

The Water Cycle: Plip's Big Journey

Read the story aloud together, then try the activities.

Name _____

Class _____

Date _____

Plip was a tiny drop of water living in a puddle outside Kabir's school. Every morning Kabir jumped over the puddle, and every morning Plip splashed up and said hello — though Kabir never heard.

One hot afternoon, the Sun shone down on the puddle. Plip felt warmer, and warmer, and lighter... until — whoosh! — Plip wasn't a drop any more. Plip had turned into water vapour, a gas so light and clear that nobody could see it. "I'm evaporating!" Plip whispered, floating up past the school roof.

Up and up Plip drifted. The higher Plip went, the colder the air became. Brrr. Plip bumped into a speck of dust and a hundred other bits of water vapour, and they huddled together. As they cooled, they turned back into liquid — tiny droplets, far smaller than a raindrop. "We're condensing!" said Plip. Millions of droplets crowded together, and from the ground they looked like one big, fluffy, white shape: a cloud.

The cloud grew darker as more droplets joined. Plip bumped into one droplet, then another, and grew bigger and heavier. Soon the air couldn't hold Plip up. "Here I go!" Plip shouted — and fell as a raindrop. That's precipitation: water falling from clouds as rain, snow, sleet or hail.

Plip landed on a mango leaf, rolled off, splashed into a stream and was carried all the way to a wide river. Some of Plip's friends soaked into the soil to feed the trees' roots. Others ran all the way to the sea. This is collection — water gathering in rivers, lakes, oceans and under the ground.

The next morning, Kabir saw the river shining in the sunshine. He didn't know that one of the drops in it was Plip, warming up again, getting lighter... "Here we go again," Plip smiled. Because water never runs out — the same water has been going round and round this journey for millions of years.

1. Match each word to its meaning

Write the letter next to each word.

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. Evaporation _____ | A. when water vapour cools and turns back into liquid droplets. |
| 2. Water vapour _____ | B. any water that falls from clouds: rain, snow, sleet or hail. |
| 3. Condensation _____ | C. water gathering in rivers, lakes, oceans and the ground. |
| 4. Precipitation _____ | D. when liquid water turns into an invisible gas. |
| 5. Collection _____ | E. water as a gas. You can't see it. |

2. Put the four steps of the water cycle in order (1-4).

- [] Condensation
- [] Precipitation
- [] Collection
- [] Evaporation

3. Answer the questions

1. Why did Plip float up out of the puddle?

2. Could Kabir see Plip when Plip was water vapour? Why not?

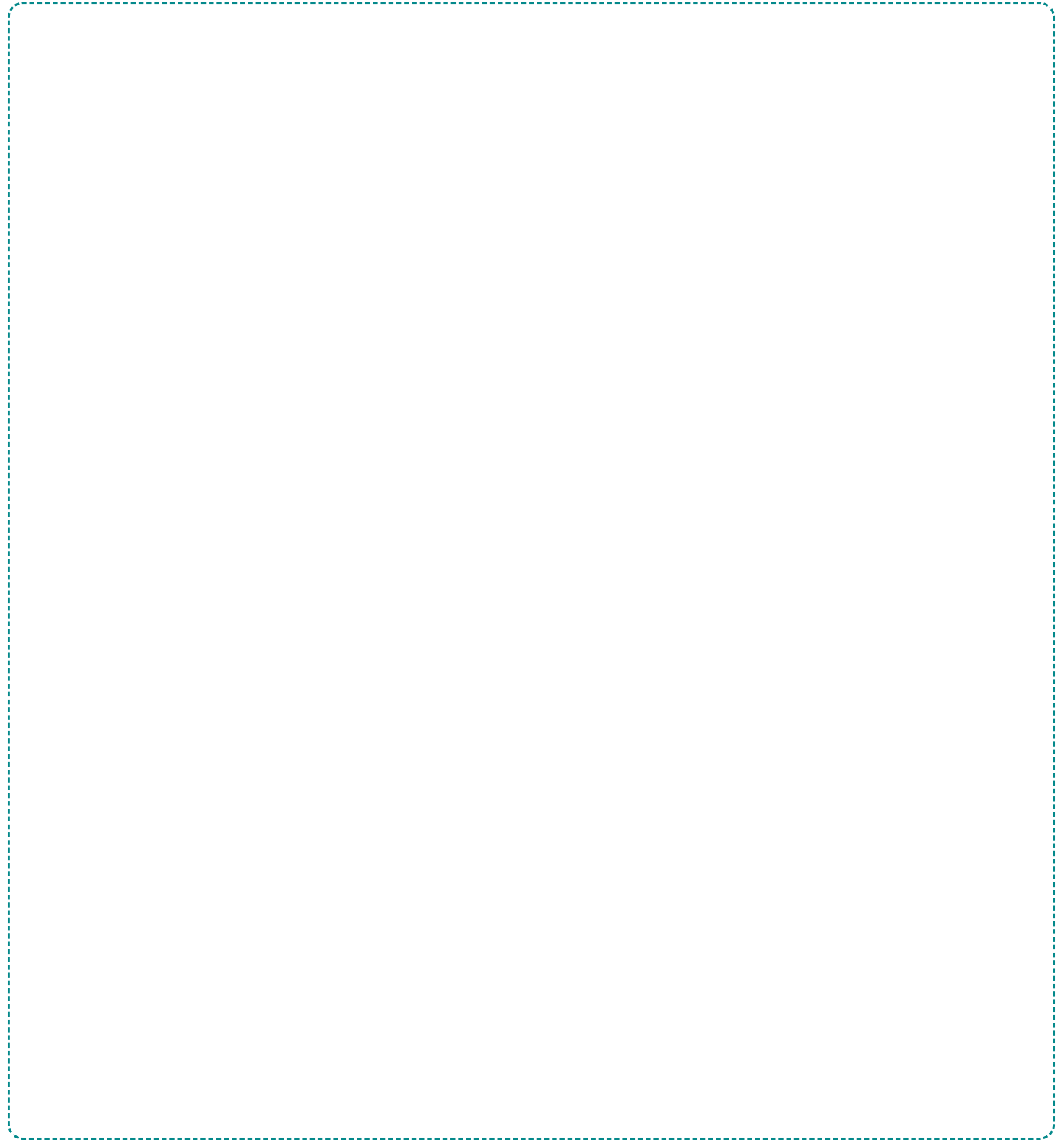
3. What made Plip turn back into a droplet in the sky?

4. Why did Plip fall as rain?

5. Where can water go after it rains?

4. Draw and label

Draw the water cycle. Label: evaporation, condensation, precipitation, collection.

A large, empty rectangular area defined by a dashed teal border, intended for a child to draw and label the water cycle.

Answer key (for teachers and parents)

On its own page so you can leave it out when printing for children.

1. 1-D 2-E 3-A 4-B 5-C

2. 1. Evaporation 2. Condensation 3. Precipitation 4. Collection

3.1 The Sun's heat made the water evaporate into water vapour, which is light and rises.

3.2 No — water vapour is an invisible gas.

3.3 The air high up was cold, so the water vapour cooled and condensed.

3.4 Plip joined other droplets and became too heavy for the air to hold up.

3.5 Into rivers, lakes, the sea, or soaking into the ground.