



Lesson Plan Reading in the Rain (and Under the Clouds)

This lesson plan works very well with children preschool through second grade. The lesson lasts between 45 minutes to an hour, based on the number of books read. To orient the children to what it means to be a scientist, think scientifically and “do science,” use the **“A Scientist Is. . .”** and **“Scientific Method”** handouts available at the end of this lesson plan.

SING

Begin with your favorite welcome song.

SCIENCE CHAT

Begin a theme on rain and clouds, starting with a free-form science Q&A like the following (though feel free to improvise and add your own scientific knowledge or twist). Simply start by asking these questions:

Q: Where does rain come from?

A: Clouds!

Q: Why does rain come from a cloud?

A: When lots of tiny droplets of water in a cloud get bigger and heavier, the clouds get big and cannot hold all of the heavy water. This water falls to the earth and we see it as rain. Sometimes gently (drizzle) or heavy (downpour).

Q: “Who/What is rain good for?”

A: EARTH! Grass, plants, flowers, crops, drinks for our animals, drinks for us. It also helps keep things clean by washing away dirt and grime.

Q: Why/When can rain be bad?

A: Sometimes thunderstorms are scary! Sometimes there are floods!

For more information, please contact:

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Talk about what it means to observe and observe characteristics of the children (i.e., brown hair, blue eyes, etc.). If there are clouds in the sky step outside or go to the window and ask the children to observe and describe cloud formations.

READ

Suggestions from the Wisconsin Water Librarians, but feel free to swap out with your own OR visit our **subject specific reading list:** [Rain, Rain, Go Away.](#)

Start with a poem "It's Raining Pigs and Noodles," in [It's Raining Pigs and Noodles \(2000\)](#), poems by Jack Prelutsky illustrated by James Stevenson

READ [Tap Tap Boom Boom! \(2014\)](#) by Elizabeth Bluemle illustrated by G. Brian Karas

READ [Cloudette \(2011\)](#) by Tom Lichtenheld

READ [It Looked Like Spilt Milk \(1947\)](#) by Charles G. Shaw

READ [The Rain Came Down \(2000\)](#) by David Shannon

SING

Use any song you like adapted to the theme of rain/clouds. Here is one song/rhyme suggestion that gets the kids moving:

5 Little Clouds (count the number of kids, begin with that number of clouds and repeat rhyme (5, 4, 3, 2, 1) until that last child ("cloud") rolls away.

Five little clouds, so white and plain.

The first one said, "I want to make it rain!"

The second one said, "Where are we?"

The third one said, "In the sky, don't you see?"

The fourth one said, "Let's go, go, go."

The fifth one said, "Look out below!"

Then out came the stars, out came the moon,

And the clouds rolled away but they'll be back again soon!

