

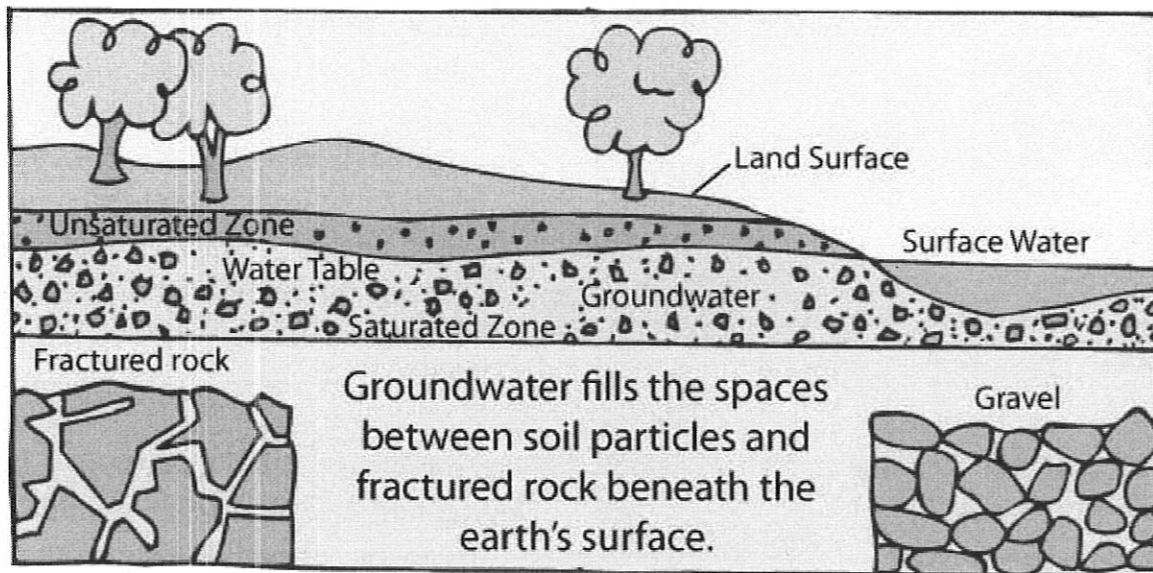
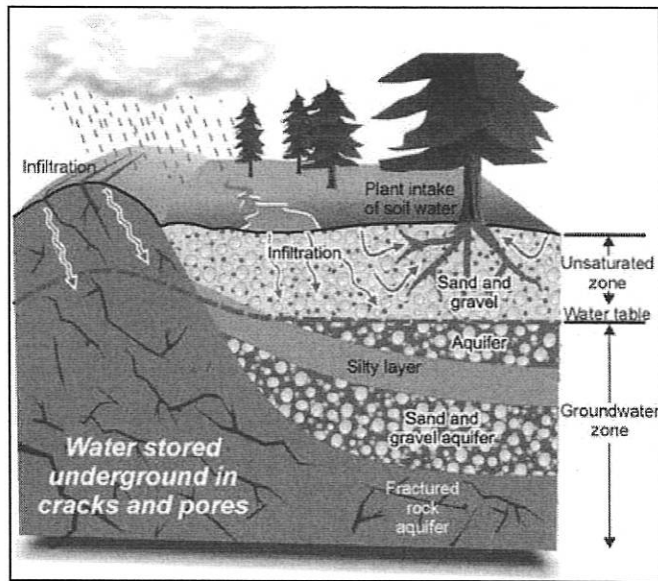
What is Groundwater?

Name _____

Groundwater is water that exists under the Earth's surface. Groundwater comes from rainwater that has soaked in from the surface (**infiltration**) and percolated down through soil layers into layers of fractured rock and gravel below. Groundwater can flow underground, in the direction that gravity pulls it.

Stores of water underground are called **aquifers**. Spaces in rock and gravel that are filled with water are called "**saturated**." Spaces that are not filled with water are called "**unsaturated**."

The upper level of an aquifer is called the "**water table**."



Wells must be dug below the water table in order to pull water out. However, the water table raises and lowers depending on how much rain the area has recently received. If the water table falls below the depth that the well has been dug to, the well will run dry.

