

Lesson 1.2 – The Ten Main Clouds

Getting More Specific with Cloud Types

Objective: This lesson is about learning to recognise the ten main types of cloud (known officially as cloud 'genera'). Students will find out what makes them different and what similarities there are between the different ones. They will choose favourite ones to paint or create with collages. Students will learn definitions of feelings and how to observe feelings like they're learning to observe clouds.

Time: 45-90 minutes depending on activity options selected and teacher preference.

Materials:

1. Printables
 - a. The Ten Main Clouds double-sided printed sheets
 - b. Emotions Chart
 - c. Sensations Chart
 - d. Big and Little Emotions Chart
 - e. Big and Little Emotions Cards
 - f. My Hidden Emotions Chart
 - g. What's My Primary Emotion? Chart <not available yet>

Lesson Prep:

1. Hang Cloud Poster
2. Print The Ten Main Clouds sheets (double-sided, so educators can look at the backs while showing fronts. Perhaps laminate?)
3. Ready the [Ten Main Clouds video](#) to show.
4. Print Secondary and/or Primary printables.

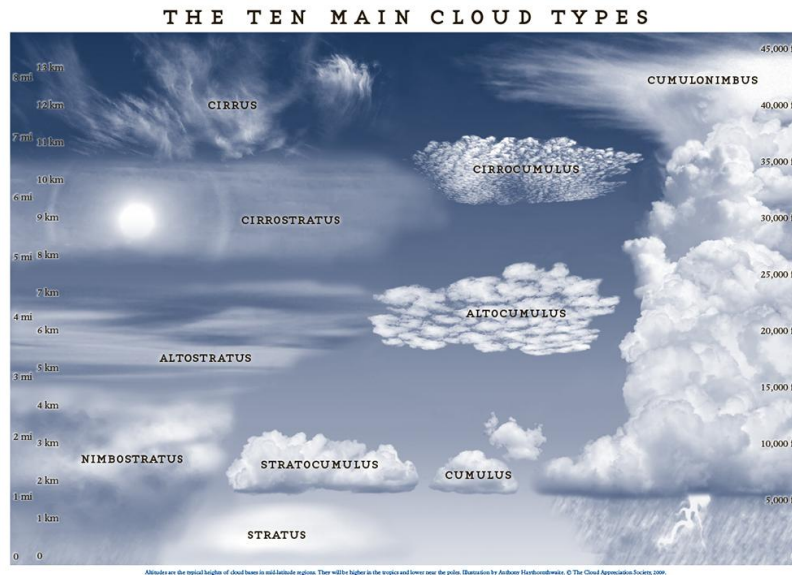
Resources:

1. The Ten Main Clouds printout sheets
2. Primary emotions chart <early draft>
3. Emotions and Sensations cloud charts <early draft>
4. My Hidden Emotions chart <early draft>
5. Cloud Emotion Intensity Rating chart <early draft>
6. Cloud Poster: <Not yet available, but you can use this [temporary Cloud Poster](#)>

Review previous lesson: Remind students they learned about becoming aware of the clouds, if they look up and notice them often, they will notice all different types of clouds. This lesson explores the Ten Main Clouds.

Lesson Intro: Welcome to the Ten Main Types of Cloud

Each and every cloud is unique, but we group them into ten main types based on how they look and how high they are: whether they are low, mid-level or high clouds. These ten main types are known as cloud 'genera', and you can think of them as each having their own character or personality. The teacher can start by showing the class the Cloud Poster that will have been distributed as part of the school pack. Here is a diagram of them <the schools poster will look different from this, by the way>:



Show individual images of different clouds. Have students think about:

1. What type of cloud group is being shown: Cumulus, Stratus or Cirrus? How can they tell?
2. How high above the ground are they? How can they tell?
3. Are they made of water droplets or ice particles? How can they tell?

The educator can show the class our video describing the ten main clouds:

[Video resource of the Ten Main Clouds](#)



To help the class learn these different types, we have provided a set of Ten Main Clouds printout sheets. The teacher can print these out in advance and laminate them as double-sided that have the info notes on the back. That way they can show them to the class as they describe them (using the notes on the back).

Then the original images can be shown again to see if the pupils can identify the answers to the original 3 questions by thinking about trying to make combinations of the key words to identify what is being shown in each image.

Pupils can choose their favourite cloud and justify their choice. They could also think about which clouds they would prefer to be in the sky in different situations and why, like while walking to school, when in a shopping centre, on a beach holiday, during a sightseeing tour, or when on a long car journey.

The 'Personalities' of the Ten Main Clouds

You can think of each cloud as having a feeling – almost a personality.

Ask the students to think about which cloud is most like their own feelings at the moment.

Activity Options:

Option 1 (No preparation):

PRIMARY/SECONDARY: Ask the students to paint the cloud or clouds that they are feeling today. They can use The Ten Main Clouds sheets as reference.

