Nova’s Water Cycle Wonders

Learning objective: To describe the key stages of the water cycle, including evaporation, condensation, precipitation, and collection, and to understand the role of the sun in this process.

Use these flashcards to test your knowledge of how water moves around our planet. Nova the owl suggests reading the front and trying to explain the process before checking the answer.

What is the primary source of energy that powers the water cycle?

The Sun provides the solar energy needed to heat water on Earth.

Define 'Evaporation'.

The process where liquid water turns into water vapour (a gas) due to heat from the sun.

What happens during 'Condensation'?

Water vapour cools down as it rises into the atmosphere and turns back into tiny liquid water droplets, forming clouds.

What is 'Precipitation'?

When water droplets in clouds become too heavy, they fall to Earth as rain, snow, sleet, or hail.

Describe 'Collection'.

The stage where water gathers in oceans, rivers, lakes, and streams after falling as precipitation.

What is water vapour?

Water in its gaseous state, which is invisible and rises into the air.

How do clouds form in the water cycle?

They form through condensation when water vapour cools and clusters around tiny dust particles in the air.

Why is the water cycle described as a 'cycle'?

Because it is a continuous process with no beginning or end; water is constantly recycled through the environment.

Where does most of the Earth's evaporation occur?

From the surface of the oceans, which cover the majority of our planet.

What is surface run-off?

Water that flows over the ground into rivers and streams instead of soaking into the soil.