



Read the passage comparing two kinds of weather. Then answer the questions about what is the same and what is different.

Look for words like "both," "but," "however," and "unlike" that point to similarities and differences.

## Rain vs Snow: Water's Different Forms



Rain and snow are **both** forms of precipitation, which means water falling from the sky. They are crucial for Earth's ecosystems and play a vital role in the water cycle. While they share this fundamental characteristic, their formation and effects on the environment and human activities are quite different.

Rain forms when water vapor in clouds cools and condenses into tiny liquid droplets. These droplets grow heavier and fall as liquid water. We often measure rain in millimeters (mm) or inches; for example, a moderate rain shower might bring 10-20 mm of rain. Rain is essential for plant growth and for filling rivers and lakes, supporting various forms of life. It typically occurs when air temperatures are above 0°C (32°F).

**However**, snow forms when water vapor freezes directly into ice crystals high in the atmosphere, usually when temperatures are below 0°C (32°F). These delicate crystals stick together to form snowflakes. Snowfall is measured in centimeters (cm) or inches, with a heavy snowfall potentially bringing 15-30 cm of snow. Snow acts as an insulating blanket, protecting plants and animals from extreme cold during winter.

**Unlike** rain, which can make roads slick and slippery, heavy snow can completely block roads and require specialized plowing equipment. **But**, a surprising similarity is that **both** rain and snow can actually start as tiny ice crystals in clouds; rain simply melts into liquid water before it reaches the ground, **while** snow remains frozen.



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**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

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(1) Which form of precipitation typically falls when air temperatures are above freezing?

- A Rain    B Snow    C Both    D Neither

(2) Which weather phenomenon can act as an insulating blanket for plants and animals?

- A Rain    B Snow    C Both    D Neither

(3) "Both rain and snow are crucial for Earth's ecosystems." Is this a **SIMILARITY** or a **DIFFERENCE**?

- A Similarity    B Difference

(4) "Heavy snow can block roads, but rain makes them slick." Is this a **SIMILARITY** or a **DIFFERENCE**?

- A Similarity    B Difference

(5) Tell **ONE** way rain and snow are alike. Use words from the passage.

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