**Extension Activity**

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| **Activity Title:** Water Choices | **Duration:** 30 minutes |
| **Introduction:** | |
| In this activity, students will get the opportunity to recognize the ways that they consume water in their everyday lives and to consider what these choices look like in a developed versus an undeveloped country   * Suitable for Grades 6-8 | |
| **Materials:** | |
| * Water Choices worksheet | |
| **Procedure:** | |
| * Explain to students that they will have to decide how to select their water choices * Students get a total of 16 water choices to use, no more or less * Students must place at least one checkmark in each category * Food * Drinking * Clothing * Household * Personal Care * Technology * After students have decided how to place their checkmarks, have them revisit their choices since they will need to take away 4 checkmarks. Let students know that this now represents an undeveloped country. | |
| **Conclusion:** | |
| Students should be able to recognize that water goes into making everything that we use in our daily lives, and understand the concepts of their own water footprint and know what virtual and physical water means  **Discussion Questions:**   * Discuss with the class your thoughts on your choices? * Did you find it hard to make decisions? * Are there any choices that you will start making to conserve water? | |

**Water Choices**

**Background Information:**

As the world population continues to grow, the ability to source clean water is becoming a more pressing concern. One of the main problems is global water supplies are unevenly distributed. In some countries there is an abundance of water and in others a severe shortage.

Every human being needs water to survive and the bare minimum per person for drinking and sanitation is measured at 20 litres a day.

In highly developed countries clean water is available 24 hours a day and the average consumption level is 300 litres per person.

In contrast, in many developing countries, hundreds of thousands of people must walk miles every day to find clean water. The water supply is often limited; it can also run out and is not always safe for drinking.

**Good News &**

There is a lot of fresh water in the world ….

Water is free from nature ….

In many areas, water is easily accessible at a low cost ….

Nature is constantly recycling & purifying water in river & lakes ….

There is a huge amount of water underground ….

5 billion people have reasonable access to fresh water ….

3.8 billion people have at least basic sanitation ….

Millions are working their way out of poverty ….

The pace of industrialization is increasing ….

Industry is becoming more efficient in its water use ….

Awareness of water issues is increasing ….

**Bad News**

It is not always where people need it

Infrastructure needed to deliver water is expensive

People assume it will always be available & take it for granted

Humans are polluting water faster than nature can recycle it

Humans are using this water faster than nature can replace it

Over 1 billion do not

2.4 billion do not

Affluent people use more water

Industry will require more fresh water

Many industries are still using water unsustainably/inefficiently

Translating awareness into action can be slow

**Sources:**

<http://www.unwater.org/downloads/Water_facts_and_trends.pdf>

<http://everylittledrop.com.au/knowledge-center/our-global-water-footprint/>

Your Water Footprint, Stephen Leahy, 2014

**Water Choices**

**How will you use your water budget?**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Category | A (1 Checkmarks) | B (2 Checkmarks) | C (4 Checkmarks) |
| Food | Rice, beans, chicken, only local fruits and vegetables | Rice, beans, variety of meat, root vegetables, local fruit, | Pizza, hamburgers, any fruit, any vegetables, dessert, juice, pop |
| Drinking | Have to walk 10 miles to get water | Can’t drink the water from your tap | Unlimited drinking water straight from your tap |
| Clothing | Minimal clothing usually homemade | Jeans, t-shirt, sweater, shoes, | Unlimited clothing |
| Household | Wash everything by hand | Washing machine | washing machine, dish washer, pool |
| Personal Care | No indoor plumbing | 10-minute shower, running toilet | 45-minute shower, running toilet |
| Technology | No technology | TV, computer | Smartphone, TV, computer |

If you had a “16 point budget” to spend how would you spend it? What would your priorities be? Place the required number of checkmarks to indicate your spending choices. You have to make a choice for each category (you can’t skip any categories)

**1 pair of jeans**

**uses 7600**

**litres of water**

**1 chocolate bar uses 1700 litres of water**

**1 cheeseburger uses**

**2400 litres of water**

**1 smartphone takes up to 910 litres of water**

**10-minute shower**

**85 litres/day**

**Average toilet**

**75 litres/day**