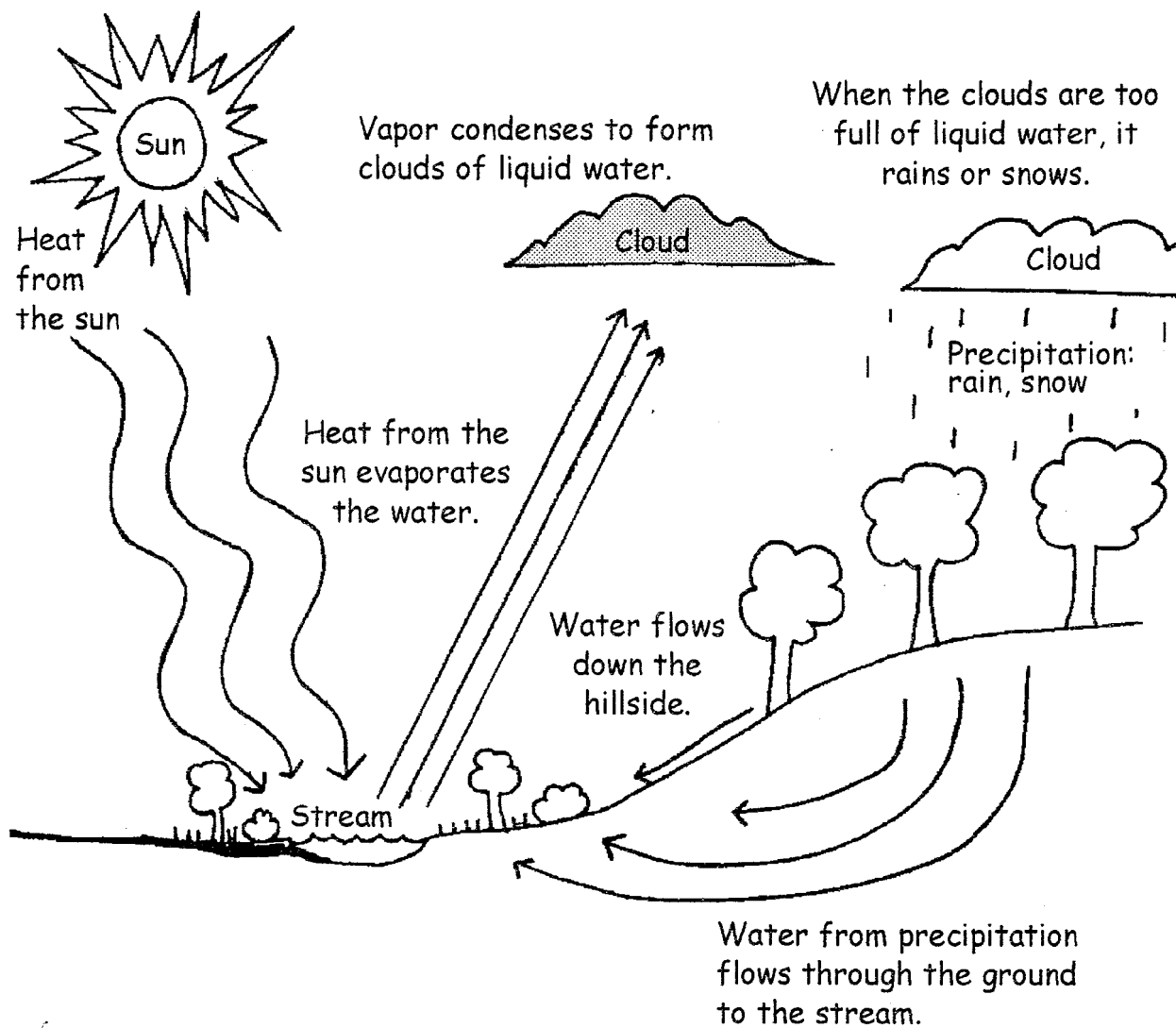
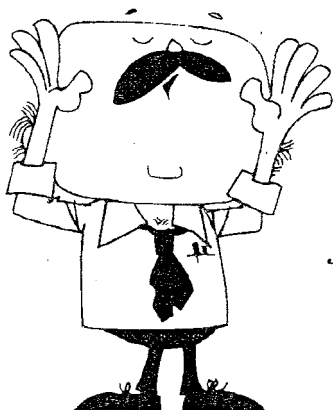


