



TRUCKEE MEADOWS PARKS FOUNDATION

AWARENESS • APPRECIATION • STEWARDSHIP

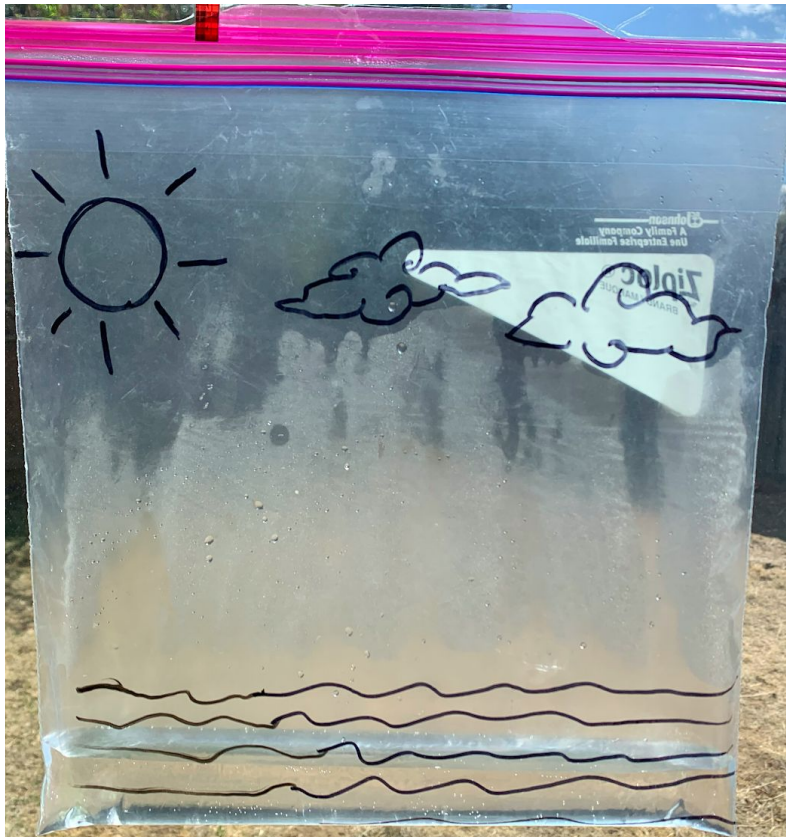
Water Cycle in a Bag

What you'll need:

- Plastic ziplock bag
- Permanent marker
- Water
- Tape

Directions:

1. Decorate your bag! Use your permanent marker to draw a sky in the upper half of the bag. Include clouds and the sun because they are very important to the water cycle!
2. Pour about one cup of water into the bag. This is your river!
3. Zip the bag closed. Make sure it's closed tight!
4. Hang your bag on a window using tape. Make sure it's taped tightly—you don't want the bag to fall off!
5. Leave your bag taped for a few days and observe how it changes.

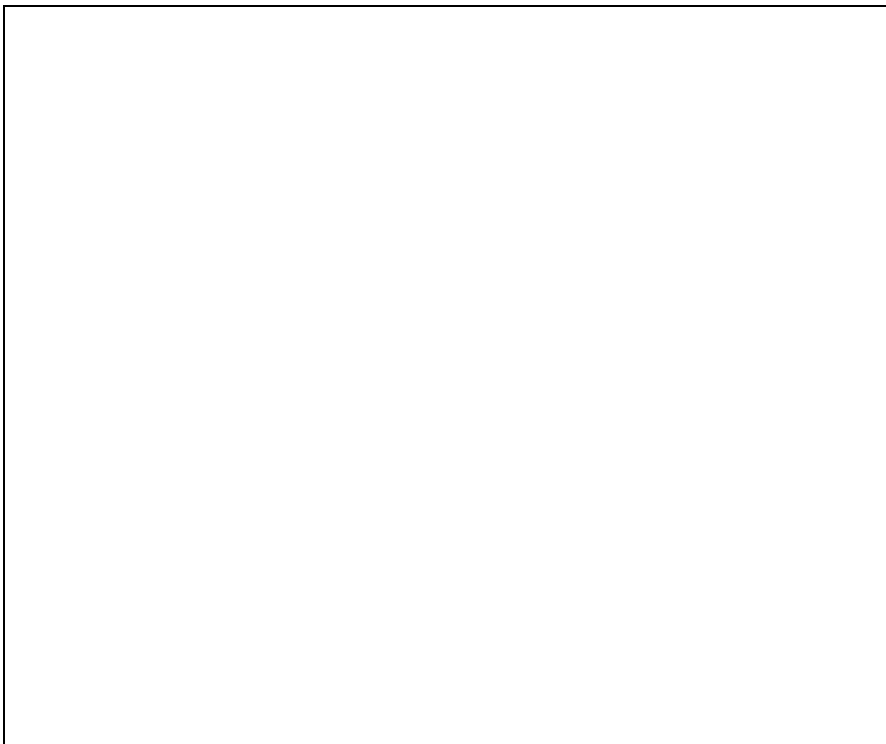


Keep an eye on your bag and watch how it changes over 2 days. Draw a picture of your bag each day in the space below. Make sure to label the bag, water, and heat source.

