: Make a mini water cycle

Materials: a clear cup or zip-top bag, warm water, a plate of ice cubes or cold water, tape, a marker.

Steps:

- Pour 2 cm of warm water into the cup. Mark the water level with the marker.
- Cover the cup with a plastic bag or plate of ice. Tape it so no air escapes.
- Put the cup in a sunny spot and wait 30 minutes. Observe what happens on the inside of the cover.

Record what you observe:

Explain which step you saw (evaporation, condensation, or collection) and why:

Note: the experiment is a classroom example; the materials and timing are suggestions your teacher may change.