

Test Date _____ Name _____

The Water Cycle

Facts to Know

Most of the Earth's surface is covered by water.

The process of evaporation, condensation, formation of clouds, and precipitation is called the water cycle.

Evaporation:

When water on the Earth's surface gets heated it turns into steam and rises into the air. This process is called **evaporation**. The steam is called water vapor. The amount of water vapor in the air is called humidity.

Condensation:

Water vapor rises into the sky and starts to cool down. As it cools, it joins together to form water droplets. This process is called **condensation**. Water droplets group together to form clouds.

Precipitation:

When the water droplets become too heavy, they fall to the Earth in different forms as precipitation. Some examples of precipitation are rain, snow, and sleet.

Water that is found underground in soil or rocks is called groundwater. Groundwater waters plants and helps create rich soil.

Clouds:

Cumulus clouds are puffy and white. Cumulus clouds are found during fair weather.

Cirrus clouds are high in the sky. They are white and feathery, and made of ice crystals.

Stratus clouds are low lying clouds that look like grey blankets. You can see stratus clouds on a cloudy day.

Vocabulary

evaporation- the process in which liquid changes to a gas

condensation- the process in which vapor or gas turns into a liquid

precipitation- any form of water that falls from clouds to the Earth's surface- rain, snow, or sleet.

humidity- the amount of water vapor in the air

groundwater- all water found under the surface of the ground

