

Snowflake: A Water Cycle Story by Neil Waldman Millbrook Press, 2003

SYNOPSIS-

The Snowflake shows the water cycle in a totally unique way. Instead of a simple chart, Neil Waldman depicts the cycle in the form of a beautiful picture book. The arrows showing how water goes from earth to cloud and back again are replaced by a narrative that traces a single snowflake through an entire year. Each month's transformation is illustrated with an exquisite watercolor painting.
-Millbrook Press 2003

THEMES-

water, water cycle, weather, precipitation, months of the year, snow, winter

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ACTIVITIES-

1. Discuss the adventure the snowflake endured throughout the story. Talk about how it changed over time. Ask the students what the temperature of the snowflake was at various stages in its journey? Divide the students into cooperative groups. Assign each group a month. Give them a glass of water, and a thermometer. Ask them to work together to heat or cool their water to an appropriate temperature for the month they were assigned. For example if they were assigned April, they may decide to set their jar in the sun to warm it to an appropriate temperature, where as if they were assigned January they may ask to put their jar outside or in the freezer to freeze. To create an endless range of options, provide an equipment table filled with coolers, heat lamps, ice cubes, and insulating materials such as foil, felt, fur, cotton, and much, much more.
2. After reading the Snowflake, discuss the characteristics of a snowflake. All snowflakes are different however every snowflake has six sides and is symmetrical. Ask your students to illustrate this by making a snowflake out of snow dough*. Roll the dough out flat and cut it into a circle. Then use a plastic knife to design a six sided snowflake. To make each snowflake unique provide the students with the little yellow pieces of a Perfection game to make shapes and designs in their dough.

*The recipe for make snow dough:

- 1 cup of salt
- 2 cups of flour
- 2 tablespoons of cream of tartar
- 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil
- 1 ½ cups of water

Combine ingredients in a saucepan. Add white tempera paint and iridescent glitter to make shine like snow, heat gently, stirring all the time. When the dough has a good consistency, take it off the heat and allow to cool.