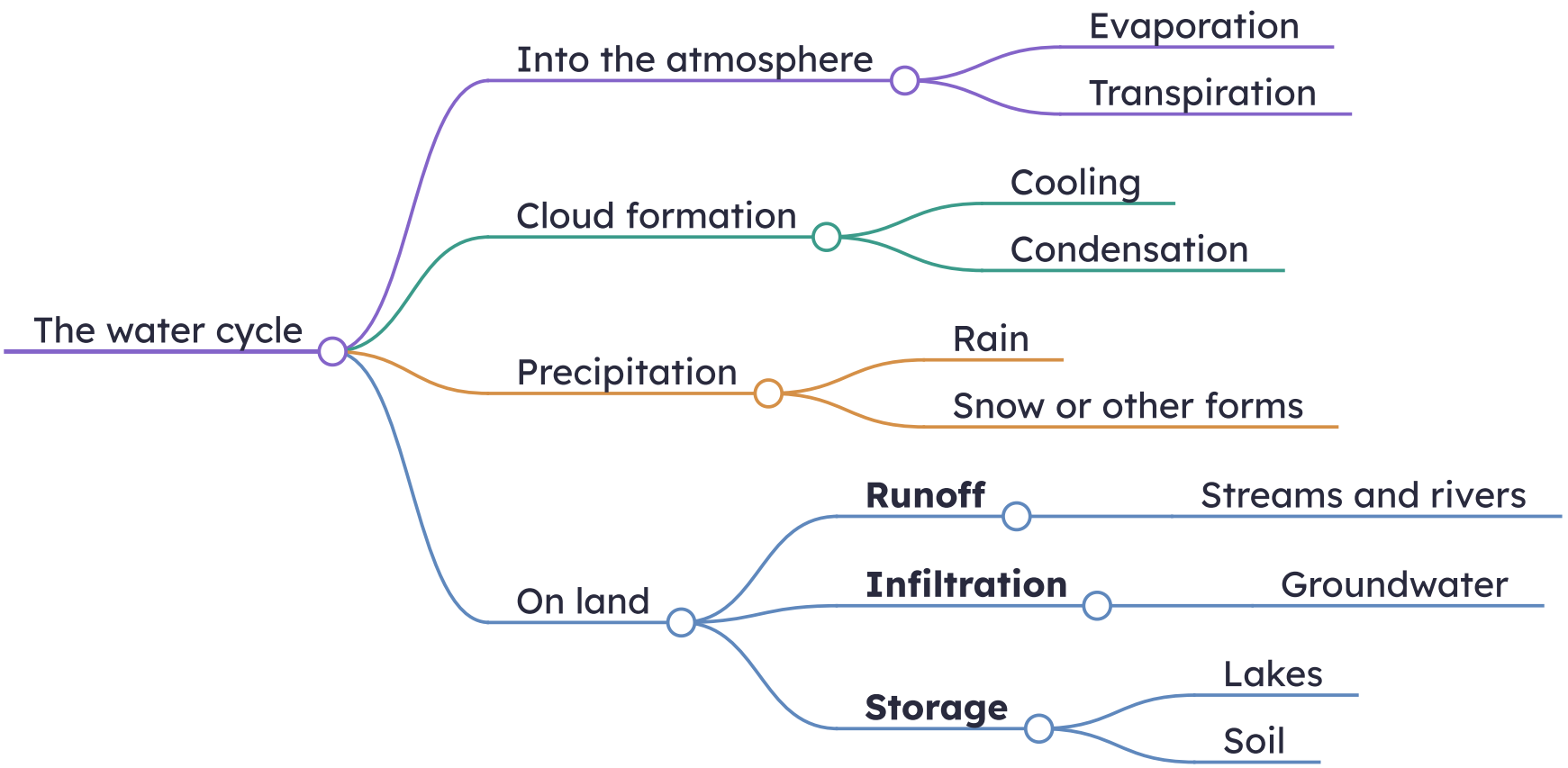
The water cycle

Trace water through evaporation, clouds, rainfall, soil, and rivers.



Read one branch at a time. Then cover the details and explain them in your own words.

Understand the topic

Solar energy drives evaporation, and plants release water vapor through transpiration. Cooling can cause vapor to condense into droplets. Water returns as precipitation and may run off, infiltrate the ground, or remain in storage. Not every drop follows the same route or spends the same time in each reservoir.

How the map is organized

The branches show processes and storage places. Read them as connected possibilities, not a fixed timetable.

> **Watch out for this**
> Clouds contain tiny liquid droplets or ice crystals. Water vapor itself is an invisible gas.

Try it yourself

Trace rain falling on a garden and on a paved playground. Compare infiltration and runoff, then explain where each route might lead.

Two questions to answer

What is infiltration?

Infiltration is the movement of water from the surface into the soil.

What can paving increase?

An impermeable surface limits infiltration at that location.

Sources

usgs.gov
https://www.usgs.gov/water-science-school/water-cycle

Original practice material compiled by Studera.ai. Explore at studera.ai/en/resources/mind-map-examples.