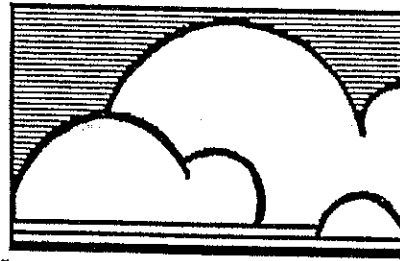


Clouds and What They Mean

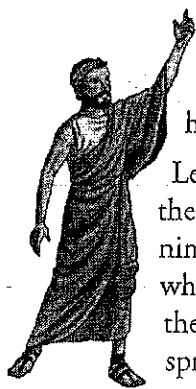


name

Using Word Origins to Identify Clouds

Recognizing Clouds-Worksheet 1

Did you know? Latin originated more than 2,500 years ago in ancient Rome and was the primary written language of western Europe for hundreds of years, until about 600 years ago when people began using their own local languages for writing. But even then, Latin continued to be used as the language of scientists and scholars for another 350 years. As you might imagine, the words of a language used for so long and by so many people would creep into many languages. In fact, about half of the words in the English language are of Latin origin.



Let's take a closer look at how Latin and English words are related. Our word *nimbostratus*—as in the nimbostratus cloud—for example, is made up of two Latin words. To find out exactly what a nimbostratus cloud is, we can break apart the word into its Latin parts. In Latin, *nimbus* means *cloud*, which signified rain and water to the ancient Romans. *Stratus* means *to spread*, as in layers. If we put these two meanings together, we might reason that a nimbostratus cloud is a gray rain cloud that spreads across the sky as a general overcast. In fact, our guess is right on target. Nimbostratus clouds are low-lying clouds that are generally producers of rain and snow.

Latin words can be found in many of the names of the cloud types you are studying. First, look up the five Latin words below in the dictionary and write the meaning next to each word. Then, using the Cloud Bank at the right, write the names of the clouds that use the Latin root word(s) in them.

Remember: Each Latin word will have more than one cloud type next to it. Some of the cloud types may be used twice.

1. alto

2. cirro

3. cumulus

4. nimbus

5. stratus

Cloud Bank

Alto cumulus	Cumulonimbus
Alto stratus	Cumulus
Cirrocumulus	Nimbostratus
Cirrostratus	Stratocumulus
Cirrus	Stratus

Clouds and What They Mean

name _____

Quiz

If you need more room to answer the following questions, write on the back of this sheet or attach an additional paper to the back of this sheet.



1. What is *evaporation*?
2. Define *dew point*.
3. What is *relative humidity*? How can it be increased?
4. What are clouds made of? How high off the ground are they?
5. Dew point and relative humidity are both important to the creation of clouds. What is the third scientific principle that is essential to cloud formation? How does this principle work—in terms of cloud formation?
6. Looking up at the sky one afternoon, you see a big, tall cloud that is puffy and white—and looks like it won't produce any rain. What type of cloud are you observing?
7. As you are getting ready for school one morning, you notice that the sky is gray. Your mother makes you take a raincoat “just in case” it rains. What types of clouds are in the sky?
8. What type of clouds are known as *thunderheads*, and why do some people call them that?
9. Sometimes, part of a cloud's name is derived from a Latin word. If you know what this Latin word means, then you can easily figure out certain characteristics of that cloud type. What do these three Latin words mean? With which cloud types are they associated? Why?
 - a. *nimbus*—
 - b. *alto*—
 - c. *stratus*—
10. Name three types of precipitation.