

# New York City Water Cycle Rain Dance

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## Description:

This icebreaker activity can be used to introduce students to water and the water cycle.

## Objectives:

- To creatively help teachers and students understand the water cycle
- To actively engage students and teachers in learning about the source of their drinking water

## Vocabulary:

Catskill Mountains

## Recommended for:

Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

## Method:

- Pose the question: "Where do you think your drinking water comes from?" Some responses may be "rain", "snow", "reservoirs."
- Introduce the activity: "As a group, right in this room, we are going to create a rainstorm. You will need to concentrate and use your imagination. We will make the rainstorm using our hands and feet, so make sure that you have enough room to do so. Let's review the different things we will do. (Go through each movement). Now, watch my hands and as I change what they are doing, you follow and do the same thing."
- Start to **rub your palms together**. You can narrate the storm if you chose. "We are in the Catskill Mountains, over 125 miles away from New York City. It's summer and a

rainstorm is brewing. The wind is picking up and leaves start to rustle and a cloud covers the sun."

- **Snap your fingers.** "The raindrops are starting to fall, lightly at first and streams begin to fill and lakes form."
- **Clap with two fingers to palm.** "The rain is starting to fall a little harder." Water is flowing quickly down the mountains.
- **Clap.** "The storm is getting more intense. The raindrops are falling harder and heavier. Rivers and streams swell. Reservoirs, large bodies of water, built to hold this rain and melting snow, fill with water."
- **Slap your lap and stomp your feet.** "The summer cloudburst is reaching its peak as the wind rushes through the trees and the rain comes heavy and fast."
- **Clap.** "It has been an intense cloudburst, but like many summer storms, it doesn't last long. The rain is starting to slack off and the wind is dying down."
- **Clap with two fingers on palm.**
- **Snap fingers.** "Rain drops fall in the reservoir in smaller drops."
- **Rub palms together.** "The sun comes out from behind the clouds, the leaves are fresh and wet and green. Small streams and puddles rush over the sloping ground. Whispering: And our rainstorm is over." Stop rubbing palms together. Remain silent for a few seconds.

## Discussion:

- Where does NYC's drinking water come from?
- Discuss the concept of a watershed (the land that water flows across or under on its way to a stream, river, lake or reservoir).
- What happens if we don't get enough rain or snow where the reservoirs are located?

- Introduce the concept of water conservation and drought.

**For more information contact:**

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Also visit DEP's website at:

[www.nyc.gov/dep](http://www.nyc.gov/dep)