

What is the Water Cycle?



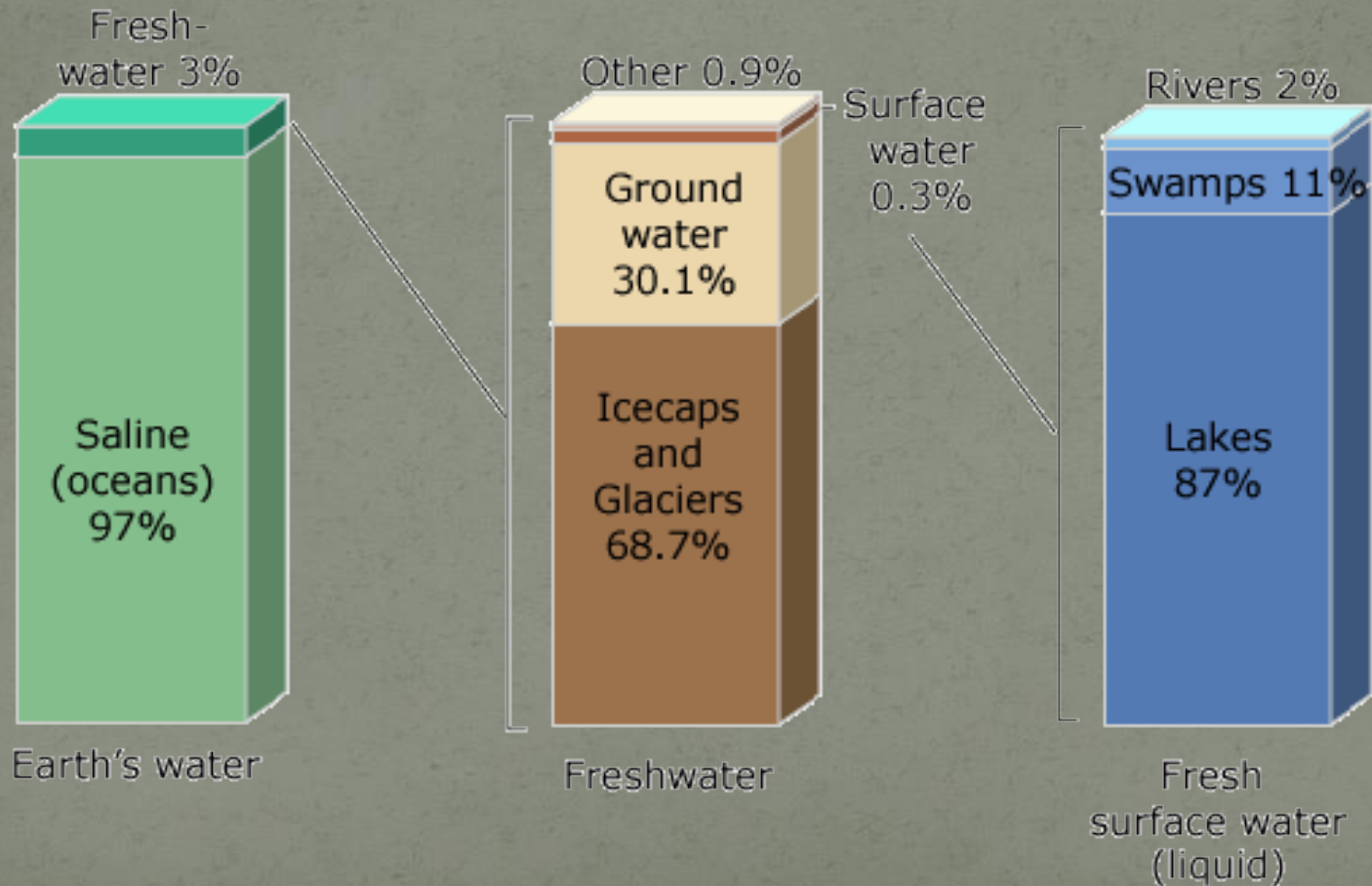
Water covers almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of Earth's surface.

Oceans cover **71%** of the Earth's surface



Less than 3% of Earth's water is fresh water.

