

Rainfall And The Water Cycle

- Read the information and complete the tasks.



It is hard to imagine, but there is a limited amount of water in the world. The water that you may drink today has actually been recycled millions of times before it reaches your cup. This process of water recycling is known as the water cycle. The next time you have a drink of water think about where it has come from - it may have been a part of the iceberg that the Titanic hit or water which was once snow on the top of Mount Everest!

Water is constantly being recycled throughout the world. Water is considered a precious resource due to the large differences in its availability

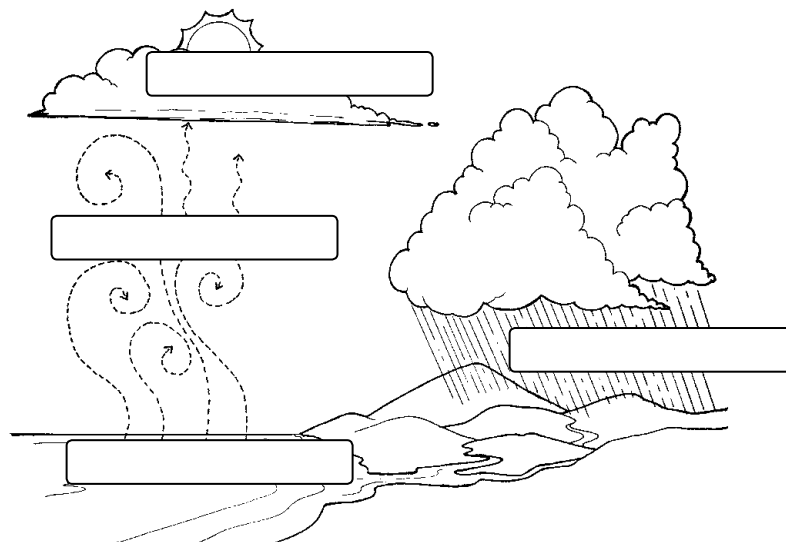
in different countries. Some countries have an abundance of water such as New Zealand; other countries, such as Australia, have little water due to long periods of drought and large desert areas. Even within one country the availability of water can change greatly. For example, parts of Australia such as New South Wales and Victoria often suffer from extreme flooding due to heavy rainfall, while other outback regions frequently experience droughts.

Water is capable of taking many forms to serve many purposes. Firstly, water in its liquid form evaporates.

Evaporation occurs when the sun heats up the water in lakes, rivers and oceans, and turns it into vapour or steam. The vapour then rises into the air. This is the start of the water cycle. The water vapour gets cold in the air and changes back into a liquid, forming the clouds. This is called condensation. The third step in the water cycle process is precipitation - another name for rain. Rainfall occurs when the air can no longer hold the condensed air, and it falls back to Earth. The last step in the water cycle is collection - the return of the rain (water) back into the Earth's oceans, rivers, lakes and groundwater.

- A. Label the diagram to show the four stages of the water cycle. You could provide further explanation of each stage in the spaces around the diagram.

The Water Cycle



- B. Tell a partner how the water cycle works without looking at this sheet.

Challenge

- C. The Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) publishes daily reports on dam water levels, rainfall predictions and actual annual rainfall in each region of Australia. Look up the actual rainfall recorded in your area for June for the last three years. Has the amount of rainfall increased or decreased during this time? Record your findings on the back of this sheet.