

Water Water Everywhere?



Aim

to interactively explore the use we make of water in our everyday lives and how it is unequally distributed

Age

6 years and older

Time

30 minutes

Materials

sheets of paper/card, markers, water, plastic cup

WATER FACTS

- 2005-2015 is the UN Decade of Water for Life.
- If all the earth's water could fit in a 5 litre container, just over 1 tablespoon full would be drinkable.
- Worldwide, more than 1.5 billion people do not have access to a safe and adequate water supply.
- Poor people in the Developing World pay on average 12 times more per litre of water than people connected to a town supply – they use less water, much of which is dirty and contaminated.
- 4000 children die every day from a lack of safe drinking water.

Visit www.un.org/waterforlifedecade

What to do

Part 1

On a large sheet of flipchart paper, draw some clouds. Brainstorm with your group all of the words they think of when they hear the word 'water' and write them into the clouds.

Cut the card into the shape of raindrops and give one to each person. Ask them to think of all of the reasons why water is so important and to write one reason on each card. Collect the cards and explain that they are the rain drops falling from the clouds. Remember to make them large enough so that everybody can see them. Group similar reasons together and ask which ones are related to health. Possible reasons are: to clean yourself, to wash your clothes, for crops and animals, to prepare food and drinks, to cool you down, to swim in, for animals and plants to live in, to wash down food.

Part 2

Ask the group to sit or kneel in a circle. The person who has the water in front of them pours it into the hands of the person on the left. That person then must pass the water into the hands of the next person and so on. The objective is to ensure there is enough water left in the hands to reach the first person again.

As a variation, use a plastic cup with some holes in the bottom. The cup is passed around the circle to see how many people it can pass before it is empty. You could also form two teams and have a competition between them to see who ends up with the most water.

Discuss what happened. How did it feel to lose so much water? In Ireland, how is water lost? What about in developing countries? Read out the facts about water around the world. Ask if any of the facts surprise, interest or anger the group. Why?