



Stories in the Clouds

Let imagination come to life while you watch the clouds together!

Materials Needed:

Access to outside, a sunny day with a few clouds moving across the sky, a blanket, imagination.



cdn.pixabay.com/photo/2012/06/02/07/26/happy-49361_960_720.jpg

Instructions:

This is a calming activity to relax and talk with your child. It is also a good opportunity to encourage your child's imagination.

Find a nice spot outside with a view of the sky (e.g. lawn, deck, grassy park). Put your blanket on the ground and lay or sit down together. Look up at the sky, away from the sun. **Never look directly at the sun!**

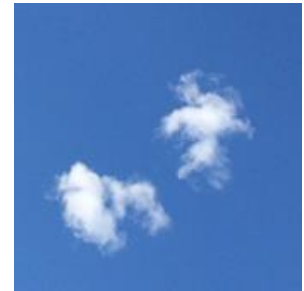
Point at the sky and talk about the shapes you see in the clouds. Encourage your child to say what they see. Tell a story together.



"A butterfly"



"Baby fish is swimming with mama fish. They are going to meet some friends."



"A bird is flying down to her nest."

Observe other objects in the sky. Follow airplanes, observe birds, or spot insects flying overhead. Use this time to talk about other interesting topics. You could even take an outside nap together!



Are you ready to share your cloud observations and learn more about the cloud science? Become a citizen scientist with the GLOBE Observer App!

To get started, go to the [Virtual Early Explorers page](#), click on the "Observe Clouds" link, and follow the instructions.



What is a Cloud?

When the air is warm, tiny round droplets of water rise into the air as vapor. The air is full of water, but the droplets are too tiny to see. As the water moves higher up in the atmosphere, the droplets cool off and stick together, along with other tiny things in the atmosphere like dust or pollution. Many tiny water droplets make up clouds. When enough water droplets stick together, they will fall back down to Earth as rain.



Clouds can be white, light gray, or dark gray. White clouds reflect the light of the sun. With more water inside of them, clouds don't reflect as much sun and look darker.

There are many different kinds of clouds. On a hot sunny day, water rises to make cumulus clouds. Cumulus clouds often take interesting shapes. On sunny days, cumulus clouds don't usually bring rain.



Clouds over the southern Indian Ocean.
Image: NASA/GSFC/LaRC/JPL

NASA scientists study clouds to better understand the weather on Earth. Clouds are important for cooling down the Earth. Predicting the weather is also important to protect people during storms, flooding, or forest fires.

What clouds do you see in the sky today?