W A T E R C Y C L E

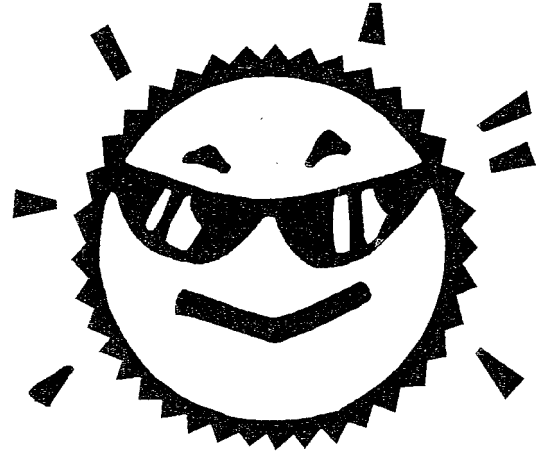


Water goes through three states of matter (liquid, solid, gas) in the water cycle. The water cycle is the movement of water from Earth to the **atmosphere** and back again.



Surface water is any water flowing or standing on the surface of the ground.

Water from lakes, rivers and oceans is warmed by the sun. The liquid water turns into water vapor (gas). When vapor is warmer than air, it rises up into the atmosphere. This is called **evaporation**.

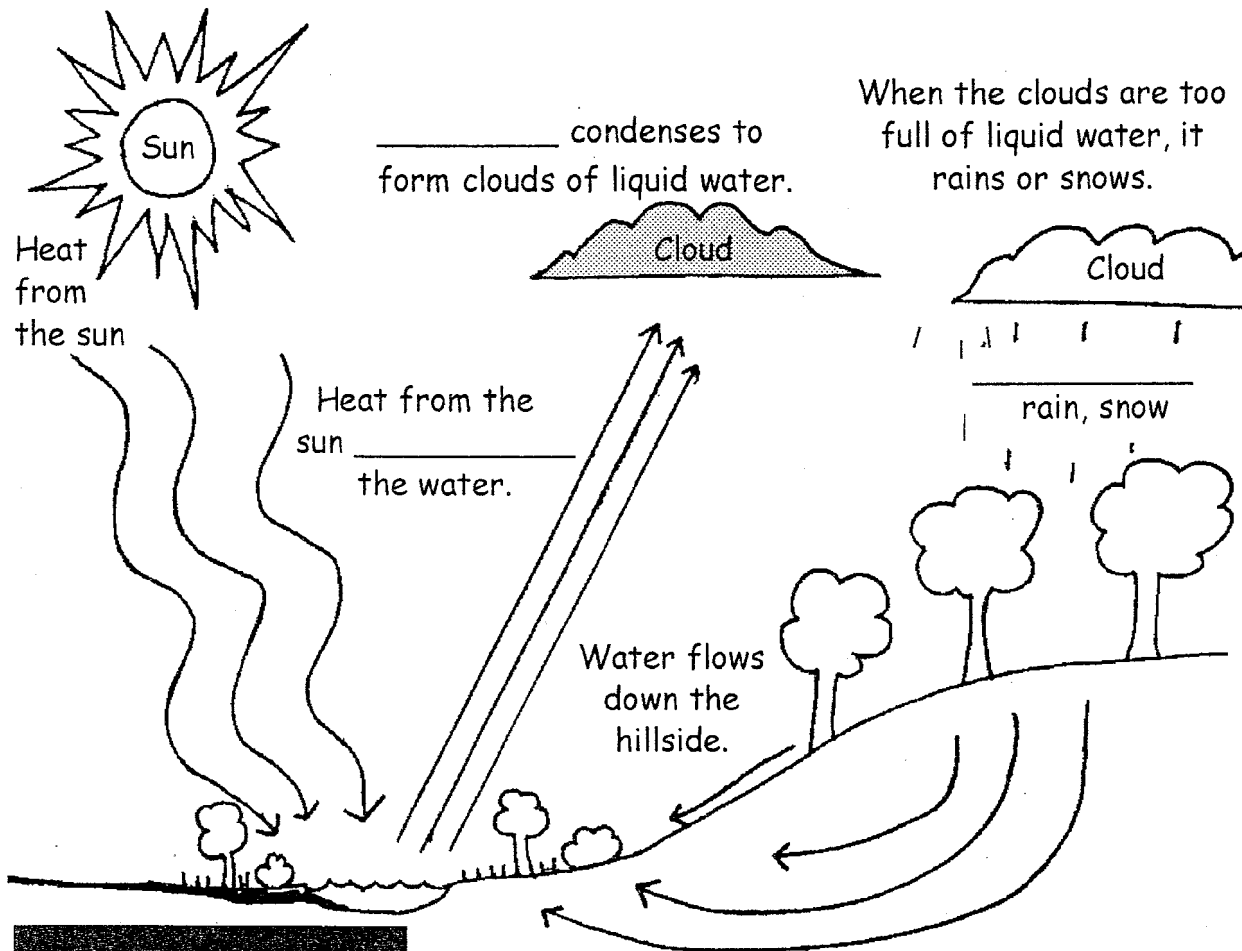


Plants and trees also “breathe” water into the atmosphere in a process called **transpiration**.

*Sunlight striking
falling rain makes a
colorful effect.
What is this called?*



