

Cloud observation worksheet

Look closely. Record clues. Name what you can support.

Name: _____ Date / time: _____

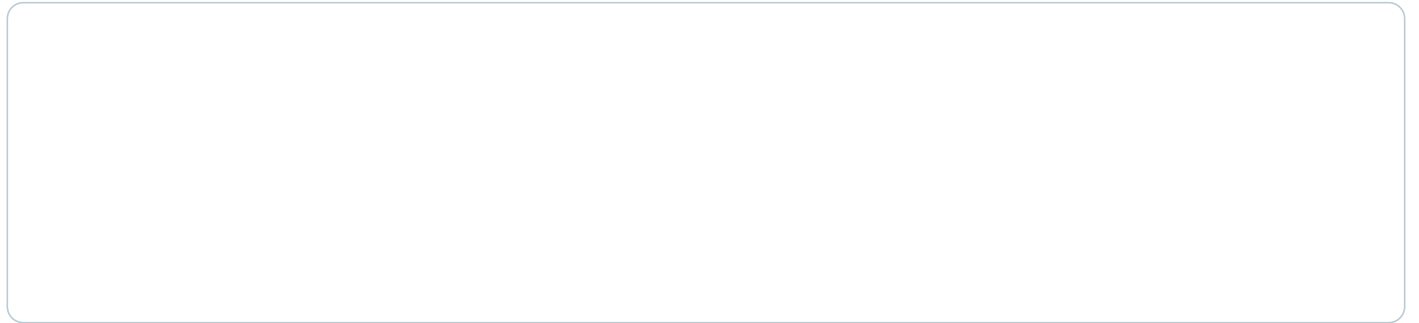
Observation place: _____

1 Observe the sky

Sky cover: clear / mostly clear / partly cloudy / mostly cloudy / overcast

Weather I notice: _____

Sketch the cloud's shape and its position above the horizon.



2 Build your identification

Overall shape: _____

Texture or pattern: _____

Cloud type: _____

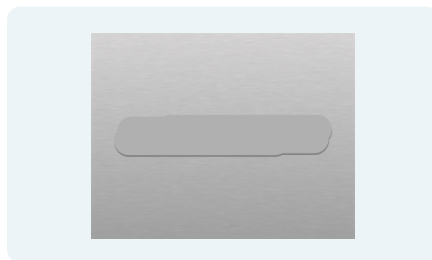
Evidence for my choice: _____

3 Name these three clouds

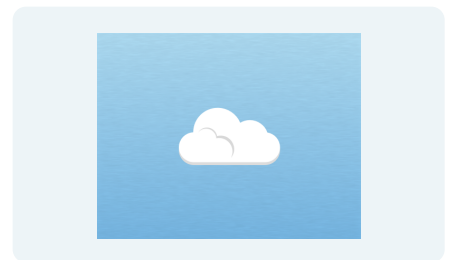
Word bank: cirrus, stratus, cumulus. Match each drawing to one name.



A: _____



B: _____



C: _____

Explore names, photographs, and clues: whatsthiscloud.com/cloud-types

Teacher key & identification cues

Use the evidence in the sky. A careful, uncertain answer is better than a guess.

1 Picture answers

A: Cirrus - thin, wispy fibers. B: Stratus - a low, fairly uniform layer. C: Cumulus - detached puffs with relatively flat bases.

2 Quick reference: the ten cloud types

Altitude is a clue, not a measurement you can make from one drawing.

Cloud type	Typical level	Look for
Cirrus	High	Thin fibers, feathers, or wisps
Cirrocumulus	High	Very small white grains or ripples
Cirrostratus	High	A thin veil; a halo may be visible
Altostratus	Middle	Rounded patches or rolls, often with shading
Altostratus	Middle	A widespread gray sheet; the Sun may look blurred
Stratocumulus	Low	Broad, low rolls or connected lumpy patches
Stratus	Low	A low, relatively uniform, fog-like layer
Nimbostratus	Several levels	A thick layer often bringing steady rain or snow
Cumulus	Vertical growth	Detached puffy heaps with relatively flat bases
Cumulonimbus	Vertical growth	A tall thunderstorm cloud with an icy, fibrous top

3 Discuss the observation

Accept a cloud name supported by visible shape, texture, and pattern. Ask which clue mattered most.

Several cloud types may share the sky. Students can record more than one, or write 'uncertain'.

Repeat the observation later. Compare growth, motion, and coverage; explain what changed.

Continue learning

Cloud guide and lessons: whatsthiscloud.com/cloud-identification

Classification reference: WMO International Cloud Atlas - cloudatlas.wmo.int

Original illustrations and worksheet: What's This Cloud, 2026.