Mini Water Cycle

Water is moving around us all day long! A process called the "water cycle" uses heating and cooling to move water from the sky to the ground and back again. In this experiment, you will use simple materials to create a visible water cycle in your own home!

Hypothesis

In this experiment you will create a mini water cycle using markers, a plastic bag, and water. Write down your "hypothesis" (your guess) about what will happen when you leave a sealed plastic bag full of water in the sun.

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Materials

- Resealable plastic bag (like a sandwich bag)
- Permanent marker (any color)
- Water
- Blue food coloring (optional)
- Tape
- A sunny window

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Experiment

1. Gather your materials.
2. Using the marker, draw a sun on one of the top corners of the bag and a cloud in the middle.
3. Fill your bag slightly less than half-way with water. Add a drop of food coloring if you want to see the water better.
4. Seal your bag and tape it closed.
5. Tape the bag securely to the window. Make sure it's a sunny window!
6. Record the time you put the bag in the window on the next page and follow the instructions in the "observation" section.

Your bag should look sort of like this!

Observations

Draw your bag or describe what you see when you start the experiment, after two hours, and after four hours.

Start

After 2 Hours

After 4 Hours

What happened to the water in the bag?

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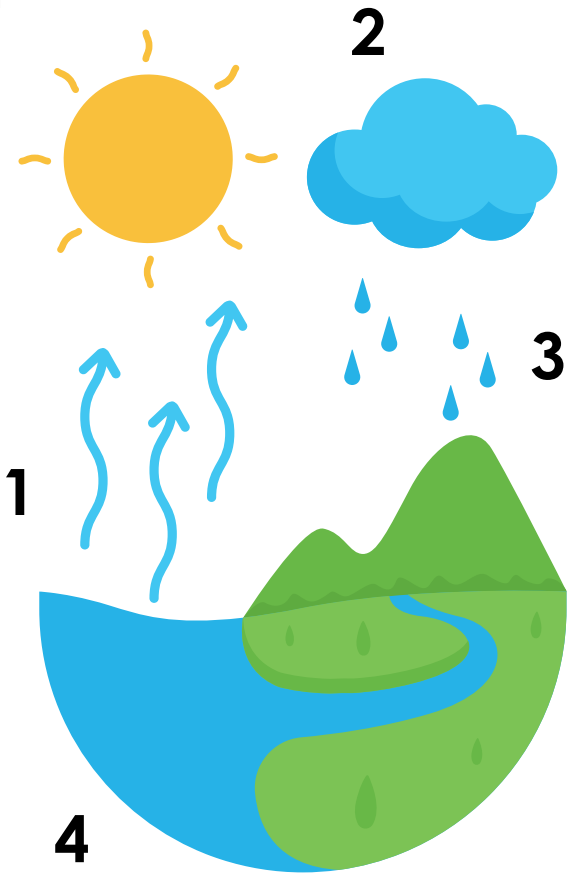
Water Cycle Matching

Here is what happens in the water cycle. Match each step with the correct number on the picture.



◯ **Evaporation:** The sun heats the water, causing it to rise up like steam.

◯ **Accumulation:** The drops of water collect in the water below, like rain in a puddle.

◯ **Precipitation:** As water droplets gather, they become heavy and fall down as rain or snow.

◯ **Condensation:** When the warm water rises up and touches something cooler, like the bag, the water cools down and forms into drops.

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