

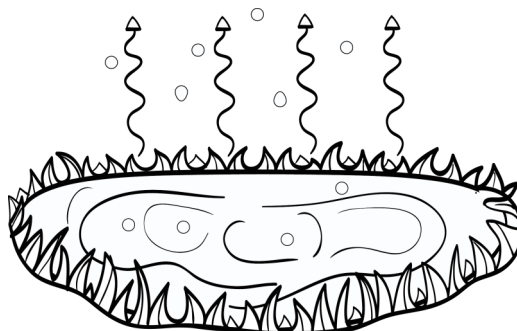
Evaporation

The water cycle starts with the sun. I know, that might sound strange (after all, what does the sun in the sky have to do with the water we drink?), but the sun plays a very important part. When the heat and energy from the sun reach the ocean, they warm the water. When the water gets warm enough, it turns into a gas called water vapor. The water vapor rises into the air. This process is called **evaporation**.

Think of what happens when someone boils a pan of water on the stove. As the water heats up, it starts to evaporate. It turns into water vapor and disappears into the air around us.

Evaporation is also why a puddle of water on the sidewalk does not stay a puddle forever. Even if there's nowhere else for the water to go, eventually, it will evaporate back into the air.

Evaporation

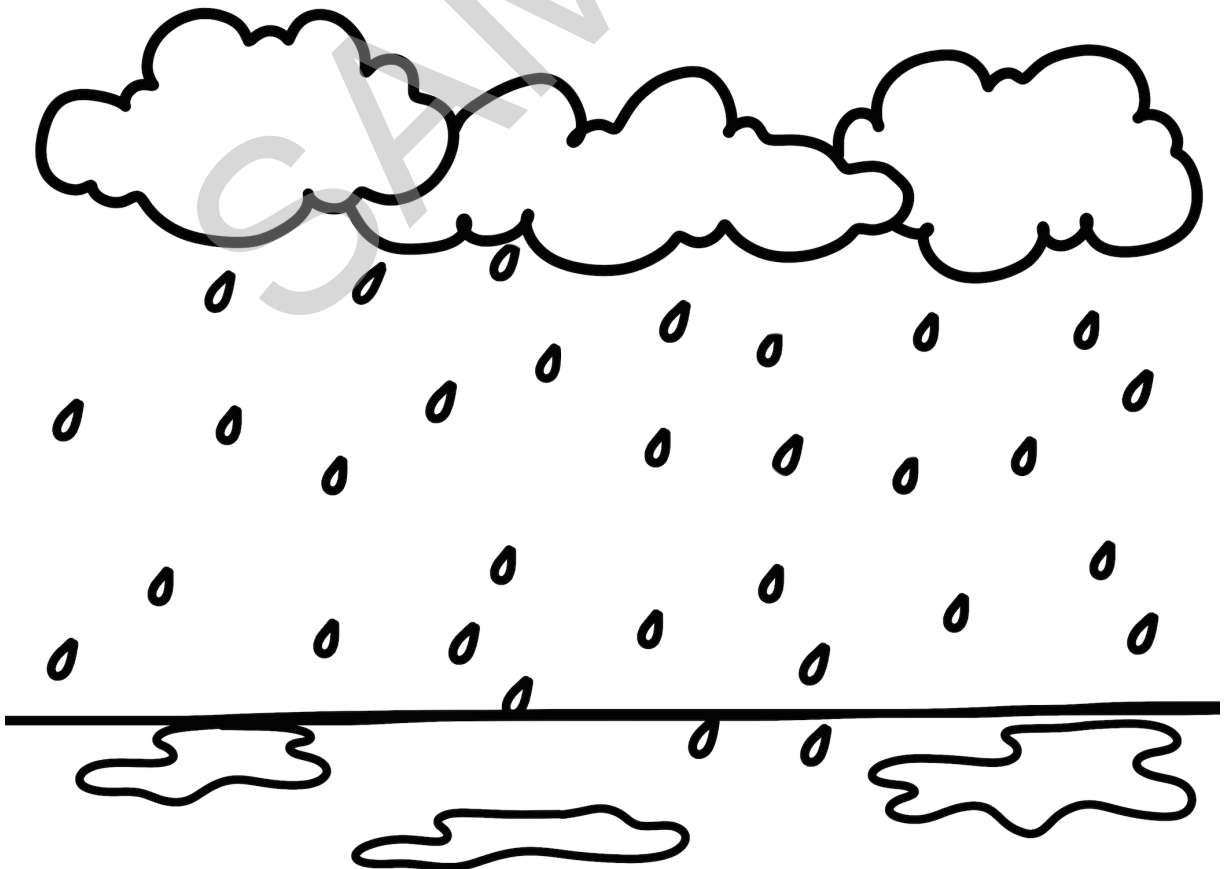


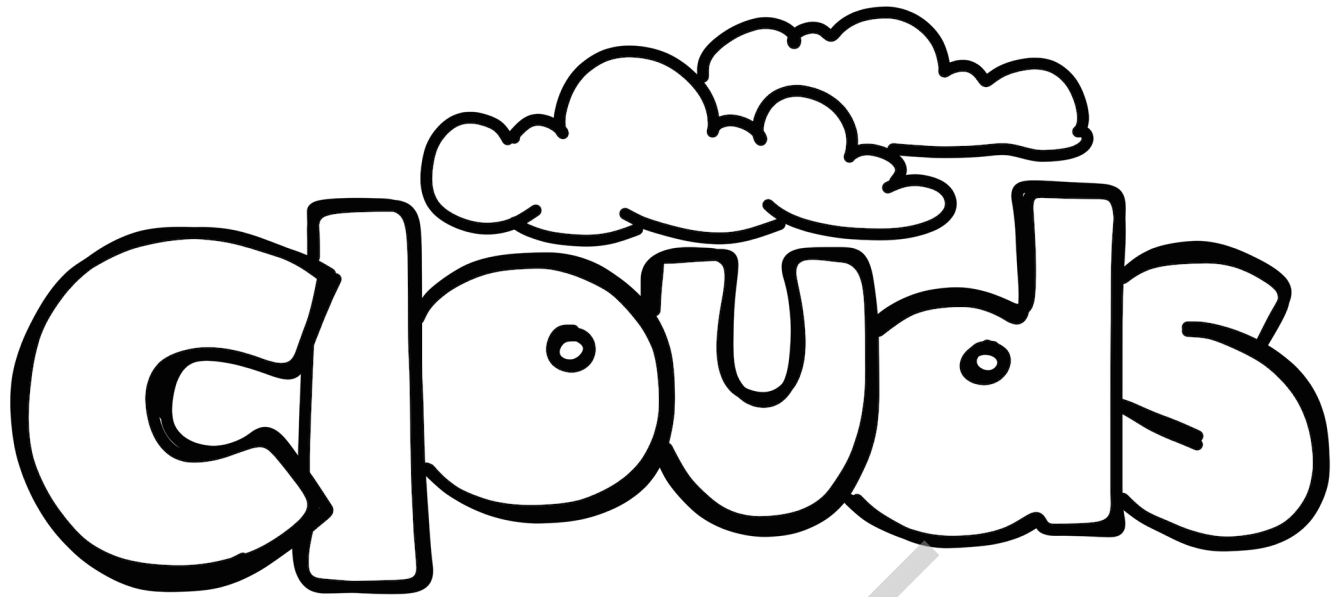
Infiltration

When the rain, snow, or other precipitation reaches the ground, some of it soaks into the ground through a process called **infiltration**. Now the precipitation becomes ground water.

Some of the water will quickly find its way to rivers and run off into them. The water that doesn't find its way to a river could end up being collected and stored in the ground in a place called an aquifer. An aquifer is made up of soil and rocks and can hold the water until the environment needs it.

Infiltration





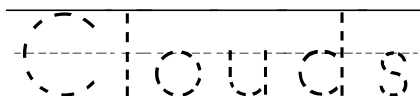
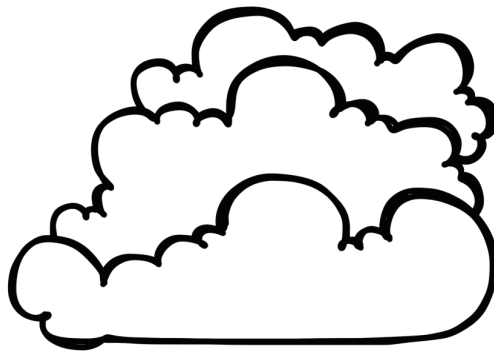
