Overview:
Youth practice water cycle vocabulary and concepts by collectively building a water cycle model.

Rainwater harvesting is one way to direct precipitation that falls in an area toward a beneficial use.

Materials:
- Water cycle cut outs (included)
- Masking tape
- Chalkboard or whiteboard
- Opaque bag (such as a canvas, paper, or plastic grocery sack)
- Scissors

Activity Duration:
15 minutes

Preparation:
- Cut out the water cycle cut outs (consider laminating them for longevity).
- Put at least one of each of the cut outs into the opaque bag. (Add duplicates as needed so that the total number of cut outs equals the number of participants.)
- Designate a part of a chalkboard or whiteboard for the activity.
- Roll masking tape segments that will affix to the backs of the cut outs and have them available for the activity.

Activity Steps:
1. Ask participants if they like riding bicycles. Write the word on the board. Circle the “cycle” part of the word. Explain that a cycle means something that goes around in a circle like the wheel of a bicycle. Explain that everyone in the class is going to help build a model of a “water cycle,” which will show how water moves around on the earth.
2. Move around the room, holding the opaque bag. Stop at each participant and ask him or her to reach into the bag without looking and pull out one of the papers inside.
3. Each participant will describe, one at a time, what is on the piece of paper and place it (with a segment of rolled masking tape) onto the board in the place where he or she thinks it should go. Others can make suggestions if the young person requests assistance.
4. As each participant places a cut out on the board, discuss that aspect of the water cycle.
5. When finished, the model on the board should look similar to the diagram example (included).
Note to Leaders and Teachers:

Enrich the activity by finding color images or photographs for each cut out. Youth can also create the cut outs as an art project prior to the activity. Consider using a memo whiteboard as a background and touch fasteners (such as Velcro©) to make a more permanent version.

Source:

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Cut Outs for “Build a Water Cycle”

1. mountain
2. aquifer
3. water/waves
4. word: evaporation
5. water vapor (upward blue arrows)
6. sun
7. white cloud
8. cloud with wind
9. cloud with rain
10. word: condensation
11. word: precipitation
12. lightning
13. trees
14. word: transpiration
15. deer
16. family
17. word: infiltration
18. word: runoff
19. title “Water Cycle”
20. transpiration (upward green arrows)
21. infiltration (downward blue arrows)
22. word: surface water
23. word: aquifer
24. arrow #1
25. arrow #2
26. arrow #3
27. arrow #4

If more cut outs are needed to equal the number of youth, make two of any of the following until there are enough cut outs for all youth:

* lightning
* trees
* white cloud
* cloud with rain
* deer
Water Cycle Cut Outs

Mountain → Aquifer
EVAPORATION

Water/Waves

Water Vapor (upward blue arrows)
Sun

White Cloud
Cloud with Wind

Family        Deer
Cloud with Rain

Lightning

Trees
Transpiration

Infiltration

TRANSPERSIONATION

INFILTRATION

AQUIFER
Water Cycle Arrows
CONDENSATION

PRECIPITATION

SURFACE WATER

RUNOFF

THE WATER CYCLE (HYDROLOGIC CYCLE)