**Water Cycle Study Guide**

 **The water on Earth is in an ever changing cycle. The water cycle is how water recycles. There is NO NEW WATER ON EARTH. The water you drink today was around a million years ago. Water can evaporate from things other than bodies of water such as oceans and lakes. It can evaporate from animals, plants and puddles. The water cycle on Earth involves the flow of water into the atmosphere by evaporation and returning it back as a result of condensation and precipitation. In general, the water cycle always consists of evaporation, condensation and precipitation.**

**Evaporation (Water changes from a liquid to a vapor form.)**

 **On a warm sunny day, water in a glass of water seems to slowly disappear. This is because the energy from the sun is heating the water up and turning the liquid water into water vapor. This process is called evaporation. When the water evaporates, it becomes an invisible gas in the atmosphere. Evaporation takes places all over the earth, but especially in the lakes and oceans where there is lots of water.**

**Condensation (Water changes from a vapor to a liquid form.)**

**As the water vapor rises, it cools off and condenses into water droplets. If the water vapor becomes extremely cold, it will form ice crystals instead of water droplets. As the water droplets or ice crystals grow bigger and more numerous, they form clouds.**

# Precipitation

 **If water droplets or ice crystals become too heavy, they can’t stay in the air. They precipitate. Water droplets precipitate as rain (liquid) and ice crystals precipitate as snow. Sometimes, the rain freezes before it hits the earth and precipitates as hail. (In this case, water changes to a solid form.)**