



Water Cycle in a Cup

Investigate how water, a limited resource, moves from Earth to clouds and back again.

Make your own Water Cycle

Water evaporates from oceans, rivers, and lakes and rises into the atmosphere in its gas form where it condenses to form clouds. Precipitation then falls to the earth as rain or snow where it flows into rivers, lakes and oceans and the process begins again.

1. Color the landform handout.
2. Tape the landform drawing to the back of the cup.
3. Add 60 ml (¼ cup) of water to the earth cup and cover with plastic to keep the water from evaporating.
4. Mark the starting water level with a crayon with the current time.
5. Place the cup outside in the sun for ½ hour.
6. Observe and discuss changes.

Materials

- Plastic cup
- Plastic wrap
- Landform cut out from LearnAboutAg.org/agbites
- Plastic wrap
- Water
- Tape
- Crayons

Tip

This activity can also be done using plastic bags and taping them to a window.

Classroom Activities

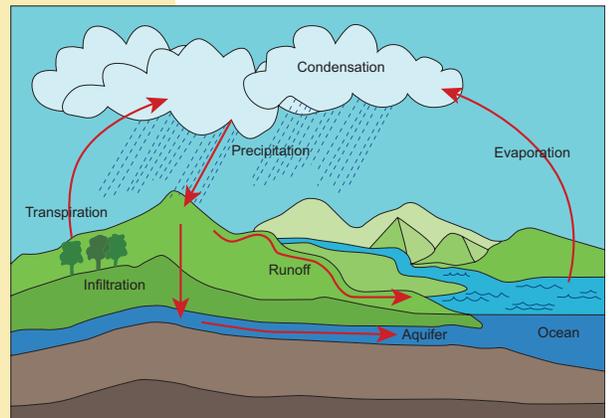
Science

- Create an experiment with water cycle in a cup. Use the scientific method and write up a report. Make observations over a period of ½ hour, one hour, one day and two days. Measure the amount of water that is left after observations.
- Discuss the following:
 - When and why does it rain?
 - What happens to the rain water once it reaches the ground?
 - What happens to the water when the sun comes out?
 - What happens to the vapor in the air when it gets cold?
- Define the following terms:

Evaporation	Collection
Condensation	Watershed
Precipitation	

English Language Arts

- Create a story about the water cycle. For an example, go to LearnAboutAg.org/imaginethis and read past winning stories like “The Journey of Robby the Raindrop” from the 2010 contest.



California Standards:

Grade 2

ELA CC: W.2.3, 7, 10
 NGSS: 2-PS1-4, 2-ESS2-2, 3

Grade 3

ELA CC: W.3.3, 7, 10

Grade 4

ELA CC: W.4.3, 7, 10

Grade 5

ELA CC: W.5.3, 7, 10
 NGSS: 5-ESS2-1, 2

Grades 6-8

ELA CC: W.6-8.3, 7, 10; RST.6-8.3;
 WHST.6-8.2, 7
 NGSS: MS-ESS2-4

Adapted from California Department of Water Resources

