The Raindrop That Took a Trip

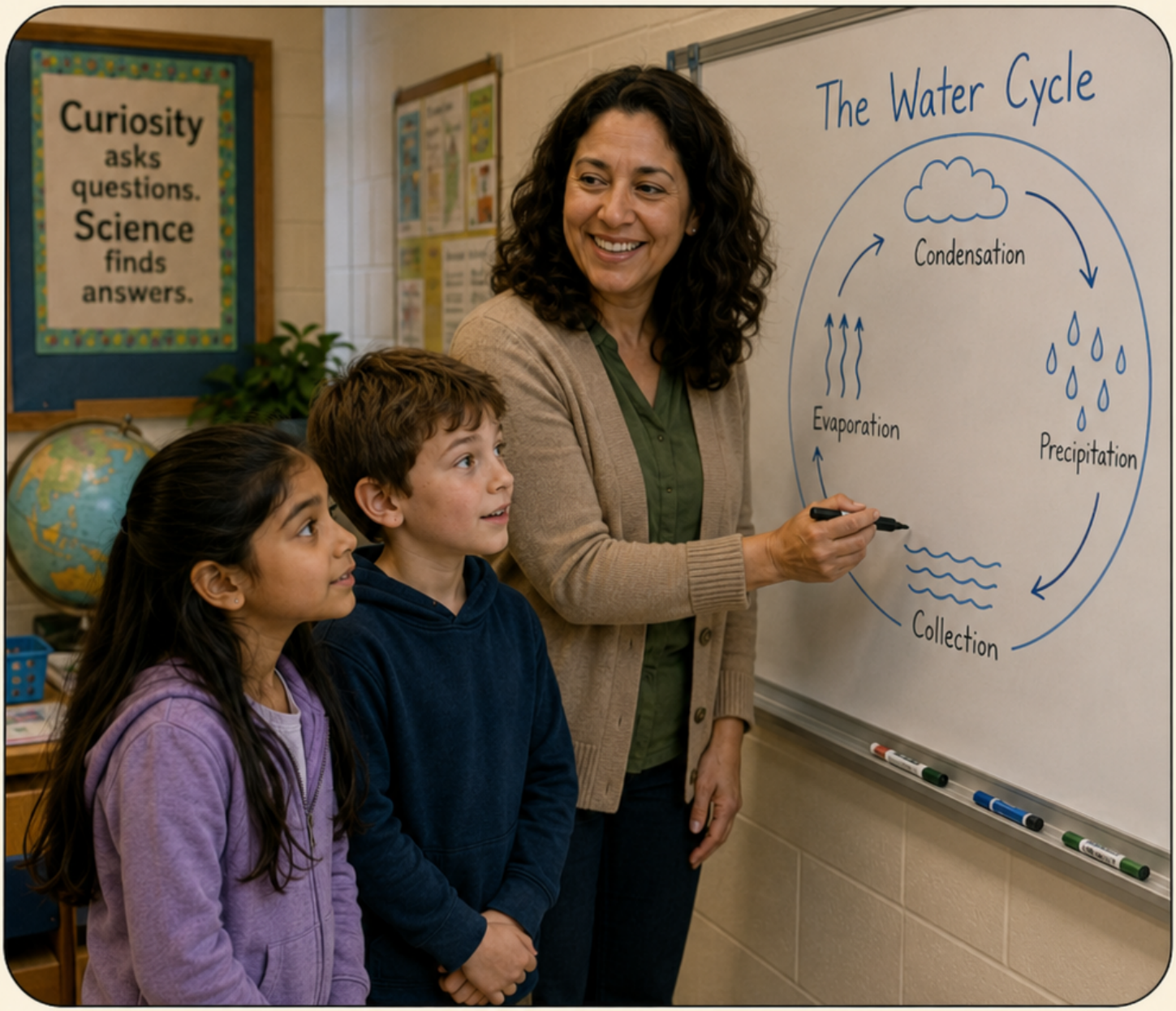


Kavya pressed her finger against the classroom window. A tiny raindrop slid down the glass like it was racing.

'Look, Ben,' she said. 'That raindrop is going on an adventure.'

Ben leaned closer. 'Where did it come from?'

Science Fables



Just then, Ms. Alvarez walked over with a smile.

‘That,’ she said, ‘is the mystery of the water cycle.’

‘The water cycle?’ Kavya asked.

Ms. Alvarez drew a big circle on the board.

‘Water does not stay in one place,’ she explained. ‘It keeps moving around Earth.’

Science Fables



She drew the Sun above an ocean. ‘First, the Sun warms water in oceans, lakes, and rivers. Some of that water changes into invisible water vapor and rises into the air. That is called evaporation.’

Ben looked surprised. ‘So water can float up without us seeing it?’

‘Yes,’ said Ms. Alvarez. ‘Water vapor is water in gas form.’

Science Fables



Then Ms. Alvarez drew tiny droplets inside a cloud. 'High in the sky, the air is cooler. Water vapor cools down and turns into tiny liquid droplets. Those droplets gather together to make clouds. That is called condensation.'

Kavya looked out the window. 'So clouds are made of tiny water droplets?'

'Exactly,' said Ms. Alvarez.

Science Fables



The rain tapped harder on the window.

