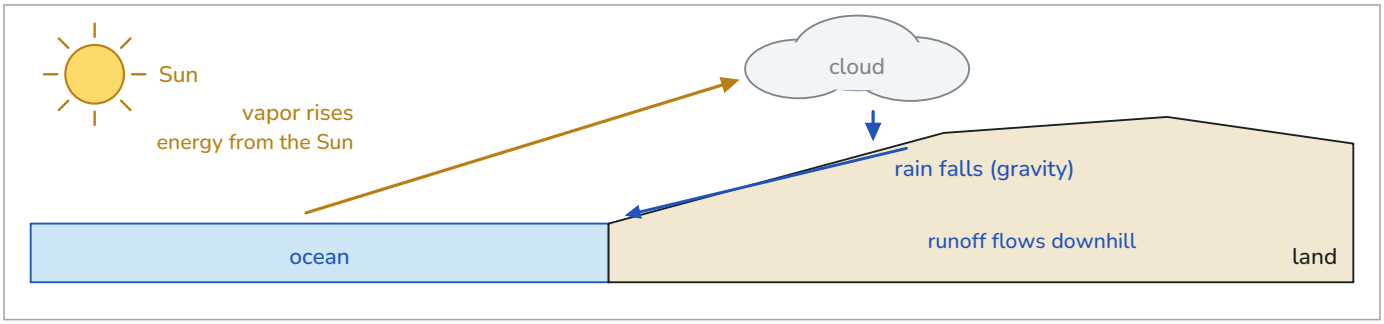
The Water Cycle: Name the Process

Grades 6-8

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Read each description of water on the move. On the line, write the water cycle process it describes. Use each word from the bank once. Item 8 asks for two short explanations.

evaporation	**condensation**	**precipitation**	**transpiration**	**sublimation**	**infiltration**	**runoff**



Two things keep water moving: energy from the Sun lifts water into the air as vapor, and gravity brings it back down and across the land.

1. Afternoon sunlight warms the surface of a pond. Liquid water at the surface changes into water vapor and drifts up into the air. _____

2. Air carrying water vapor rises over a mountain and cools. The vapor turns back into tiny drops of liquid water around specks of dust and salt, and a cloud forms. _____

3. A snowbank on a sunny, windy ridge gets smaller every day for a week, yet the ground under it stays dry and no puddles appear. _____

4. In a cornfield on a hot day, water leaves the plants through tiny openings in their leaves and enters the air as vapor. _____

5. During a thunderstorm, rain hitting a sloped parking lot streams across the pavement and pours into a storm drain. _____

6. The same storm drops rain on a grassy park next door. Most of that water sinks down through the soil toward the groundwater below. _____

7. Inside a cloud, droplets bump into each other and merge until they are too heavy for the air to hold up. They fall as rain, sleet or snow. _____

8. Use the diagram. (a) What supplies the energy that moves water upward in items 1 and 4, and what does it do to the water? (b) What force moves the water in items 5, 6 and 7, and in which direction does it always pull?

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Answer key

Items 1 to 7: one point each for the process named. Item 8: two points, one for each part.

1. **evaporation**
   Liquid to gas at the surface, powered by heat from the Sun.

2. **condensation**
   Gas to liquid as rising air cools; the droplets need tiny particles to form on.

3. **sublimation**
   Solid ice goes straight to vapor without melting first; dry ground and no puddles are the clue.

4. **transpiration**
   Water released by plants through the stomata of their leaves.

5. **runoff**
   Water moving over the surface of the ground, downhill, because the pavement does not let it soak in.

6. **infiltration**
   Water soaking into the ground; grass and soil let it in, pavement does not.

7. **precipitation**
   Any form of water that falls from clouds to the ground.

8. **(a) The Sun. Its energy heats liquid water so it changes to vapor and rises. (b) Gravity. It pulls water downward: rain to the ground, runoff downhill, soaked-in water down through the soil.**
   Accept any wording that names the Sun (or solar energy, heat from the Sun) for (a) and gravity pulling down for (b).