

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## The Magic of Clouds: How Do Clouds Form?

### Short Answer Key

1. Condensation nuclei are tiny particles in the atmosphere around which water vapor condenses, forming tiny water droplets. They serve as the starting point for cloud droplet formation.
2. The dew point is the temperature at which air becomes saturated with moisture and can no longer hold all the water vapor. When the air reaches the dew point, excess water vapor condenses into visible clouds. Humidity measures the amount of moisture in the air, and high humidity makes it more likely for the air to reach its dew point and form clouds.
3. Cumulonimbus clouds, with their towering appearance, often indicate the potential for thunderstorms and heavy rainfall. Cirrus clouds, high and wispy, can signal fair weather. Stratus clouds, low and uniform, might bring overcast skies and light rain.
4. The primary source of energy driving evaporation is the sun. Solar energy heats the Earth's surface, causing water from bodies of water like oceans, lakes, and rivers to evaporate into the atmosphere.
5. Meteorologists use the appearance, movement, and altitude of clouds to make weather predictions. Different cloud types and their changes can provide information about upcoming weather conditions, such as the likelihood of rain, thunderstorms, or fair weather.

