

Title: All about Water!

Aim: To learn about water consumption in our lives through different activities and in different places

Age: 6+ (Part 1); 10+ (Part 2)

Time: 20 minutes (Part 1); 20 minutes (Part 2)

Materials: Crayons/markers, paper, a World map (optional). If playing outdoors, 3 large containers for holding water (i.e. 10 litres), access to a tap



WHAT TO DO

Part 1: Ask participants to think about how they use water every day and name some activities e.g. washing, cooking, flushing toilet, etc. Do they use water carefully, or sometimes waste it? Do they think they use a lot or not? Have the participants draw a picture of a bucket, glass or any water container, and a line at one-third full. Ask the group to imagine that the line is the amount of water every person uses every day in Ireland. Ask them to colour in lines for how much water they think other countries like the USA and Malawi (in Africa) use.

Tell the group the actual amounts used: USA water use would fill the bucket, the average person in the USA uses approximately 3 times more water than the average person in Ireland. The average person in Malawi uses approximately one fifth of the water we use per day in Ireland. Ask the group if they are surprised. Why do some people and countries use more water than others? How might we reduce the amount of water we use daily?

Water use in Ireland and other countries

Country	Daily use	Difference to Ireland
Ireland	148	
UK	150	+2
USA	466	+318
China	86	- 62
Malawi	33	-115
Haiti	17	-131

(Source: www.progressio.ie)



NOTE TO LEADER: When thinking about the other countries, ask the group to consider the following questions (looking at a map): Can they point to the country on the map? How big is it compared to Ireland? What are the main water sources (large rivers, lakes, sea)? What is the population in relation to Ireland? What is the climate/landscape compared to Ireland?

Alternative Idea: Take It Outdoors! For an outdoor version of this activity, use buckets to demonstrate the amount of water different countries use per day. Fill the buckets according to the amount used in each country. Encourage the group to think of ways to use the water at the end of the activity so that it is not wasted, e.g. water plants, wash the floor.



FACT BOX: Almost half of our water in Ireland is lost because of leaks, unauthorised use and metering errors. The worst situation is in Limerick City where 58% of all water is lost. The 'best' is South Dublin where 21% goes missing. The Irish Government intends to introduce water charges by 2014 as a way of reducing the amount of water being wasted and to help pay for the maintenance of Ireland's water system (Source: *Report on www.lgcsb.ie*)




FACT BOX: Water around the World: The international norm for a family of 5 people is 100 litres per day. 40 billion hours are spent each year in sub-Saharan Africa fetching water (Source: *www.8020.ie*)

? DID YOU KNOW? Water is a finite resource. This means we will never have more water than what is currently on Earth. Only 3% of the water on Earth is fresh and drinkable. 2.5% is frozen in glaciers and icecaps. This leaves only 0.5% for our needs. Many countries rely on water from other parts of the World to produce what they need, such as Holland and Belgium. The UK currently consumes 3 billion bottles of water every year, half a billion of which are imported from overseas (*Source www.8020.ie and www.watercooler.ie*)

Case Study: Women from a rural area in Southern Ethiopia solved their water problems together. 'As well as our daily housework cooking, cleaning and minding children, we had to fetch water. During wet season, we used a local pond which animals also used and it made us sick. During dry season we had to walk 6-7 hours to find water'. The women set up a collective saving and credit group. This was a bold move, in a society where it is unusual for women to manage money. Then they decided to try harvest rainwater, by constructing a rock catchment area and a reservoir. The women asked an aid agency for support and the new reservoir with a capacity of 150,000 litres has changed the women's lives. (*Source: GOAL*) Ask the group are the women resilient? How?

Part 2: Apart from using water to cook, take showers and wash our clothes, a lot of water is used to produce food and other products every day - to grow apples and even to produce a bag of crisps. The amount of water needed depends on local weather, agricultural practices and transport. The total amount of water needed to produce what we consume on a daily basis is known as our "water footprint".


Copy and cut out the cards below. In small groups, ask the participants to match cards (amount of water with items), thinking about how the item is produced and possible distance it travels to reach them. Then for each item, read out the correct amounts and award points to those who are closest to the correct amount. After the final round, announce the winning team!




Item	Amount of water used in production	Item	Amount of water used in production
Tomato	13 litres	Cotton t-shirt	2,700 litres
Potato	25 litres	A bag of crisps	185 litres
Cup of Tea	35 litres	A glass of milk	200 litres
Apple	70 litres	A kilo of wheat	1,500 litres
An Egg	135 litres	100g of Chocolate	2,400 litres
A glass of orange juice	170 litres	A kilo of meat	15,000 litres

(*Source: Water Unit, FAO (Food and Agricultural Organisation), UN; Water Footprint Network www.waterfootprint.org; www.8020.ie*)

Ask participants if they were surprised by how much water different products need? Why does a glass of milk use so much more water in its production than an apple?

 **ACTION IDEA:** To calculate your water footprint, go to: <http://www.onedrop.org/calcul/en/> Ask participants to think about what they ate today. What is their 'water footprint' in litres? How might they reduce this when choosing food and products? Monitor your water footprint for a period of time and share the results in your youth organisation.

 **ACTION IDEA:** Progressio Ireland is an independent Irish international development organisation. They encourage people to think about what is a fair amount of water for all, and show people how to change their water use. Take part in their 'Zanjero Water Challenge' or try to live on 10 litres of water for one day. For more information on how to get involved go to: <http://www.progressio.ie/zanjero/>

Activity adapted from information provided by Progressio Ireland