



WALK FOR WATER – Do you take drinking water for granted?

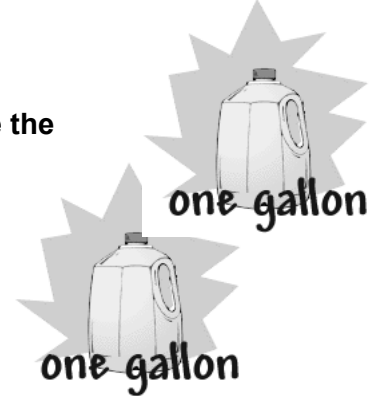
Timing: 20-40 minutes

Activity Type: Physical Fitness/Math/Reading/Discussion/Journaling

Description: Students will go on a group walk and carry water to appreciate the scarcity of water and the role women and children play as water collectors in developing countries.

Preparation:

Collect enough plastic gallon milk or water containers so each student has two.



Expectations:

Health and Physical Education – Active Participation

Social Studies/Geography – Find countries where drinking/clean water is scarce or polluted and where it is plentiful and discuss the thinking that access to clean water should be a right for every living thing.

Math – use conversion factors to determine distance and weight to appreciate the value of having clean drinking water piped to our homes, schools etc.

Writing – collect thoughts on paper to compare our water resources with those or lack of them in other countries and in our own country

Conversion factors:

1.00 miles = 1.61 kilometers

2.2 pounds = 1 kilogram

1 gallon of water weighs 8.35 pounds

Teaching Strategies:

1. Lead your class on a mile-long walk having each student carry 2 gallons of water. If there are not enough to go around, divide students into groups and ask them to take turns carrying the water, without letting it touch the ground.
2. Have students read “The Facts About The Global Drinking Water Crisis. Explain to the students that many people in developing countries, usually women and girls, have to walk several kilometers for water. Once filled, their water jugs can weigh as much as 20 kilograms. (Math 1 kg = 2.2 pounds) Have them think about how tiring it was to walk a fraction of that distance, with a fraction of that weight.
3. Have students compare and contrast their walk with people from other countries. Using the facts and conversion factors have students determine: the average distance in miles these people walk to get water, the average weight of the water they carry and the time they spend collecting it. Ask them to address the disparity of water use in this country compared to other countries.
4. Ask students how they feel after learning this information. Have their opinions changed about the importance of access to water for everyone. How does it make them feel about the access to water that we have in this country?
5. Ask the students to write a journal entry about their thoughts on the role of women in developing countries. Ask students to think about some of the other things women and children could be doing with their time instead of walking to collect water. D
6. **Use the website below to find maps to locate areas where access to clean water and sanitation are problems.**

The Facts About The Global Drinking Water Crisis <http://blueplanetnetwork.org/water/facts>



One-in-six people in the world lack safe drinking water. Water-related illnesses are the leading cause of human sickness and death.

In many countries, the water problem is the primary reason people are unable to rise out of poverty. **Women and children bear the burdens disproportionately, often spending six hours or more, each day fetching water for their families and communities.** But there is hope. Proven solutions to the water problem currently exist, such as digging wells and rainwater harvesting. Proper funding and a collective will can make universal safe drinking water a reality.

Scope

- **1.1 billion people** in the world don't have access to safe drinking water, roughly **1/6 of the world's population**.
- **2.2 million people** in developing countries, most of them children, **die every year** from diseases associated with lack of access to safe drinking water, inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene. In the past 10 years, diarrhea has killed more children than all the people lost to armed conflict since World War II.
- **Half of the world's hospital beds** are filled with people suffering from water related illnesses.
- Despite the size of the problem, we have made little progress against it. There are even places in the U.S. that still empty raw sewage into the water.
- 50 percent of people on earth lack adequate sanitation: Nearly half of the world's population fails to receive the level of water services available 2,000 years ago to the citizens of ancient Rome.



Women and Children

- Some **6,000 children die every day** from disease associated with lack of access to safe drinking water, inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene - equivalent to 20 jumbo jets crashing every day.
- **The average distance that women in Africa and Asia walk to collect water is six kilometers.**
- Tens of millions of children cannot go to school because they must fetch water every day. Drop out rates for adolescent girls, who even make it that far, skyrocket once they hit puberty, as there are no private sanitation facilities at their schools.

Water Diseases

- 80% of diseases in the developing world are caused by contaminated water
 - Waterborne diseases (the consequence of a combination of lack of clean water supply and inadequate sanitation) cost the Indian economy 73 million working days per year.
 - If we did nothing other than provide access to clean water, without any other medical intervention, we could save 2 million lives a year.
 - The water and sanitation crisis claims more lives through disease than any war claims through guns.
- www.water.org**

Geography

- The **average person in the developing world uses 2.64 gallons** of water a day. The average person in the **United Kingdom uses 35.66 gallons** of water per day. The average person in the **United States uses between 100 and 175 gallons** every day at home.
- More than 40 million hours are wasted each year in Africa alone from women and children gathering water.
- It is estimated that 5.3 billion people, two-thirds of the world's population, will suffer from water shortages by 2025.

Economics



- Every \$1 spent on water and sanitation generates a return of \$9 in saved time, increased productivity and reduced health costs in Africa. -- **United Nations Development Program**
- Water is a \$400 billion dollar global industry; the third largest behind electricity and oil.
- The UN estimates it would cost an additional \$30 billion to provide access to safe water to the entire planet. That's a third of what the world spends in a year on bottled water.
- An estimated 25% of people from cities in developing countries purchase their water from vendors at a significantly higher price than piped water. In some cases, it costs more than a quarter of their household income. -- **CBS News, FLOW**

Consumption

- The average American uses 100 to 175 gallons of water per day.
- The average African uses 5 gallons per day.
- It takes 5 liters of water to make 1 liter of bottled water.
- Almost 70 percent of the available fresh water gets used for irrigation in agriculture.
- More than half of the water used for irrigation leaks, evaporates or runs off.
- It takes 2,900 gallons of water to produce one quarter pound hamburger (just the meat)

Our Planet

- 20 percent of freshwater fish species have been pushed to the edge of extinction from contaminated water.
- Half of the world's 500 major rivers are seriously depleted or polluted.
- "The U.S. has more than 300,000 contaminated groundwater sites.
- **New contaminants including pharmaceuticals and toxins in personal care products are showing up in drinking water around the world.**
- **The water we drink today is the same water the dinosaurs drank—there is no new water.**



These statistics are generally accepted by United Nation, World Health Organization and Millennium Development Goals.

Unicef/WHO Joint Monitoring Program for Water Supply and Sanitation

http://www.wateraid.org/documents/plugin_documents/global_cause_and_eff...

Costing MDG Target 10 on Water Supply and Sanitation, World Water Council, March 2006.

http://www.financingwaterforall.org/fileadmin/Financing_water_for_all/Re...