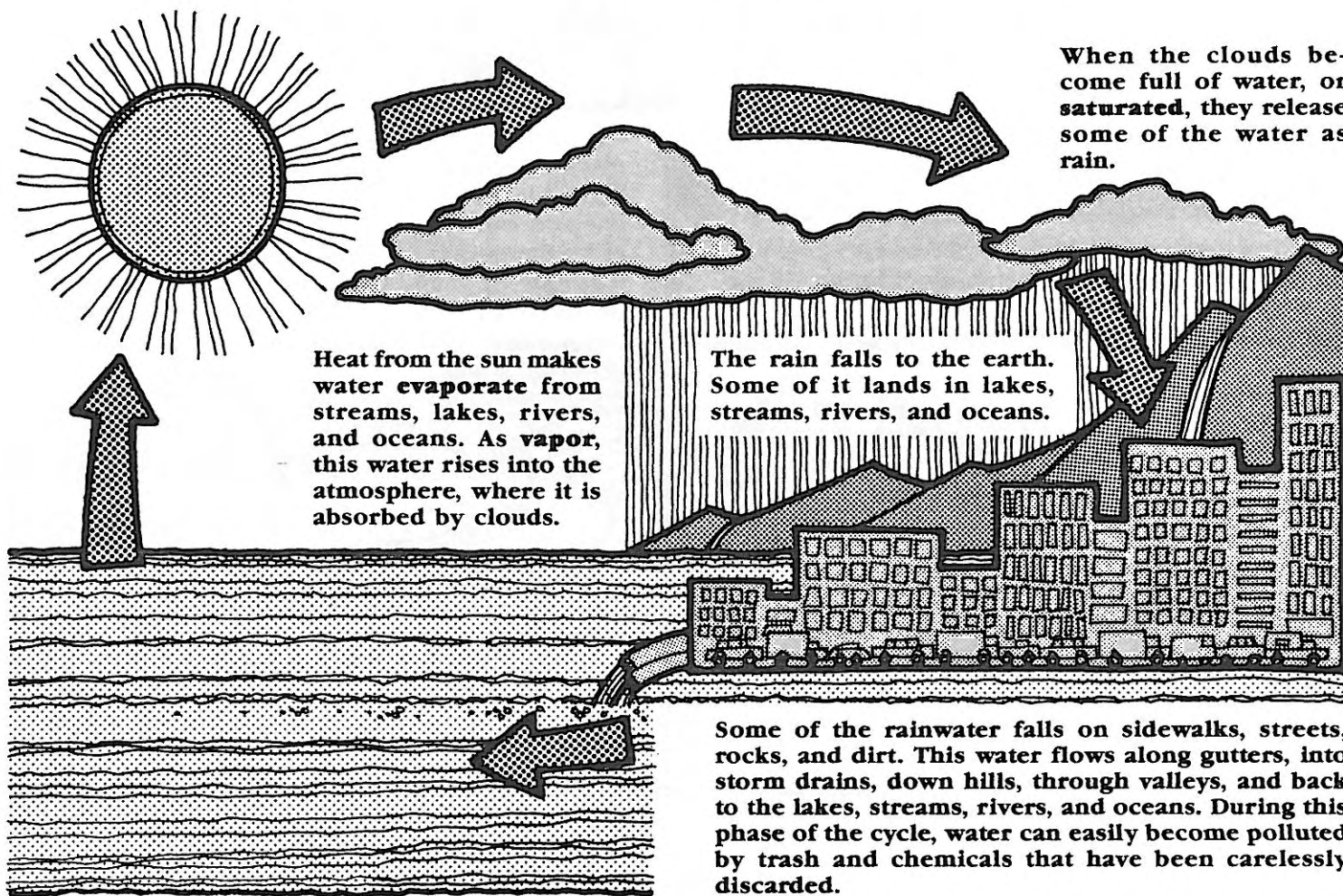


# The Water Cycle

*Water does not stay in one place. Instead, it flows in a continuous cycle. Here are the phases of the water cycle.*



# Watch the Water Cycle

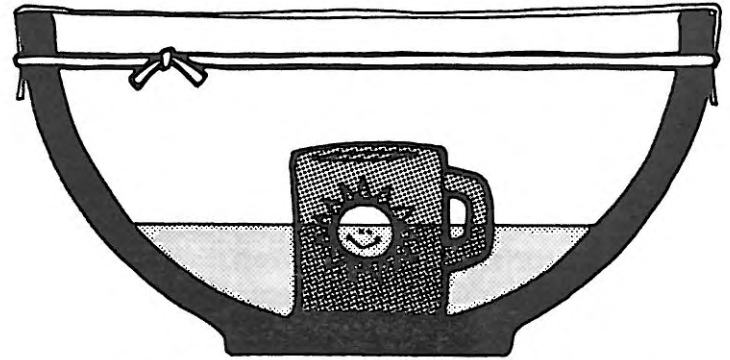
Here's your chance to watch the water cycle.

## WHAT YOU NEED

- a large metal or plastic salad or mixing bowl
- a hose or pitcher
- some water
- a sheet of clear plastic wrap (If possible, reuse a sheet that has been rinsed and dried.)
- a ceramic mug or other heavy, tall-sided container (If this container is opaque or colored rather than clear, it may be easier for you to see the water droplets in it.)
- a piece of string long enough to be tied around the bowl

## WHAT YOU DO

1. Carry the bowl outside and place it in the sun.
2. Using a hose or pitcher, pour water into the bowl until it is about one-fourth full.
3. Gently place the mug in the center of the bowl, being careful *not* to splash any water into it.
4. Cover the top of the bowl with the clear plastic wrap.
5. Tie a piece of string around the top of the bowl to hold the plastic wrap in place and to make the inside of the bowl as airtight as possible.
6. Let the bowl sit in the sun while you watch to see what happens.



## WHAT YOU WILL SEE

Heat from the sun will cause the water in the bowl to evaporate. This water will rise as vapor and condense on the plastic wrap, clouding it. As more and more water vapor condenses on the plastic wrap, it will form droplets. Then, these droplets will fall as "rain" back into the water in the bowl and into the mug.

**VARIATION.** Once vapor has condensed on the plastic sheet and made it look cloudy, gently move the bowl from the sun into the shade, being careful not to splash water onto the plastic sheet or into the mug. Let the bowl sit for a while. Then take the plastic sheet off and look inside. What happened to the water on the plastic sheet? Where did it go? Why?