Snowflakes

No two snowflakes are exactly alike. Snowflakes form in clouds, and their different journeys to the ground affect their shape and size, giving each snowflake its own unique identity. Very cold clouds contain water droplets and ice crystals. As water droplets attach themselves to ice crystals, they freeze, creating an even larger ice crystal. When this happens, water molecules line up and form a six-sided shape called a "hexagon." This is why all snowflakes are six-sided. The shape of the ice crystal is determined by the temperature of the cloud. The amount of moisture in the cloud determines the size of the ice crystal. Likewise, the more moisture there is in a cloud the bigger the ice crystal will be. When several ice crystals join together, they form a snowflake. As snowflakes tumble through the air, whirling and spinning, they each take a different path to the ground. As each snowflake falls it drifts through clouds with different temperatures and moisture levels, which shapes each snowflake in a unique way.