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SCE4310
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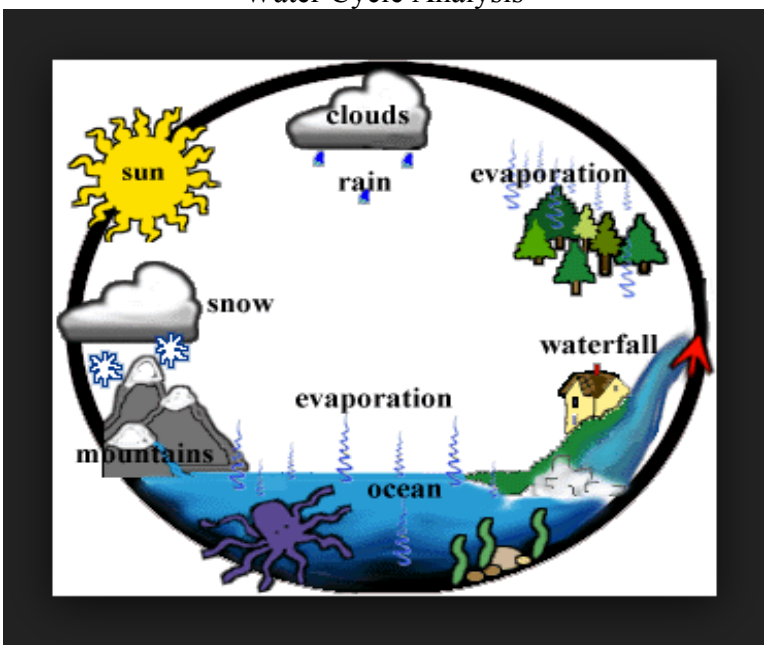
Water Cycle Analysis



This is a still image of a graphic that originally had animation to it. The red arrow located on the right side of the waterfall revolves in a counterclockwise direction around the black outline of the circle.

There are a few strengths to this image. To start, examples of liquid and solid precipitation are included. The rain cloud is located above the ocean (which is where 77% of all rainfall in the world is precipitated) and the snow is shown falling onto ice-capped mountains. The sun is pictured in this particular water cycle image. Evaporation is labeled rising from the ocean as well as from plants. Also imaged is an example of surface water being runoff into a larger body of water.

Though this image is more detailed than many others, it still has limitations. From an instructional standpoint, the absence of labels for "precipitation" or "condensation" could cause confusion between the *processes* that water goes through and examples of *locations* that water can go on its journey while in its different forms. When animated, the arrow taking a single path around the circle is not only misleading students to believe there is only a single journey that water takes, but the sequence of images around the circle is not even logical as a possibility. According to this image, water is evaporated from the ocean, travels up a waterfall, is evaporated from trees into clouds, precipitated as rain into the sun, then is transformed into snow to be precipitated onto mountains and somehow making it back to the ocean. In image, sun is positioned as a stop on the water journey. There is no indication in the graphic that the energy required for evaporation is coming from the sun. These inconsistencies could cause more harm than good for a child's understanding of the water cycle.