Fill in the blanks in the water cycle.



WATER WORDS:
PRECIPITATION
VAPOR
EVAPORATES

Describe what happens in the water cycle:



Another name for the water cycle is **Hydrologic Cycle**. Look for this word in a dictionary. Why do both terms have the same meaning?

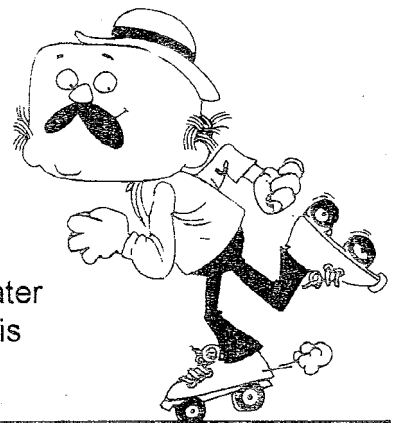
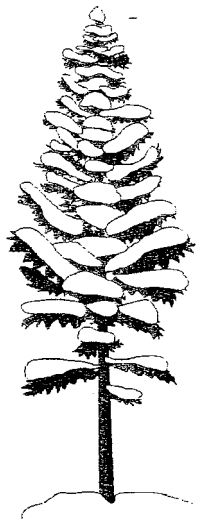
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Snow falls in winter. Snow is frozen water. In states with mountains – like Colorado, Wyoming, Montana and California – snow piles up in the mountains in winter. This buildup of snow is called **snowpack**. The amount of snow and the water content in the snowpack determines how much water we will have in the summer and fall.

