

# Cheers to Water

## Water Learning and Appreciation Activity Grade 7-10

### Cheers to Water

Develops appreciation of reality of life with limited access to water

<b>Number of Participants:</b>	10 – 30
<b>Duration:</b>	20 – 30 minutes
<b>Materials Required:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• two buckets full of water</li><li>• backpack with books or something heavy inside</li><li>• bed sheet/blanket (to wrap around the backpack to resemble a child being carried)</li><li>• cups for the toast</li><li>• chairs and other large items as obstacles</li><li>• drinking water</li><li>• salt water</li><li>• pens</li></ul>

### Warm-Up Activity:

Ask students to turn to the person sitting beside them.

Together they will approximate the amount of water they have used in the last 24 hours. If it is not possible to come up with a number, at least come up with a list of activities they have participated in that consumes water.

Bring students' attention back to the front – ask the following questions:

- *How many of you took a bath/shower last night?*
- *How many of you took a bath/shower this morning?*
- *Did any of you need to go and collect the water you used?*
- *Did any of you need to go and find water to use?*
- *Did any of you even think about the fact that you had water readily at your disposal last night or this morning?*

Remind them of water uses that they may not have thought of – for example, cooking, dishwasher use, laundry, leaky tap, toilet flushes, etc.

For the majority of people living in the developing world, water is something that needs to be constantly thought about, found, collected, conserved and in many places purchased. For millions of people in the world even after they have collected water, it isn't clean water.

**Fact:** By 2025 more than 3 billion people (half of the world's population) could be living in water stressed countries, and 14 countries will slip from water stressed to water scarcity.

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### Definitions

**Water scarcity:** is a situation where there is insufficient water to satisfy normal requirements. There are degrees of scarcity - absolute, life-threatening, seasonal, temporary, cyclical, etc. Populations with normally high levels of consumption may experience temporary "scarcity" more keenly than other societies, who are accustomed to using much less water.

**Water stress:** are the symptoms of water scarcity or shortage. (e.g. growing conflict between users and competition for water, declining standards of reliability and service, harvest failures and food insecurity.)

### Activity:

Get a volunteer to come up and demonstrate to the group what it would be like to be a woman, with a baby on her back, carrying water. Get the volunteer to walk around the desks in the room (as physical obstacles).

*OR*

Ask all the students to form two lines at the front of the class and take turns walking around the classroom carrying a bucket full of water.

### Optional Settings to have students think about:

- It is 30 degrees outside, you have five children, your husband is away in the city looking for work. You must collect water every day or every second day for your family to survive.
- You are a nine year old who is helping your mom collect water as she is very ill. You must wake up at three am every morning to go and fetch water before you go to school.

### Questions to ask the group:

**A.** From what you have just seen (the reenactment of what it is like for some women in water poor countries) what are some obstacles you can think of that people collecting water (woman/girls) may run into when collecting/finding water?

- can't find a water source
- long lines waiting for water
- threat of wild life
- sick, pregnant or injured
- insecure areas – kidnapping or rape etc.

**B.** How many hours do you think the average person (who is usually a woman or child) takes to collect water?

- in many countries it takes two to five hours to collect water because of the distance needed to find the water point, time you wait in line, transporting it back home.

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### True and False Questions:

1. Lack of water is the number one trigger of daytime fatigue. **TRUE**
2. More water is used in the kitchen than any other place in the home. **FALSE (Bathroom)**
3. 50% of the world's fresh water is held in polar ice caps and glaciers. **FALSE (90%)**
4. In developing countries, 80% of illnesses are water related. **TRUE**

### **World Water Statistics**

- Each year more than 1 billion people have little choice but to resort to using potentially harmful sources of water. This perpetuates a silent humanitarian crisis that kills some 3900 children every day.
- A mere two per cent drop in body water can trigger fuzzy short-term memory, trouble with basic math, and difficulty focusing on the computer screen or on a printed page.
- By 2050, it is believed that “water will be the most critical resource issue we face in the entire world.”
- According to the UN, nearly two million children die every year because of unclean water and poor sanitation – far more than the casualties from violent conflicts.
- Human brains are 75% water, human bones are 25% water, human blood is 83% water.
- Each day the sun evaporates a trillion tons of water.
- A single tree will give off 265 litres of water per day in evaporation.
- A small drip from a faucet can waste as much as 75 litres of water a day.

### Cheers to Water!

- Make sure that 30% of the cups have regular drinking water and the rest (70%) have salt water.
- Ask each student to come and take a cup of water and get ready for the ‘toast’.
- Get all students to raise their cups and toast to the fact that they are very fortunate to live in a country like Canada and have access to clean drinking water.

#### ***“CHEERS TO CLEAN WATER!” (TOAST)***

- Wait for the student's reaction (most will have salt water).
- Ask students to raise their hands to show those that had salt water in their cups. Explain that 70% of students have salt water in their cups to represent the fact that after spending many hours a day collecting water, most water collected is still unsuitable for drinking. Most of the water collected by citizens of a developing country will make them sick with many different diseases.

What do they think about this fact?

How do they feel? Do they think it is worth doing something about it?

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### Conservation Activity – Doing Your Part:

Divide the group into two smaller groups.

- Provide each with a piece of paper and pencil.
- Instruct each group to appoint a secretary.
- Instruct each group to brainstorm a list of conservation ideas to help save water around the home, school, community and the globe. Have the secretary record the ideas.
- Give students about five to eight minutes to come up with as many ideas as they can.
- Have each secretary come to the front of the group and take turns presenting their conservation ideas. If one secretary reads a conservation idea that the other group also has, then the other secretary must read something different. The group with the most unique ideas is declared the 'winner'.
- Provide a small prize to the winning group.

### **Lesson Extension**

Encourage students to apply what they have learned in this workshop to their home life.

- Create a friendly classroom competition where students vie to be the most water conservative member of their class.
- Have students keep a record of the different water-saving methods they have utilized in their daily routines.
- As a quality control measure, have the student's parent sign off on the different activities. For example, if a student states that they have switched their shower head to a low flow shower-head, have them obtain a parent's signature to attest to that fact. At the end of a month, have the students submit their list of water conservation methods.
- Assess who has saved the most water for the month and award them a small prize or class privilege.