Weather Clues in the Clouds

hand2mind

Definition

Photos are a text feature that help you visualize what the text description is saying. *Bold print* and *bulleted text* also are text features. Bold print draws attention to important words; bulleted text helps organize text visually.

Read the passage and study the photos.

All **precipitation**—snow, rain, sleet, or hail—comes from clouds. A cloud's shape and its **altitude**, or height in the sky, can tell a lot about upcoming weather. Scientists use a system based on three main cloud types to name clouds:

cirrus
- high, feathery streaks, sometimes called horse tails
- formed by blowing ice crystals
- signal changing weather

cumulus
- white, puffy "cotton ball" clouds
- best for cloud watching to find interesting shapes
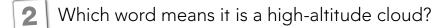- signal fair weather

stratus
- smooth, dull, gray blanket
- often cover the whole sky
- bring light, steady rain

Cloud names may contain other clues about their form:

"alto"	"cirro"	"nimbo" or "nimbus"
• mid-altitude cloud • **Altocumulus** clouds look like cornrows and bring short-lived showers	• high-altitude cloud • **Cirrocumulus** clouds look like fish scales and often turn into rain clouds	• black cloud that drops sleet, rain, or snow • **Cumulonimbus** clouds tower high, have flat white tops and dark bases, and bring thunderstorms

Find the word (or words) that answers each question.

1 Which cloud forms a dull, gray blanket?

2 Which word means it is a high-altitude cloud?

3 Which word means it is a mid-altitude cloud?

4 Which cloud brings thunderstorms?

5 Which high-altitude clouds look like fish scales?

6 Which clouds look like feathery streaks?

7 What does *precipitation* refer to?

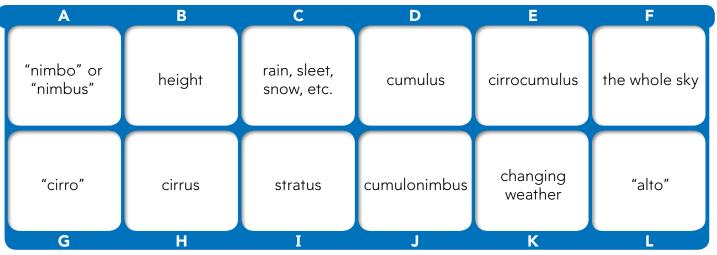8 What does *altitude* refer to?

9 What do cirrus clouds signal?

10 In which cloud might you find a fun animal shape?

11 What do stratus clouds often cover?

12 Which type of cloud is full of precipitation?

Tip

Picture this in your mind: **Cirrus** clouds resemble a wispy curl of hair on the tail of a horse that is galloping, or running, very fast. **Cirrus** means *curl* in Latin.

A	B	C	D	E	F
"nimbo" or "nimbus"	height	rain, sleet, snow, etc.	cumulus	cirrocumulus	the whole sky
"cirro"	cirrus	stratus	cumulonimbus	changing weather	"alto"
G	H	I	J	K	L

Objective: Use text structures (description, comparison) and features (chart, bold print, photography) to locate and comprehend information presented visually and in informational text.