Option 2 (Some preparation):

PRIMARY: 'I Am a Cloud' game. Have printed pictures with information on the back. A child reads the information. Others guess which cloud it is. Show the picture when a pupil gets it right. The winner gets the next card.

SECONDARY: Matching Names of Cloud with Cloud Type Photo. Use 10 main cloud type printouts. Cut name off bottom. Students working in pairs match names to photos.

Option 3: (More preparation):

PRIMARY: A simple worksheet split into quarters labelled Cumulus, Stratus, Cirrus and Cumulonimbus with simple line drawings of each cloud would be useful for Primary age children. They could colour in the pictures with blue skies for Cirrus and Cumulus, grey for Stratus and a dark based towering cloud with yellow lightning for the Cumulonimbus.

SECONDARY: Give students printouts of ten unlabelled new photos <these will be available as a resource to download> and ask them to work out which of the ten main cloud types each one is. Ask them to group them into Low, Mid-level, High, and Multi-level clouds. Ask them to choose which feels the happiest and which feels the saddest.

Mindfulness: Introducing Emotions & Sensations with Cloud Breathing

Remind students mindfulness is about observing our bodies and emotions, in the moment, without judging what is happening. Just like we observe clouds, we watch and observe, making mental notes and on purpose taking breaths.

Share with students the list of general emotions with the definitions. You can think of emotions as being like clouds. Whatever emotions you have right now won't hang around forever. Have you been angry or sad before? Those emotions come and go and usually don't stay the same. Students could use the ten different cloud types as a way to describe which emotion they have each day.

<Beta group: a list of emotions is created but not the definitions yet.> Review Emotions and Sensations Chart. Just like using your imagination to see clouds, sometimes it takes your imagination to identify the sensation in our bodies. Sometimes it's hard to identify the emotions we are experiencing at all. Our brains begin to calm down when we can name the emotion. This is called "Name it to Tame it," and it means that when we can name our emotions, our body begins to calm down.

Have a small discussion about sensations that match emotions. For example, feeling angry may have heat on the face, or tightness in the hands, if they make a fist. For some, they may feel like yelling, a pressure in their lungs that has to be released. What sensation does feeling sad bring to your body? No energy, wanting to lie down, or feeling like a nap, heavy eyes, watery eyes, or like you need to cuddle with a blanket? Explore the different emotions and sensations and encourage students to pay attention to when they have different emotions, what it feels like in their body, what sensation the different emotions bring. Anticipate them sharing what they discover during the next lesson.

Emotions, just like clouds, come and go. But it's hard to know what to do with the emotion when it sinks uninvited into the body. We can learn to take breaths on purpose, elongating or pausing between breaths, to help the emotions move through our bodies more easily. It's like watching a rainstorm come and go, we can watch the emotions come and go.

PRIMARY & SECONDARY: Introduce Cloud Breathing with the cards, giving each student their own. Guide students how to start with their finger at start, inhale to the next raindrop, pause, then exhale, as they trace their finger around the cloud.

SECONDARY: Offer students the cloud card. It can easily be put into their wallet or purse and used when they may need to calm their emotions down. They may wish to just look at the printable poster rather than use a card. Students can also use their fingers to draw the shape of a square, circle, or triangle on their desk, in the air, or on a piece of notebook paper. They could even try tracing the clouds in the sky.

Cloud Breathing:

1. Begin with finger on Start.
2. Inhale tracing the cloud to the next raindrop.
3. Pause a moment.
4. Exhale to the next raindrop and pause.
5. Continue to trace the cloud with inhale, pause, exhale pattern.

Assessment: Guide students to name all the Ten main cloud types. Which one do they want to look for in the coming week? Encourage those with phones to take pictures and return for show and tell.

Conclusion: Although all the clouds are made up of water each cloud is different, forming in different conditions and so appears in different shapes and produces different weather. Just as the clouds are different, each student is different and experiences emotions differently. Encourage students to identify their emotions as they come, and refer to their Cloud Breathing Cards to help the emotions move through themselves more easily.

Alternative/Additional Activities:

PRIMARY:

1. Cloud bingo card (could be paper or virtual). To carry around and tick off as you spot the different clouds. Not being able to find certain types would lead to discussions about the reasons for finding/not finding them.
2. Children can make their own cloud spotter - like the one the society sells in their shop - but a printable wheel children could cut out and make. <CAS may provide a printable template>.

SECONDARY:

1. Compare the student created reference sheet with the Ten Main Clouds chart. Compare commonalities/differences in categorisation. Introduce the relationship between clouds and certain types of weather in different parts of the world, and then ask students to monitor clouds for a week and make weather predictions for a week. Discussion - what did they get right?
2. Assign individual clouds to each student and make them "experts". You can have students work on your 10 in groups, or you can add unusual clouds (lenticular, etc.) to the list to make more options. Students can then create posters (I am a fan of digital posters) or presentations to share with the class. Students SO much prefer to hear from their peers than from their teacher!