

The Water Cycle · Conversation & classroom guide

Learning with a grown-up · Ages 4–8 · Flexible participation

Where can water go after a puddle gets smaller?

Learning aim: Describe a pictured water journey while distinguishing diagram symbols from visible water.

A five-minute conversation

Begin at the lake and trace the water's journey together. Read the four labels slowly, connecting each word to the picture. Explain that the rising marks help us imagine evaporation: water vapor itself is invisible. Let your child choose a starting point and tell a short water-journey story using the scene.

Remember: We compared ice, liquid water and invisible water vapor. How might water move between places as it changes form?

Start here: Trace from the lake to the cloud and back toward the ground.

Explore further: Explain what is invisible during evaporation and what a cloud is made of.

What gives this cycle energy?

Answer cue: The Sun warms water.

What happens when water vapor cools and condenses?

Answer cue: It becomes tiny liquid drops that can make clouds.

Where can water gather after it falls?

Answer cue: In rivers, lakes and oceans.

Keep the idea clear

Cloud drops are liquid water; invisible water vapor is a gas. The drawn rising marks are a teaching symbol.

Try: A little water, observed over time

Materials: An adult, shallow unbreakable dish, a little water and paper or dictation.

1. An adult places a little water in a shallow unbreakable dish on a stable surface away from electronics and children's unsupervised access.
2. Record the water level with a drawing and the date; predict whether it will look the same later.
3. An adult helps revisit it on another day. Record what you actually see, then discuss evaporation as a possible explanation for a lower level. Empty the dish afterward.

What this can show: The level may change slowly and a dish can also lose water through spills. A falling level alone does not show visible vapor or prove every step of the whole cycle.

Return to it: On a later safe window look, notice clouds or rain. Which part of the diagram helps you talk about that observation?

The Water Cycle · In the classroom

A 20-minute classroom lesson

Prepare: Read the poster, answer cues and misconception note. Prepare only the materials named in the activity; keep a picture-only or described option available.

Words to explore

evaporation — Liquid water changing into water vapor.

condensation — Water vapor changing into liquid drops.

3 min · Reconnect and wonder: Where can water go after a puddle gets smaller? Invite an initial idea; record it without marking it right or wrong.

4 min · Look together: Trace from the lake to the cloud and back toward the ground. Introduce evaporation using the poster.

8 min · Investigate or represent: Use “A little water, observed over time.” Let pairs take turns noticing and recording, with adult help and the activity’s stated boundaries.

5 min · Explain and return: Ask the core check: Where can water go after a puddle gets smaller? Accept pointing, words, signing or a drawing. If the learner is ready, offer this optional extension: Explain what is invisible during evaporation and what a cloud is made of.

Understanding check: Where can water go after a puddle gets smaller?

Answer guidance: Some liquid water can change into invisible water vapor in the air through evaporation. In the wider cycle, vapor can condense into drops, and water can fall and collect again. The level may change slowly and a dish can also lose water through spills. A falling level alone does not show visible vapor or prove every step of the whole cycle.

Accept pointing, speech, signing, a drawing or adult dictation. Describe the illustration and use labels/position as well as color. Offer one contrast first, and use the extension when the learner is ready.

A response to keep

My idea or question

What I noticed (date/time if useful)

What I think now / my next question

<https://kiddos.ai/learn/learning-with-gina-and-ollie/water-cycle>

Related story: Where Did My Water Go? — Follow Gina and Ollie’s water question, then connect the story to the water you notice.

Our discovery record

Use words, marks, a drawing or an adult's notes. Keep this page with you; nothing needs to be uploaded.

Date / time (if useful): _____

My question or idea

What I noticed

What I think now

What I want to explore next

Stories to continue together: <https://kiddos.ai/books>

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