



FALL | Water

The Water Cycle: Follow That Rain Drop

Summary:

There is water all around us. Some places seem obvious like lakes and rivers, but there is water in some unexpected places—let's go look for it!

Before Visiting the Garden:

Gather: Blue construction paper, scissors, masking tape, umbrella, flashlight, and a blue scarf or blue shirt for your gardener to wear

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:

Before we begin to explore unexpected spots where water hides, let's find all the water we can see in the garden...

Questions to Explore:

- Where does water live in the garden?
- What spot in the garden is the wettest?
- Gently examine a plant, is there water on its leaves or around its roots?

Activity:

Water can be a little sneaky. We don't always see it moving around us, but water is actually very busy. Taking on different shapes and temperatures, it moves through something called the water cycle. Today we're going to pretend to be a water droplet and follow the clues to see where our water will travel. First lay the out the water path, then send your gardener on a raindrop adventure:

1. Cut out several raindrops from the blue construction paper.
2. Place one or two drops at the base of a tree or plant in the garden—this drop represents **groundwater**. This water flows below our feet and feeds the plants and grass.
3. Attach another drop to a leaf or to a fence just above your gardener's head—this drop represents **evaporation**.
4. Attach several drops to the underside of the umbrella you brought—these drops represent the **condensation** found in clouds.
5. Store a few additional raindrops in your pocket that you can sprinkle on your gardener at the end of the adventure—**precipitation!**
6. Now that the course is set, send your gardener wrapped in their blue "water" scarf out to find the drops. As they move through the course encourage them to act like the different water forms—wiggling along the ground like a moving river, jumping up as they evaporate, snuggling together to condense into a cloud, and finally dropping slowly to the ground as rain!

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 | Make It Rain Inside:

Use this simple experiment to watch condensation and precipitation in action. Gather a tall glass jar or vase, plate, ice cubes, and boiling water. Pour the boiling water into the glass container filling it about one-third full. Place the plate over the top of the container and let sit for three-five minutes. Dump your ice cubes onto the top of the plate and watch as the condensed water at the top of the container begins to "rain" down the inside of the container.

Continue Exploring | Supporting Materials

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