

Primary Geography: Explain this...

The water cycle

Over two-thirds of the Earth is covered in water.

Water is vital to support all life on the planet.

Water never leaves the Earth and its atmosphere. It simply moves around in what is called the water cycle.

The water cycle is the continuous journey of water from oceans and lakes, to clouds, to rain, to streams, to rivers and back into the ocean again.

When the sun shines, it causes water to warm up, turning it into a gas - water vapour. This process is called evaporation.

The water vapour rises and collects in the sky as clouds.

When the water vapour cools down, it condenses, turning back into liquid, and falls back to earth as precipitation: rain, snow, hail or sleet.

This water then moves across land as run-off, and ends up in rivers and streams.

It then flows back to the sea or lakes and the cycle starts again.

Water moves continuously around this cycle.

The water we use today has been around for as long as the Earth.

So next time you take a drink of water, remember, it's the same water the dinosaurs drank!