'When the droplets in clouds get heavy,' Ms. Alvarez continued, 'they fall back to Earth as precipitation.'

'Rain!' Ben said.

'Rain, snow, sleet, or hail,' Ms. Alvarez added.

Science Fables



‘What happens after it falls?’ Kavya asked.

Ms. Alvarez drew rivers, lakes, and an ocean. ‘Some water runs over land into streams and rivers. Some soaks into the ground. Some collects in lakes and oceans.’

Ben grinned. ‘And then the Sun heats it again?’

‘Yes,’ said Ms. Alvarez. ‘Then the journey starts all over.’

Science Fables

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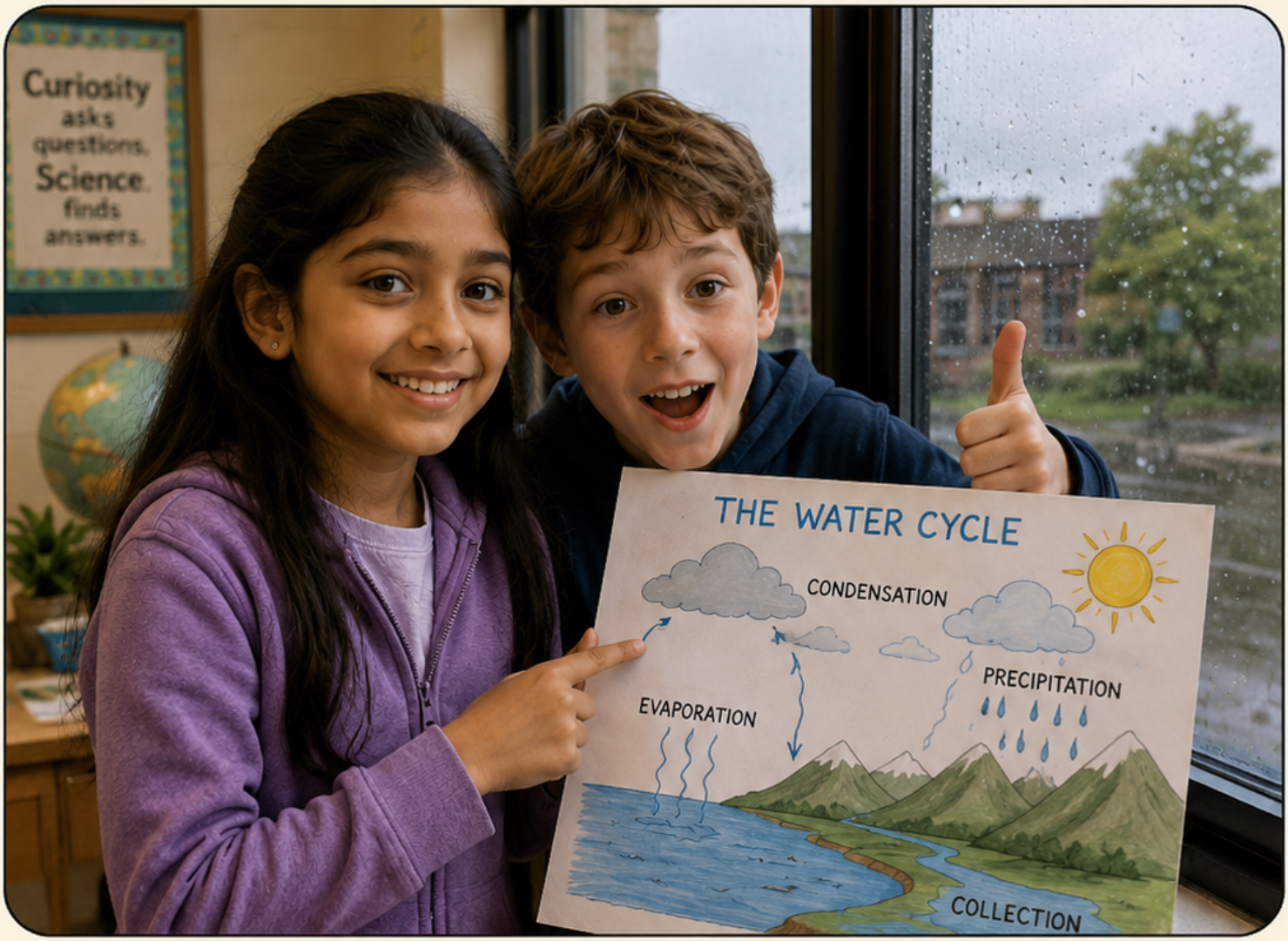
Later that day, the rain stopped. Sunlight broke through the clouds, and puddles sparkled on the playground.

Ben pointed to one puddle. ‘Look. The Sun is warming it.’

Kavya smiled. ‘The raindrop’s next trip is starting.’

At the bottom of her notebook, she wrote: ‘Water never really stops. It travels, changes, falls, flows, and rises again.’

Science Fables



What the Kids Learned:

Water moves through a cycle. The Sun heats water and causes evaporation. Water vapor cools and forms clouds through condensation. Water falls back to Earth as precipitation. Then water collects in rivers, lakes, oceans, and underground before the cycle begins again.

Science Element:

The water cycle includes evaporation, condensation, precipitation, and collection.