Weather and Atmosphere Vocab

(should be located in notebook)

Weather – the condition of Earth’s atmosphere at a particular time and place

Atmosphere – the envelope of gases that surrounds Earth

Water vapor – water in the form of a gas

Altitude – elevation above sea level

Air pressure – the pressure caused by the weight of a column of air pushing down on an area

Barometer – an instrument used to measure changes in air pressure

Troposphere – the lowest layer of Earth’s atmosphere, earth’s weather occurs here

Stratosphere – the second-lowest layer of Earth’s atmosphere, contains the ozone layer

Mesosphere – the layer of Earth’s atmosphere immediately above the stratosphere, meteoroids burn up in this layer

Thermosphere – outermost layer of the Earth’s atmosphere, no definite outer limit

Ionosphere – lower part of the thermosphere, aurora borealis (Northern Lights) occurs here

Exosphere – upper part of the thermosphere

Wind – horizontal movement of air from an area of high pressure to an area of lower pressure

Anemometer – instrument used to measure wind speed

Sea breeze – flow of cooler air from over an ocean or lake toward land

Land breeze – flow of air from land to a body of water

Coriolis effect – effect of Earth’s rotation on the direction of winds and currents

Latitude – distance in degrees north or south of the equator

Water cycle – continual movement of water among Earth's atmosphere, oceans, and land surface through evaporation, condensation, and precipitation

Evaporation – process by which molecules at the surface of a liquid absorb enough energy to change to a gas

Condensation – change of state from a gas to a liquid

Humidity – amount of water vapor in a given volume of air

Relative humidity – percentage of water vapor in the air compared to the maximum amount of water vapor that air can contain at a particular temperature

Psychrometer – an instrument used to measure relative humidity

Dew point – temperature at which condensation begins

Cirrus – wispy, feathery clouds made of ice crystals that form at high levels

Cumulus – fluffy, white clouds, usually with flat bottoms, that look like rounded piles of cotton

Stratus – clouds that form in flat layers and often cover much of the sky