



FALL | Water

The Water Cycle: How Does It Work?

Summary:

The water around us has a busy, shape-shifting life. Today we'll explore the water cycle and observe the many forms water takes as it journeys through our garden.

Before Visiting the Garden:

Gather: One gallon freezer bag, sharpie, thermos of steaming hot water (be careful!), blue food coloring, two clothespins

Explore: "Ciclo Fundamental" by Héctor Roberto Gómez Oliver

Read: *Water Is Water: A Book About the Water Cycle* by Miranda Paul and Illustrated by Jason Chin

In the Garden:

Let's figure out what we know about water before we start:

Questions to Explore:

- Where do we find water?
- Does the shape/texture/form of water change from season to season? (Snow, ice, rain, frost...)
- Are there different forms of water in your house? (Ice cubes, steam from a hot pot, water to drink)
- What is your favorite thing to do with water?

The amazing thing about water is that it travels without any help from us humans and much like a magician, it can turn itself into many different shapes and forms. Let's watch the water cycle in action.

Activity:

Take out your plastic bag and sharpie:

1. On the bottom right corner write Groundwater with an arrow pointing to the left corner of the bag. You can write sea and/or lake and draw some tree roots to illustrate.
2. On the bottom left corner write Evaporation with an arrow(s) pointing towards the top of the bag.
3. On the top left corner write Condensation and feel free to draw a sun and a cloud or two.
4. On the top right corner write Precipitation with a rain cloud raining droplets and arrows pointing to the bottom of the bag.
5. Pour your hot water from the thermos into the bag and add a few drops of blue food coloring. Tightly seal the bag.
6. Hang the bag on a fence using your clothespins
7. Observe the bag as the water moves through the four stages of the water cycle. You can explore the water cycle book together as you wait and watch the water moving.
8. Even when we cannot see water, it is in the air all around us traveling through the water cycle to keep the planet, plants, and people hydrated!

Beyond the Garden | Visit a Water Treatment Plant:

Check with your local water resource department and see if you can visit a water treatment plant. See if you can figure out how the water moves through your neighborhood!

Continue Exploring | Supporting Materials

Water cycle placemat from the US Geological Survey: <http://water.usgs.gov/edu/watercycle-kids-beg.html>