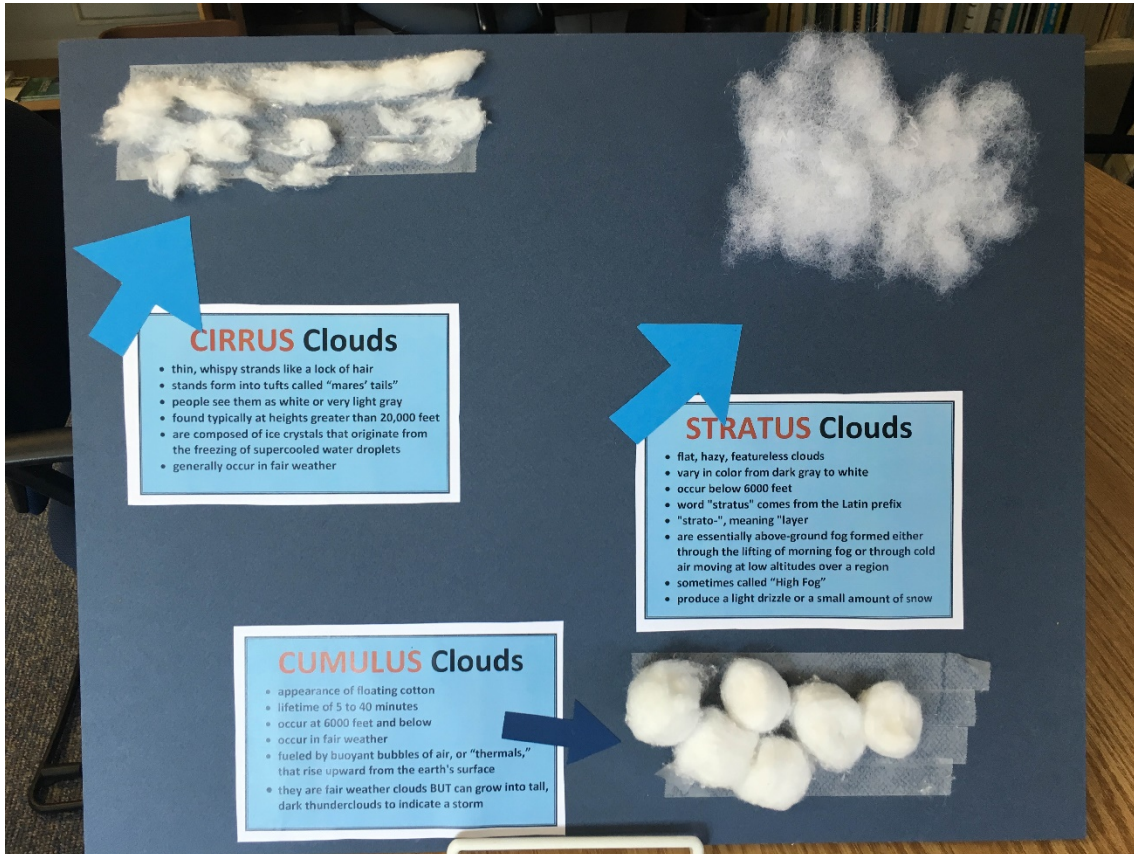
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DO SCIENCE: Types of Clouds/Build a Cloud Sensory Experiment

Remind the children about the scientific practice of observing from the "Scientific Method" handout at the end of this document. Recall what they observed about different clouds they saw in the sky outside.

If you like, speak from a pre-made chart (like [this one](#) showing (at least) the 3 of 10 major types of clouds with cotton balls: STRATUS, CUMULUS, CIRRUS. Here's the one we made:



Also this [infographic](#) of cloud types from Weather Underground for your own reference.

Explain a little about each cloud. Use this ["Cloudwise: Ten Basic Cloud Types"](#) resource from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Weather Service to build your lesson points based on the age of the children.

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EXPERIMENT “Build a Cloud” Sensory Play

Based on what the children learned about major cloud types, allow them to experiment with materials to make their own cloud types (source [A Little Pinch of Perfect](#)):



Simulate the look of each of the three clouds in pans with food serving as visual examples:

STRATUS whipped cream

CIRRUS marshmallow fluff

CUMULUS big marshmallows

Experiment Supplies Needed:

muffin tins (to hold the supplies to make clouds)
cookie sheets (to place/spread materials to make cloud formations)
cotton Balls (non-edible)
cotton poly fill batting (Pillow stuffing) (non-edible)

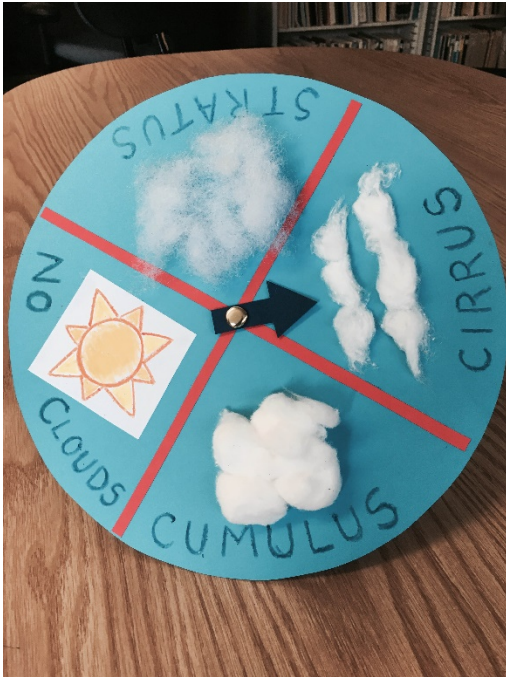
shaving cream (non-edible)
large and small marshmallows
marshmallow fluff
whipped cream
white sprinkles or white tapioca pearls

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CRAFT IDEA: CLOUD WHEEL

Create a cloud wheel like the one below. Depending on how many cloud types you cover in the lesson plan, create as many partitions of clouds as you like. Children can use the wheel at home to point to the types of clouds they see in the sky and talk about their properties.