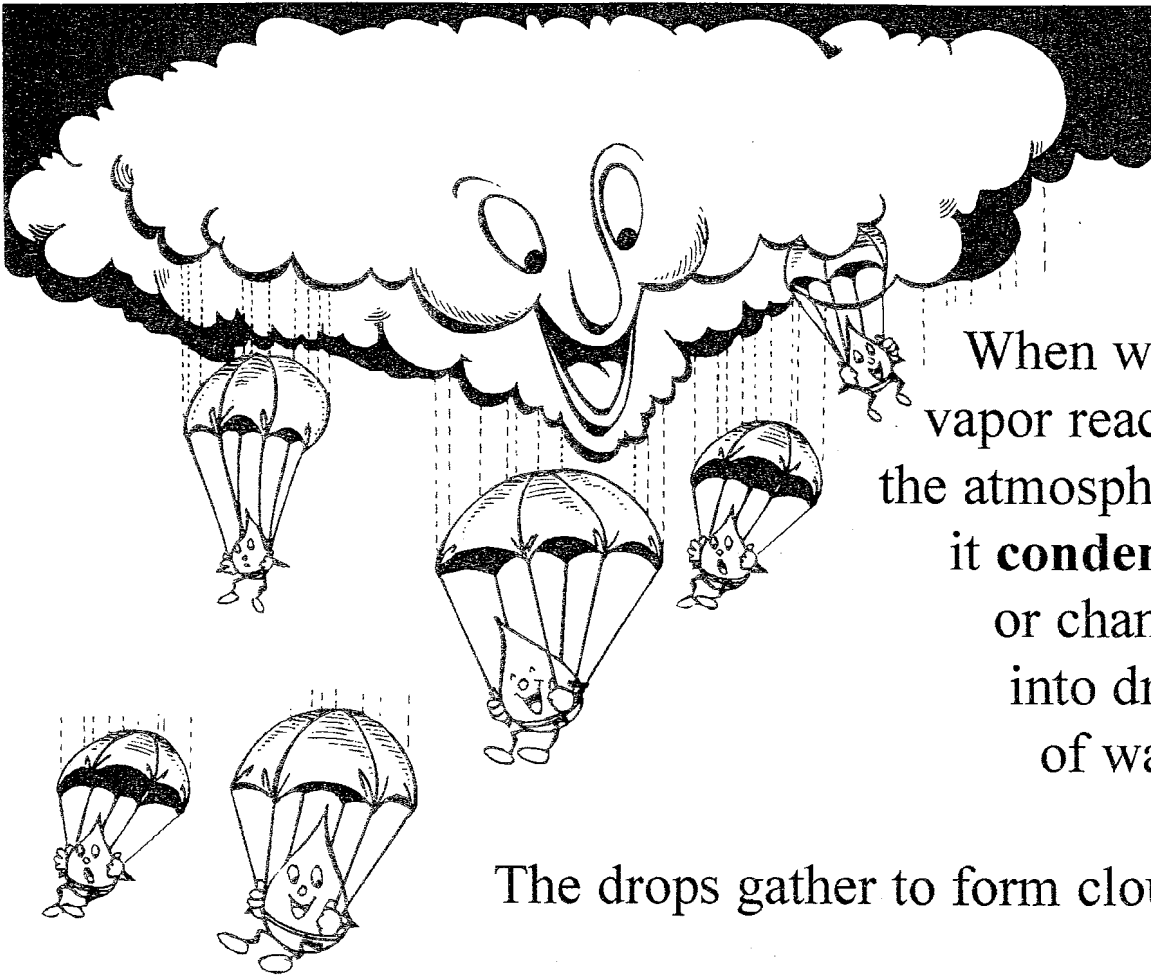
The snowpack begins to melt in spring when it gets warmer. The water from the melted snow flows into streams. The streams flow into rivers. Some of the water is caught and stored in reservoirs. This stored water can be used throughout the year.

Water stored in reservoirs and lakes is released when it is needed. The places needing water may include cities, businesses, homes or farms. Water can also flow to another state. Water is moved by letting it flow down rivers, **canals** (ditches) or huge pipes that may sit above or below ground.



A **dam** is a structure built to stop the flow of water down a stream. A **reservoir** is the water that is caught behind a dam.

W A T E R C Y C L E ◦



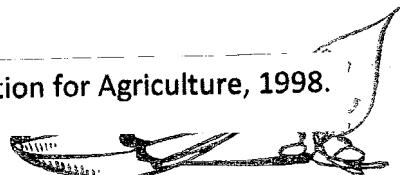
When water vapor reaches the atmosphere, it **condenses** or changes into drops of water.

The drops gather to form clouds.

When the clouds let go of the water as rain or snow, it is called **precipitation**.

The water falls back to Earth. Some of it falls into oceans. Some water runs off the land into lakes, rivers and streams. This is called **runoff**. Some water trickles beneath the surface of the ground to become **groundwater**, feeding into wells, springs and streams.

Then the cycle goes around again.



MATCH 'EM

Match the words and the meanings

Write the
letter of the
definition on
the line

- _____ EVAPORATION
- _____ CONDENSATION
- _____ LIQUID, ICE, VAPOR
- _____ PRECIPITATION
- _____ RUNOFF
- _____ TRANSPIRATION

- A** When the rain reaches Earth it flows across the land into lakes, streams and oceans.
 - B** The sun heats water. The water becomes vapor that rises into the atmosphere.
 - C** Liquid is heavier than vapor. Gravity pulls the liquid down to Earth as rain or snow.
 - D** Water vapor condenses to form clouds. When the clouds cool, the vapor becomes liquid.
 - E** Plants take in water, then “breathe” the water out as vapor.
 - F** Three states of water.
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