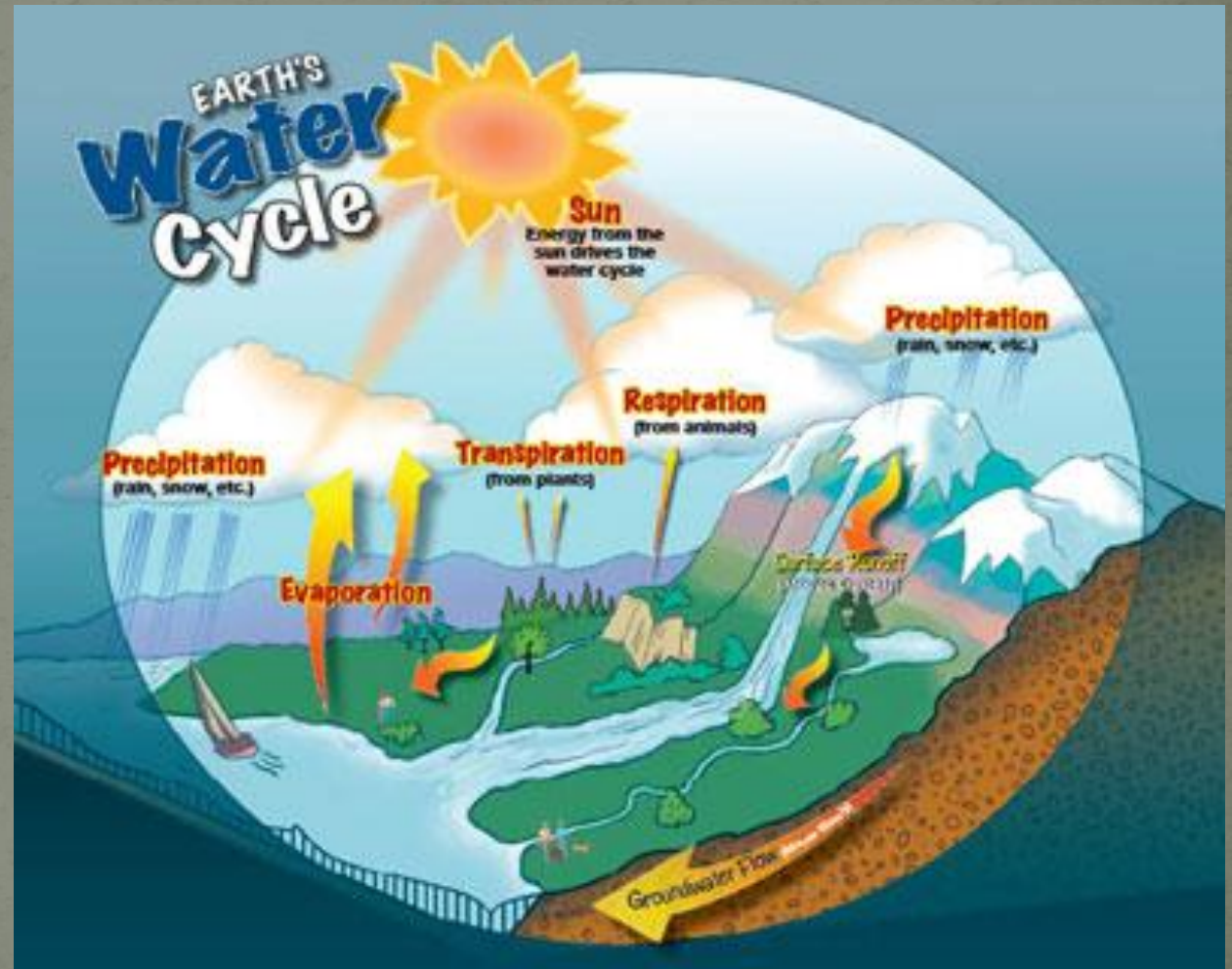
Distribution of Earth's Water



Most of Earth's fresh water is trapped as ice.



The never-ending process by which Earth's water moves from the surface to the air and back to the surface again.



Even though most rain water comes from the oceans it isn't salty.



- When ocean water is turned into vapor, all of the salts dissolved in the water stay in the ocean.
- Think about growing salt crystals on a string.