Day 1:



Day 2:



You may notice that the water is traveling throughout the bag.



This bag illustrates the water cycle—a continuous process that moves water from rivers and lakes into the clouds and back again. There are four steps in the water cycle: **precipitation**, **collection**, **evaporation**, and **condensation**.

Precipitation is the release of water from the sky. It can come down as rain, snow, or hail.

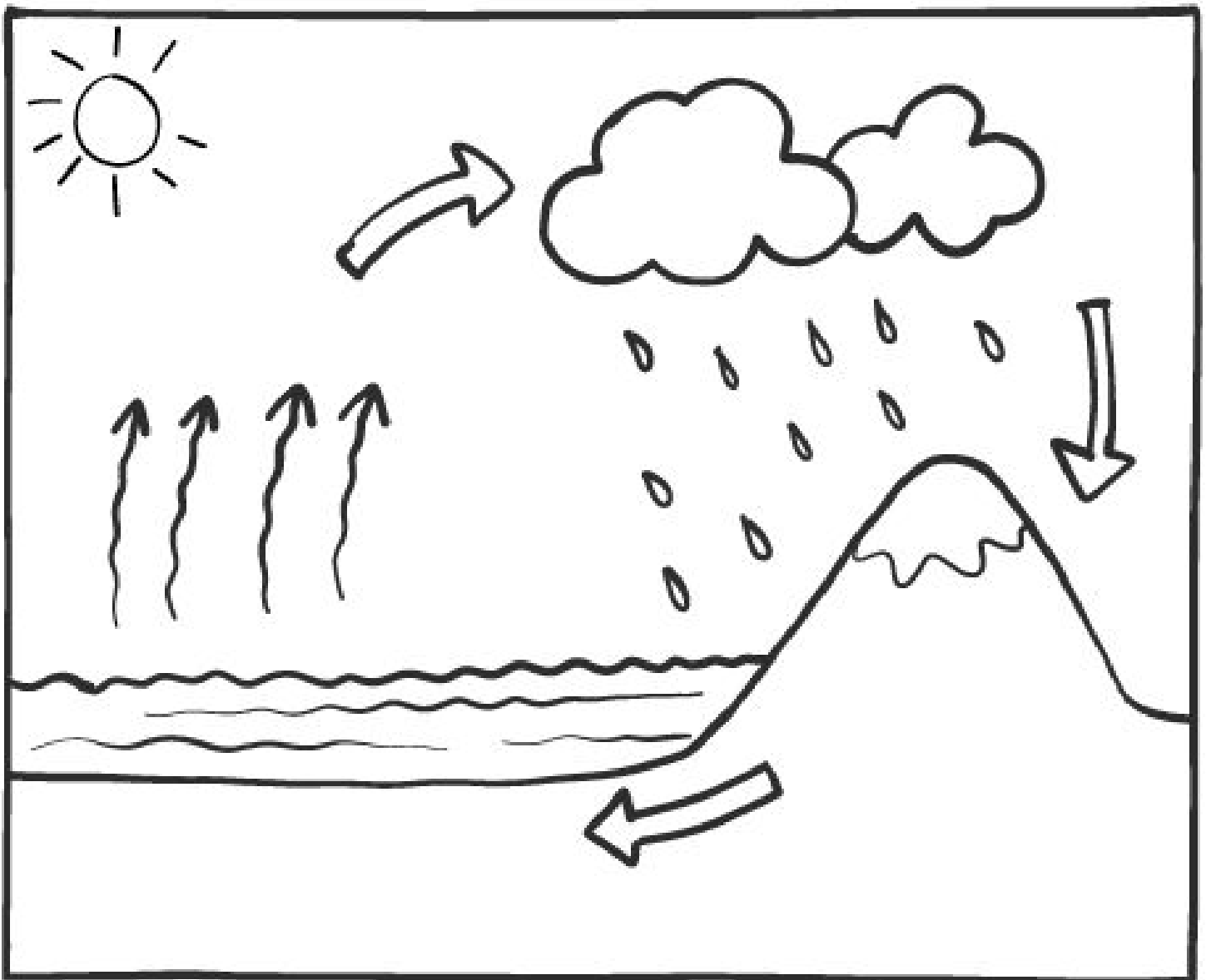
Collection refers to the water stored in lakes, rivers, and ponds.

Evaporation occurs when heat from the sun causes the water on Earth to evaporate (turn from liquid to gas). This water vapor collects in the sky, forming clouds!

Condensation occurs when the water in the clouds cools down enough to become a liquid again.

When the bag is taped against the window, heat from the sun is able to enter the clear material. This heat warms up the water collected at the bottom of the bag and causes it to evaporate and move to the top of the sealed bag. As the sun moves throughout the day and the heat becomes less intense in the bag, the water that had evaporated cools and condenses into water drops. The water droplets then move down the bag like precipitation.

Label the picture below with the four steps in the water cycle:
precipitation, collection, evaporation, and condensation.



How does the sun drive the water cycle?

What would happen if there were less sun shining on your bag? More sun?

How does the sun affect other parts of life on earth?

Can you think of other cycles on Earth that are reliant on the sun?
