

The Whys of Weather Rain

Why does it rain?

The sky gets cloudy. Clouds get darker and darker. The sun disappears, and soon drops start falling from the sky. But have you ever wondered why? What makes the rain fall?



First, you have to understand condensation. Have you ever had a cold drink and noticed the little droplets that make the outside of the glass wet? That is an example of condensation. Condensation happens when warm air turns colder. The cool drink is cooling the air around the glass. This causes the water particles in the air to turn into water droplets on the glass. Air has water in it, even though you cannot see it.

The same thing happens in the sky. Water is everywhere. But usually the water particles are spread so far apart that you cannot see them. When warm air becomes colder, it condenses. The cool temperatures draw the water particles together. This forms the rain cloud.

Eventually, the water may become too heavy to stay in the sky. All of the droplets collected in the clouds begin to fall. Water falls to the Earth as rain or snow. This is called precipitation.

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. In the passage, precipitation is defined as
 - a. clouds.
 - b. thunder and lightning.
 - c. rain or snow.
 - d. water droplets on a glass.

2. Why does the author describe the condensation of water droplets on the outside of a cold glass?
 - a. to explain how rain is different from snow
 - b. to show how water evaporates into the air
 - c. to give an example of how water is unpredictable
 - d. to compare it to condensation of water in the sky

3. If water did not condense into clouds in the sky, which of the following statements would be true?
 - a. it would not rain or snow
 - b. there would be no sunshine
 - c. it would rain all the time
 - d. there would be snow but not rain

4. Read the following sentence: "All of the droplets collected in the clouds begin to fall."

The word **collected** means

 - a. disappeared
 - b. gathered together
 - c. made warmer
 - d. destroyed

5. The main purpose of this passage is to
 - a. explain rain and rain clouds.
 - b. explain the difference between rain and snow.
 - c. give examples of condensation.
 - d. teach how to predict the rain.

6. Why does condensation form on the outside of a drinking glass?

7. Explain how condensation can form even when you cannot see any water.

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

_____ warm air turns colder, condensation occurs.

- a. So
- b. Before
- c. When
- d. Even

9. Read the following sentence.

Precipitation falls from the sky when clouds become too heavy, because gravity forces condensed water to fall down.

Answer the questions below based on the information provided in the sentence you just read. One of the questions has already been answered for you.

- 1. What? precipitation
- 2. What does precipitation do? _____
- 3. When? _____
- 4. Where? _____
- 5. Why? _____

10. **Vocabulary Word:** condensation: when water particles come together to form a liquid.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: _____

Teacher Guide and Answers

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 520

Featured Text Structure: Descriptive – the writer explains, defines or illustrates a concept or topic

Passage Summary: The author describes the manner in which rain is formed. When water condenses, it eventually becomes too heavy to remain in the sky, which results in precipitation (rainfall).

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- explain rain and rain clouds.**
 - explain the difference between rain and snow.
 - give examples of condensation.
 - teach how to predict the rain.
6. Why does condensation form on the outside of a drinking glass?

Suggested answer: Condensation forms on a glass because the cold drink is cooling the air outside the glass. Condensation happens when warm air gets colder.

7. Explain how condensation can form even when you cannot see any water.

Suggested answer: Condensation can form even when you cannot see any water because there is water in the air. The water particles are spread far apart, but the particles can condense together when they get colder.

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

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- So
- Before
- When**
- Even

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Answer the questions below based on the information provided in the sentence you just read. One of the questions has already been answered for you.

1. What? precipitation
2. What does precipitation do? **falls**
3. When? **when clouds become too heavy**
4. Where? **from the sky**
5. Why? **because gravity forces condensed water to fall down**

10. **Vocabulary Word:** condensation: when water particles come together to form a liquid.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: answers may vary.