Name:_____

Hail Stones

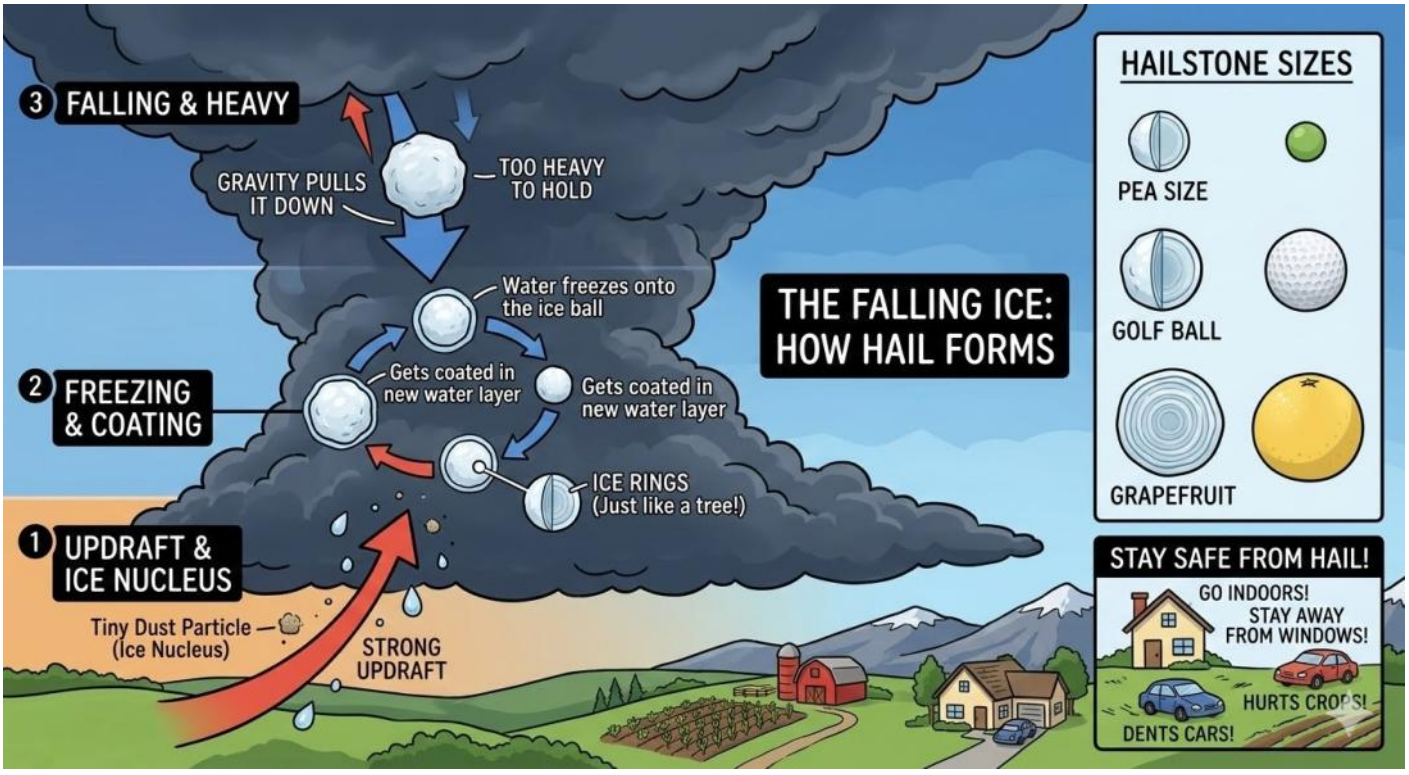
Have you ever been outside during a thunderstorm and suddenly heard a loud clink-clink-clink on the roof of a car? You might look down and see what looks like white marbles bouncing on the grass. This isn't snow, and it isn't rain—it is hail!

Hail starts inside very tall thunderstorm clouds. Even if it is a hot summer day on the ground, the air high up in the clouds is freezing cold. Small drops of water are pushed upward by a strong wind called an updraft. As the water travels higher, it freezes into a tiny ball of ice.

Inside the cloud, the ice ball gets caught in a cycle. It falls a little bit, gets coated in more water, and then the updraft pushes it back up into the freezing air again. Every time this happens, a new layer of ice freezes onto the ball. This is why if you cut a piece of hail in half, it looks like it has rings, just like a tree!

Eventually, the hailstone becomes too heavy for the wind to keep it up in the sky. Gravity pulls it down, and it falls to the ground. Most hail is the size of a small pea, but some can be as big as a golf ball or even a grapefruit!

Because hail is solid ice and falls very fast, it can be dangerous. Large hail can dent cars, crack windows, and hurt farmers' crops. If you see hail falling, the best thing to do is stay inside and away from windows until the "ice show" is over.



Name:_____

1. In the sentence, "Small drops of water are pushed upward by a strong wind called an updraft," what does the word updraft mean?

A. A wind that blows in a circle like a tornado.

B. A very cold wind that brings snow in the winter.

C. A strong wind that moves toward the sky.

D. A light breeze that smells like rain.

2. Based on the passage, what can you conclude about why hail has rings inside of it?

A. The rings show how many times the ice ball was pushed back up into the cold air.

B. The rings are caused by the hailstone hitting the ground very hard.

C. Every ring shows how many miles the hail traveled through the sky.

D. The rings are actually tiny pieces of snow trapped inside the ice.

3. If you see a piece of hail that is the size of a grapefruit, what can you infer about the storm it came from?

A. The storm had very weak winds that couldn't hold much water.

B. The storm was very small and did not last for a long time.

C. The storm had a very powerful updraft that could hold up heavy ice.

D. The storm happened in a place where it was snowing on the ground.

4. Which detail from the text best supports the idea that hail can be harmful?

A. "Most hail is the size of a small pea."

B. "It falls a little bit, gets coated in more water."

C. "The air high up in the clouds is freezing cold."

D. "Large hail can dent cars, crack windows, and hurt farmers' crops."

5. Why does the author use the words "clink-clink-clink" at the start of the passage?

A. To help the reader imagine the sound of ice hitting a hard surface.

B. To explain that hail is made of metal like a car roof.

C. To show that the author is happy about the storm.

D. To teach the reader a new song about the weather.