

# The Water Cycle

**Genre:** Nonfiction **Reading Level:** 300L **Grade:** 1st

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Water moves around our planet in a cycle. This is called the water cycle. 14  
The water cycle has three main steps. 21

First, the sun heats up water in oceans, lakes, and rivers. The water turns 35  
into tiny drops called water vapor. This is called evaporation. The water 47  
vapor rises up into the sky. 53

Next, the water vapor gets cold high in the sky. It turns back into water 68  
drops. These drops form clouds. This step is called condensation. 78

Finally, the clouds get heavy with water. The water falls back to Earth as 92  
rain, snow, or sleet. This is called precipitation. The water goes back into 105  
oceans, lakes, and rivers. 109

Then the cycle starts all over again! The water cycle never stops. It has 123  
been happening for millions of years. 129

The water cycle is important. It brings fresh water to plants, animals, and 142  
people all over the world. 148

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:

1. What are the three main steps of the water cycle?
2. What happens to water when the sun heats it up?
3. What is it called when water falls back to Earth as rain or snow?
4. Why is the water cycle important?