

Earth's Water Cycle

CONDENSATION

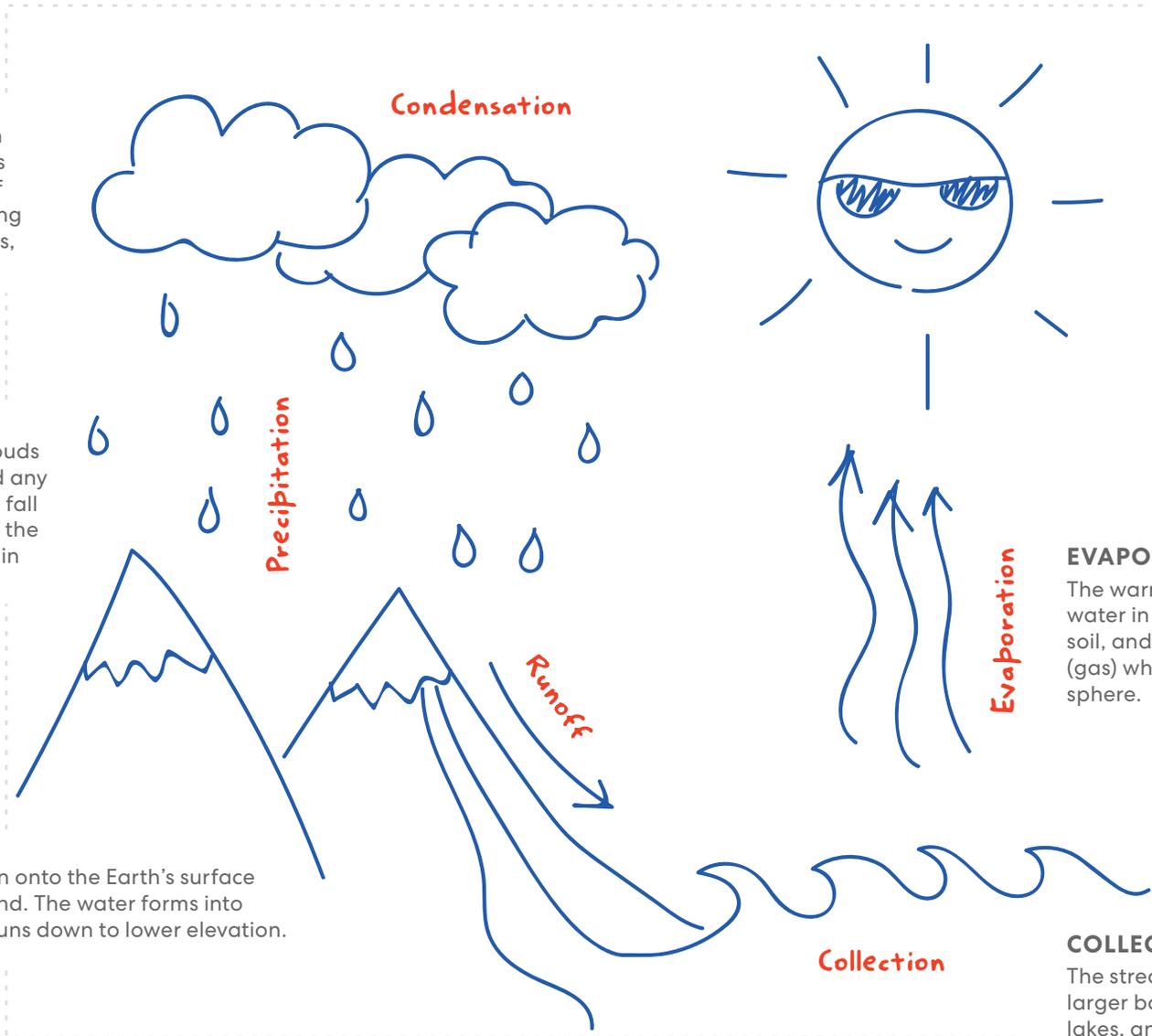
Once the vapor is high in the air, it cools and forms back into tiny droplets of water. These droplets cling together and form clouds, fog, and mist.

PRECIPITATION

When the air that the clouds are in can no longer hold any more water, the droplets fall down together as rain. If the air is cold enough, the rain turns to snow.

RUNOFF

The water that falls down onto the Earth's surface always seeks lower ground. The water forms into streams and rivers and runs down to lower elevation.



EVAPORATION

The warmth of the sun causes the water in the ocean, lakes, ponds, soil, and snow to turn into a vapor (gas) which rises into the atmosphere.

COLLECTION

The streams and rivers empty into larger bodies of water, like ponds, lakes, and the ocean.