

Water cycle



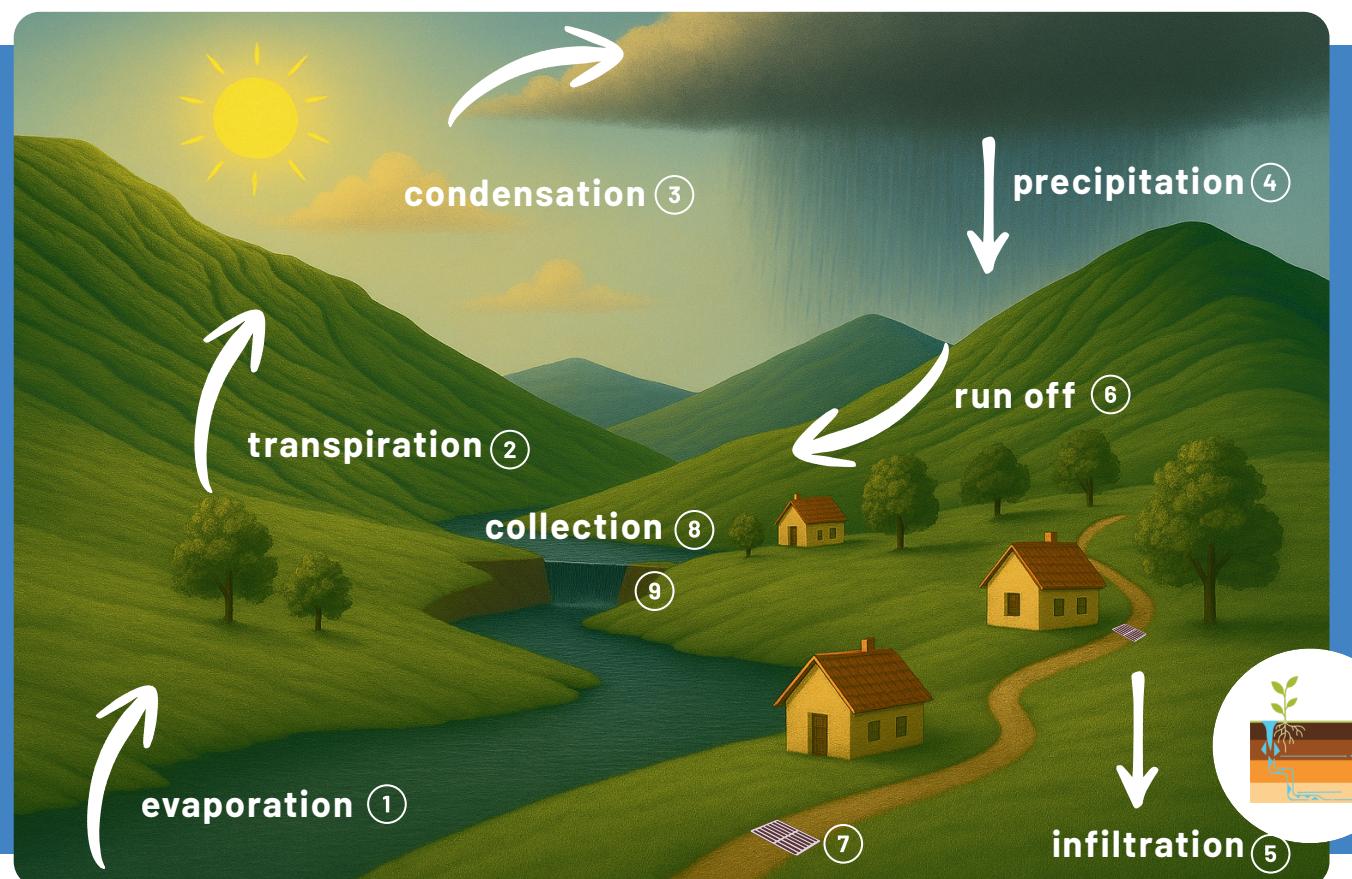
FACTSHEET (Primary Learners)

What is the water cycle?

A natural cycle that describes how water changes and moves through the Earth's land, air, waterways, and life

What is the managed water cycle?

Using dams and stormwater drains to control the flow of water and collect water creates a managed water cycle.



Parts of the water cycle



Evaporation

Energy from the sun warms the water in oceans, lakes and rivers. The water changes from a liquid to a gas (water vapour). The water vapour rises into the air.



Condensation

Rising water vapour in the air cools. It turns from a gas into liquid water. These tiny drops of water combine and form clouds.



Infiltration

Precipitation falls on the ground and soaks into the soil and rock. Some of this water is taken up by plants and some of this water becomes groundwater.



Stormwater

In towns and city, water runs off buildings and streets. It can pick up rubbish, animal waste, and chemical waste. It all flows into gutters and drains and then travels to waterways.



Dam

A dam is like a wall that is built across a river to block the flow of water. When it rains water collects behind the dam and creates a man-made lake.



Transpiration

Plants take up water through their roots. At tiny openings in their leaves, the water changes from a liquid to a gas (water vapour). The water vapour rises into the air.



Precipitation

The water in the clouds falls to the ground as liquid water (rain or sleet) or solid water (snow or hail). Precipitation is important for all living things.



Run off

Water that doesn't soak into the soil or isn't taken up by plants, flows along the ground from high to low places.



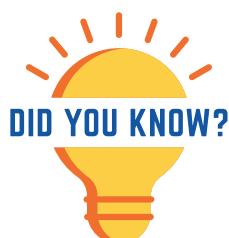
Collection

Precipitation and run off collect in bodies of water such as oceans, rivers, creeks, lakes, groundwater, glaciers, and ice caps.



Catchment

A catchment is an area of land with high and low places. The water flows from the high to the low places and collects in the low places.



Even though Earth is covered mostly in water, less than 1% (a very small amount) is freshwater that we can use. We all need clean, freshwater to live. This means that freshwater is a special resource and we must understand it, care for it, and use it wisely.

How can you use water wisely?