



The Water Cycle

Student Page 2 of 3



Here is a list of **places you could spend time when you are cycling around as a drop of water.**

Animals. Animals need water in order to survive. They receive their water by drinking it or through the foods they eat. This water will **STAY** with the animal for a period of time before it is excreted to the **SOIL** through waste or evaporated to the **CLOUDS** through perspiration and/or respiration.

Clouds. Clouds receive moisture when the heat of the sun evaporates liquid water into the air. The moisture then cools and condenses onto dust in the atmosphere to form clouds. Once in cloud form, this water will **STAY** in the atmosphere until it precipitates to the ground and collects in **GLACIERS, LAKES, or OCEANS.**

Glaciers. Glaciers receive moisture when precipitation from clouds falls in higher altitudes and freezes. Once in glacier form, water will usually **STAY** for an extended period of time before the heat of the sun causes melted water to slowly enter the **GROUNDWATER** or travel into a nearby **RIVER.**

Groundwater. Groundwater is water that is below the soil layer in the earth. This water collects from rivers, lakes, glaciers, and the soil. Once collected, groundwater will usually **STAY** in the ground for an extended period of time as gravity helps it to slowly filter downward. Once reaching the lowest point of a watershed, groundwater may filter into a **LAKE or RIVER.**

Lakes. Lakes are large bodies of water that collect water primarily through groundwater, rivers, and precipitation. Once in a lake, water may **STAY** for a period of time before evaporating to the **CLOUDS**, emptying into **RIVERS** or **Groundwater**, or being consumed by animals.

Oceans. Oceans are the largest bodies of water on the planet. They cover 3/4 of the Earth's surface and hold approximately 97% of the world's water. Oceans receive most of their water from rivers and through precipitation. Once in an ocean, water will either **STAY** or evaporate back to the **CLOUDS.**

Plants. The cells of plants need water in order to survive. Plants take in water from the soil. This water will **STAY** in the plant as it travels up to the leaves where it evaporates through a process known as **transpiration** to the **CLOUDS.**

Rivers. Rivers receive their water primarily from glaciers, lakes, groundwater, and soil. Once in a river, this water may supply the moisture needs of **ANIMALS**, evaporate to **CLOUDS**, filter into the **GROUNDWATER**, or **STAY** as it flows downward to **LAKES or OCEANS.**

Soil. Soil receives its water primarily from precipitation. Once in the soil, water will usually **STAY** for a period of time before evaporating to **CLOUDS** or filtering into **GROUNDWATER, RIVERS, or PLANTS.**