Craft Supplies Needed (depending on skill level of children and time, make the wheels ahead of time and have them glue on clouds, draw sun, and write labels:

large blue card stock (cut into circles)
construction paper (for arrow and partitions, or to make sun)
brass fasteners
scissors

tacky glue
crayons or markers
cotton balls
cotton poly fill batting

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A SCIENTIST IS SOMEONE WHO...

- Observes and wonders
- Asks questions
- Listens to ideas of others
- Conducts experiments
- Shares his/her ideas and discoveries
- Explores the world around him/her
- Uses tools to solve problems

A SCIENTISTS SAYS...

- I agree with you because...
- I disagree with you because...
- Why do you think that?
- So, what you're saying is...
- Can you tell me more?
- Can you give me an example?
- How could we test that?
- That reminds me of...

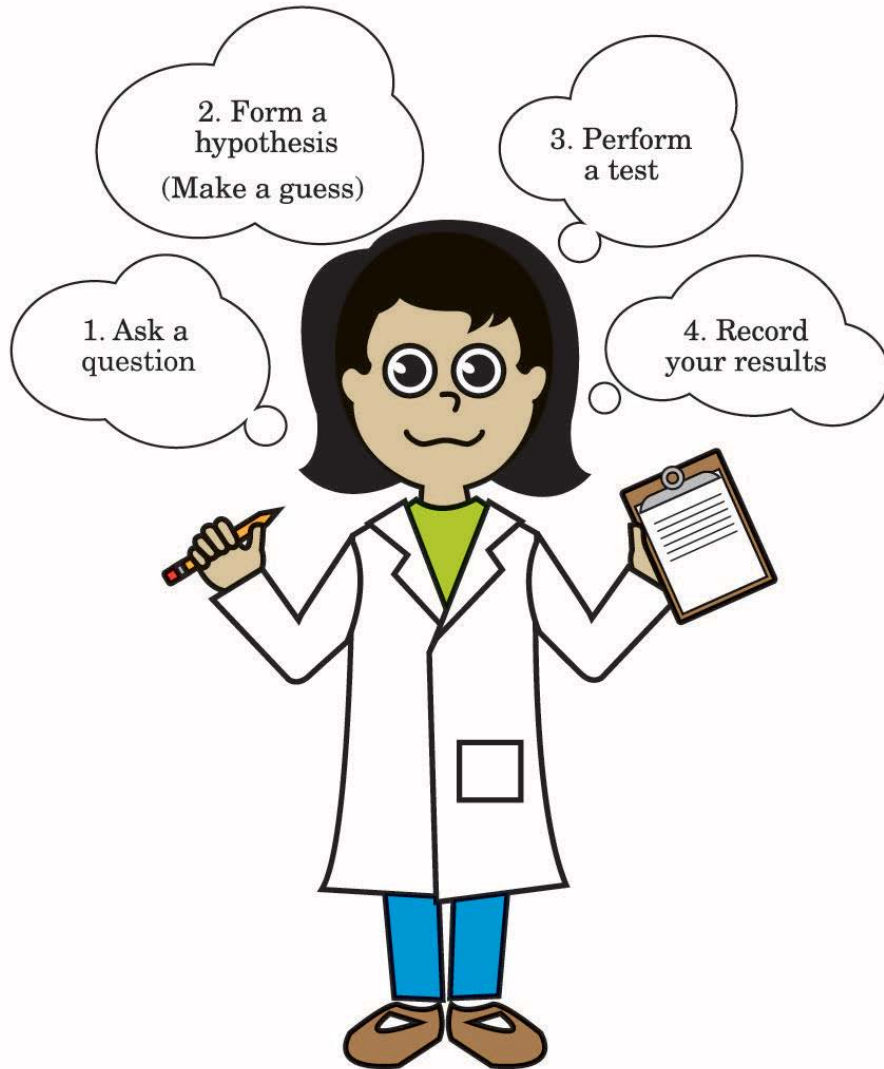


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SCIENTIFIC METHOD

THINK LIKE A SCIENTIST



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