Name: _____ Date: _____

The Never-Ending Journey of Water

Grades 5-6 | Nonfiction

1 The water in your glass today may once have fallen as rain on a rainforest or floated in the ocean. That is because Earth's water is constantly moving in a loop called the water cycle. The amount of water on Earth stays about the same; it just keeps changing form and location.

2 The cycle is powered by the Sun. When sunlight warms oceans, lakes and rivers, some water turns into an invisible gas called water vapor. This process is called evaporation. Plants also release water vapor from their leaves, a process called transpiration.

3 As water vapor rises, it cools. Cool air cannot hold as much water vapor, so the vapor turns back into tiny liquid droplets or ice crystals. This is condensation, and billions of these droplets together form clouds.

4 When the droplets in a cloud join together and grow heavy, they fall to the ground as precipitation: rain, snow, sleet or hail.

5 Precipitation collects in oceans, lakes and rivers, or soaks into the ground to become groundwater. Some is stored as ice in glaciers for thousands of years. Eventually, the Sun warms it again, and the journey continues.

Draw something you learned from this text.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Questions: The Never-Ending Journey of Water

Read the passage again if you need to. Circle the best answer.

1. What powers the water cycle?

(a) The Moon
(b) The Sun
(c) The wind
(d) Volcanoes

2. What is evaporation?

(a) Water turning into water vapor
(b) Rain falling
(c) Water freezing
(d) Water soaking into the ground

3. What forms when water vapor cools and condenses?

(a) Groundwater
(b) Clouds
(c) Glaciers
(d) Rivers

4. What does the author mean by "never-ending journey"?

(a) Water travels by boat
(b) Water keeps moving through the cycle again and again
(c) Water disappears
(d) Water only moves in rivers

5. Describe the four main stages of the water cycle in order.

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Reading Comprehension: Answer Key

The Never-Ending Journey of Water

1. b) The Sun
2. a) Water turning into water vapor
3. b) Clouds
4. b) Water keeps moving through the cycle again and again
5. Sample answer: Evaporation turns water into vapor, condensation forms clouds, precipitation falls as rain or snow, and collection gathers it in oceans, lakes, rivers and the ground.