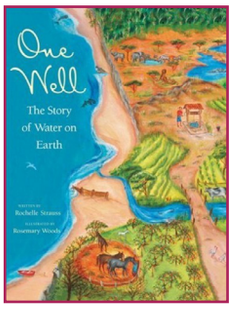
# 1 Our world's water

Time 2 Think
Lifeworlds Learning

## Introduction

This activity uses a variety of stimuli to help learners think about one of the world's most important and truly global issues - water. It introduces water as a global issue and considers our own understanding of water and how we are all connected to water.




Key Stage: 2

Time: 60 mins

Learning Style: paired learning

## Why should we think about this ?

Water and its use is a global issue that learners should become more aware of, and understand for themselves. It is likely to be one of the major global challenges of this century and is closely connected to many more visible issues such as ill-health, hunger and poverty. These activities explore these challenges in an accessible way, and could also inspire pupils to engage in responsible actions relating to water.

We are all dependent on the shared resource of water, and in order to ensure we have enough clean water now and in the future, here and everywhere, we all need to understand water issues and choose our actions carefully.

## When should we think about this ?

Water issues fit in to several obvious areas of learning, including place and time, mathematics and science and technology. The activities also address areas such as citizenship and ethics that cut across subject boxes.

Water can form a very good focus for whole school activity during an off-timetable day or week for example. This activity could form part of such an event, perhaps being used as an introductory element.

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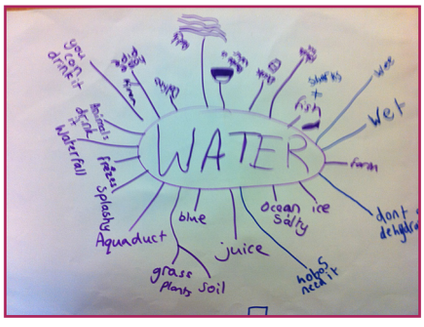
# Learning Activities

## What do I think about... WATER ?

A good way to explore what learners think about water is to ask them to quickly brainstorm (1-2 mins max) all that they associate with water (in words or pictures) onto a sheet of paper.

If you make sure that learners only use a single colour pen/pencil (right) to do this then you can record learning and thinking by adding to the brainstorm with another colour later to show progression - see the section 'What do I think now?'




## How can I develop my thinking ?

There are many ways for learners to develop their thinking around water and here we offer two key approaches. The first is based on using information critically, and the second uses different perspectives as a starting point.

As teachers we need to learn how to be the facilitator, devil's advocate and challenger to learning rather than the instructor. For advice on developing these skills see the **Time 2 Think** CPD materials ***Facilitator Skills*** and ***Critical Thinking*** as support to this activity.

### Using Information Critically

1. Give pairs of learners the ten facts about water (Sheet A on p.5), and ask them to place the facts on a scale from most surprising to least surprising.

2. Ask your learners to re-order the facts according to importance, so that one end shows 'the most important things about water' and another end shows 'the least important things about water'.

3. Create a 'gallery' moment where a piece of music is played and learners walk around viewing others' work without talking. This will show the range of opinion in the room, and can finish with a short discussion about how views, values or priorities about water may differ.

### Different perspectives

WaterAid has a slideshow of two children's experiences of water use in Ghana and India which can be used to contrast or compare with learners' own the experience of water use, through discussion. It is available on the website below:

http://www.wateraid.org/uk/learn_zone/teachers/primary/water_around_the_world/6385.asp

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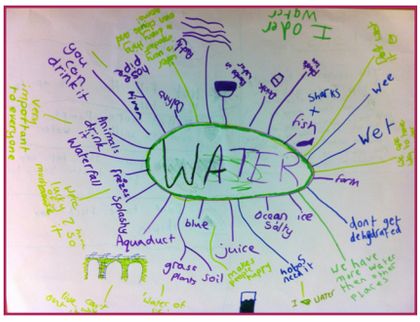
## What do I think now ?

Return to the initial water brainstorm that learners made, and give them a chance to add new words and pictures in a new colour (right) to show anything new that they may have learned or thought about.




They might choose to use one section of this drawing board to indicate actions that they will now take to save water, for example, but it is important that learners choose to do this themselves as part of the activity. If they choose to use the time to respond and think instead, then action can be discussed at a later point.

## Why do I think this ?

This question deepens the critical literacy skills of learners. Where learners are able to trace the origins of their thoughts and feelings (family, experience, peers, media etc) they can become confident to challenge their own thoughts and engage with the ideas and opinions of others.

This is also the most challenging part of the process and teachers/facilitators will need to decide whether to include this stage when working with younger or less able learners. We feel it remains vital for teachers/facilitators to be aware of and reflect on this stage for themselves as it may help to deal with responses and reactions from learners, and identify future learning needs.

If you feel confident to explore your learners' thoughts and feelings in greater depth you could gently encourage learners to think about the following questions/issues in relation to this activity:

- *Should we be concerned about water and if so why? If we have concerns then are they the same as those of people elsewhere in the world? Would we be more concerned if we lived somewhere different and why would this be?*
- *If you made an action to do something about your own water use, why was this? If you chose not to take any action then why did you choose that?*
- *Who should be responsible for caring for the water and the wider environment?*

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# Extension ideas

## Where can we take this thinking ?

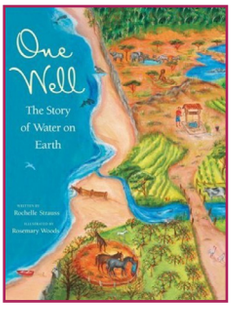
Learners could make their own slideshow showing photographs and sentences of water use in school.

Learners could share their findings about water in a class assembly with the rest of the school, in ways that smaller children can understand.

Learners could read the book *'One Well'* together and think about what it means to all share one resource (water). Are there other resources that we share?

Learners could explore water use around the home further by visiting The Water Family at Water Aid:

http://www.thewaterfamily.co.uk/index2_content.html




If you have used this activity in your classroom and have any examples you would like to share or would like to provide any comments or feedback as a teacher then we'd love to hear from you.

We want Time 2 Think to evolve into a community of practice to further develop ideas and organise events and opportunities, but for this we need the involvement of users such as yourself.

Send any contributions, or contact us to find out more, at ask@lifeworldslearning.co.uk

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# Sheet A: Water Facts

(cut into strips along dotted lines)

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Plants and animals are mostly made of water

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Jellyfish are 95% water, or 19/20 water

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Animal life began in the oceans.

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About 60% or 2/3 of all fish live in saltwater

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Most fresh water on Earth - more than 99% - is frozen so we can't use it.

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Someone living in the UK uses nearly four times more water every day (27.5 buckets) than someone living in India (7 buckets).

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Nearly 1/5 of people in the world do not have access to enough water.

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Cleaning water so it is ready for reuse is expensive and uses a lot of energy.

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The amount of water on Earth stays the same.

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More people being born means people need to think more carefully about how much water they need to use.