

Types of Clouds Lesson Plan

Recommended Book

- *Clouds (National Graphic Kids)* by Marfe Ferguson Delano

Supplies Provided

- 1 Sheet of Blue Construction Paper
- Set of White Cotton Balls
- Set of Black/Gray Pompoms
- Raindrop Stickers
- Lightning Bolt Stickers

Supplies Needed/Not Provided

- Glue
- Markers, crayon, color pencils, or other art supplies

Discussion

Clouds can make the sky look beautiful but there is so much more to them. Clouds are actually made up of millions of tiny water droplets. Clouds are made when water that was on the surface of the Earth gets warm enough that it becomes vapor, rises to the sky, then cools due to colder temperatures in the sky, and finally condenses it into water droplets. The sky has small tiny particles, like sand & dust, which create a surface for the water droplets to collect in a shape of a cloud.

Let's Learn about the Three Main Types of Clouds

1. *Cirrus clouds*

Cirrus is Latin for a ringlet or circling lock of hair. These clouds look like wispy white feathery strands. They are high in the sky and are made of water in the form of ice crystals.

2. *Stratus clouds*

Stratus is Latin for spread out, extend, flatten or cover with a layer. They look like fuzzy gray blankets across the sky. They are low-level clouds that are closer to us and are long and thin.

3. *Cumulus clouds*

Cumulus is Latin for heap, or pile. They look like fluffy balls of cotton. They also low-level clouds but come in all shapes and sizes.

Extra, Extra!

Another type of cloud is called *Nimbostratus*. The name is made out of the words *Nimbus* and *Stratus*. *Nimbus* is Latin for rainstorm. These are the clouds you see when it is raining without thunderstorms. What are the clouds we see during a thunderstorm? That cloud is called *Cumulonimbus*. What two words do you think make up *Cumulonimbus*? *Cumulus* & *Nimbus*!

Questions	Answers
What are clouds made out of?	Clouds are made out of millions of tiny water droplets.
How are clouds made?	Clouds are when surface water warms enough to become vapor, rises to the sky, then cools due to colder temperatures in the sky, and finally condenses it into water droplets.
What are the main type of clouds?	Cirrus, Stratus, and Cumulus.
What is a Nimbostratus cloud?	The clouds you see when it is raining without thunderstorms.
What is a Cumulonimbus cloud?	The clouds you see during thunderstorms.

Activity Instructions

1. Fold the blue construction paper into 3 equal vertical sections.
2. Write "Types of Clouds" on the top of the page.
3. Glue cotton balls on the 1st section to look like a Cirrus cloud (*glue high on the page to resemble the location of a Cirrus in the sky.*)
4. Glue cotton balls and black pompoms on the 2nd section to look like a Stratus cloud (*glue low on the page to resemble the location of a Stratus in the sky.*)
5. Glue cotton balls on the 3rd section to look like a Cumulus cloud (*glue low on the page to resemble the location of a Cumulus in the sky.*)
6. Write the name of each cloud on top of its example.
7. Decorate the Stratus cloud section with raindrops to turn the Stratus cloud into a Nimbostratus cloud.
8. Label your new Nimbostratus cloud under "Stratus" to show that the Stratus cloud turned into a Nimbostratus cloud.
9. Decorate the Cumulus cloud section with lightning bolts to turn the Cumulus cloud into a Cumulonimbus cloud.
10. Label your new Cumulonimbus cloud under "Cumulus" to show that the Cumulus cloud turned into a Cumulonimbus cloud.

An example of the finished activity is on the next page.

Activity Example