Scientists give **clouds** some very strange-sounding names, but their names aren't really hard to understand if you break them down. Cloud names describe their shape and sometimes how high above the earth they are.

Look at a word you know like *wise*. *Wise* means knowing what is right and making good decisions. If we add the prefix *un-* to *wise* we get *unwise*. *Un-* means *not*, so *unwise* is the same as *not wise*.

It works the same way with clouds. If we use the prefix *strato-* it means *layerlike* or *sheetlike*. We call these types of clouds stratus clouds.

If we use the prefix *cumulo-*, it means *pile* or *heap*. Cumulus clouds are the big, white puffy kind.

If we use the prefix *cirro-*, it means *curl*. Cirrus clouds look curly.



Review

This is the process of water vapor returning to the air from plants. Draw a circle around it.

Infiltration

Infiltration

Runoff

Runoff

TRANSPIRATION

Transpiration

This is the process of water turning into water vapor and rising into the air. Draw a circle around it.

Evaporation

Evaporation

Condensation

Condensation

Precipitation

Precipitation

This is the name for water that returns directly to the seas and oceans after falling from the clouds. Draw a circle around it.

Precipitation

Precipitation

Infiltration

Infiltration

Runoff

Runoff

This is the process of water coming down to earth from the clouds. Draw a circle around it.

TRANSPIRATION

Transpiration

Precipitation

Precipitation

Condensation

Condensation

Review Answer Key

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