Evaporation



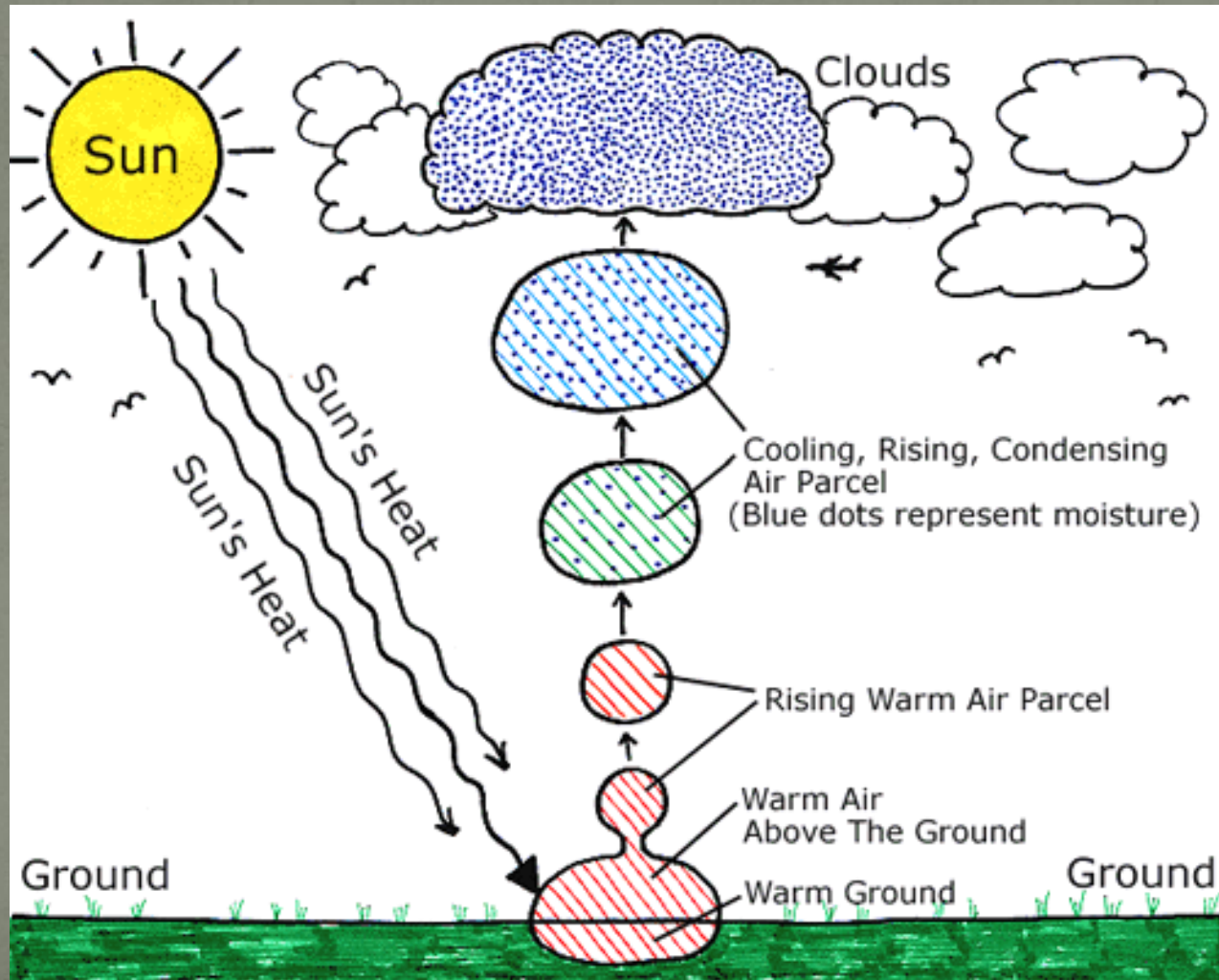
- Is the process by which a liquid changes into a gas.
- Water evaporates because heat changes it into water vapor.

Evaporation



- A large amount of water evaporates from Earth's oceans, lakes, and rivers everyday.

Air can carry water vapor high into the atmosphere. As air and water vapor move up, they cool.



Condensation



- Is the process by which a gas changes into a liquid.
- When water vapor cools it condenses on dust particles forming clouds.



Clouds that form near the ground are called fog.



When the condensation becomes too heavy it falls to Earth as rain.



If the air temperature is below freezing (32°F) water vapor becomes solid without becoming a liquid first.

