

The water cycle

When sun shines on water, the water warms up and rises into the air to form a gas called water vapor. This process is called evaporation. When the water vapor cools, it turns back into water droplets that gather to make clouds. Eventually the water droplets fall to the Earth in a form of precipitation such as rain or snow.

Evaporation

Evaporation takes place when water molecules escape from a body of water. This can be a puddle, a lake, or a stream. The water must be heated.

precipitation

Precipitation takes place when water droplets are heavy enough to fall back to Earth. Precipitation always comes from clouds.

condensation

Condensation is the opposite of evaporation. It is the process by which water vapor in the air is changed into liquid water. Condensation is responsible for the formation of clouds.