

Water for Everyone ★ Unit 1 Lesson Plan

Why is water precious?

SECTION

ACTIVITY

Pre lesson

- ★ Copy the info sheet [UNIT 1 RESOURCE A] for each pupil if you wish to use it.
- ★ Prepare card sort [UNIT 1 RESOURCE B] and compass rose [UNIT 1 RESOURCE C].
- ★ Decide whether/how to use the Unit 1 image bank.

Objectives

- ★ To know where we find our fresh water.
- ★ To understand why fresh water is scarce in many parts of the world.
- ★ To be able to categorise some of the factors affecting future access to fresh water.

Starter – mind movie

5 minutes

The water diamond paradox

- ★ Ask the class to close their eyes and let their minds go blank. They are going to create a mind movie, listening but not responding to the teacher's descriptions other than by making three key decisions and remembering them.
- ★ Read the following out to the class (allow no questions, but you may allow pupils to write down their choices):

"You have been washed ashore on a desert island. You have no idea how big it is or if it is inhabited.

After some time a man appears walking along the beach towards you carrying two buckets. He does not speak, but gestures that you must choose one of the two buckets. One has water in it, one has diamonds.

You may never see him again. You have to choose quickly – which one will it be?
REMEMBER YOUR CHOICE.

After one hour, the man appears again without warning. Again he has two buckets – one with water and one with diamonds. He gestures for you to take one bucket only.

Which will it be this time?
REMEMBER YOUR CHOICE.

One hour after the last visit he appears again. He offers the same choice. Which one will you choose this time?
REMEMBER YOUR CHOICE."

Debrief

10 minutes

- I** Write up a table on the board with three rows for the three visits and two columns for water and diamonds.
- ★ Ask the class for their choice for the first visit and make a tally for the water and diamonds
- ★ Repeat the process for the subsequent two visits.

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Debrief

continued

2 Ask the class for their reasons for their choices. Typically many choose water at first but the later choices are dominated by diamonds. This is despite the fact that they have no reason to believe that diamonds have any value in their new home or evidence that they will leave the island.

3 Put the following to the class:

Why do some of us choose diamonds over water? when we know that

- ★ without water we could die within three days.
- ★ diamonds have no intrinsic value on a desert island – they are beautiful and rare to us but they do nothing to support life.

Why do we value water so little? – could it be that

- ★ water is something we in the UK see as widely available?
- ★ we live in a developed economy where clean water is accepted as the norm?
- ★ commodities in abundant supply are usually valued less?

ACTIVITY 1

Information Search

10 minutes

1 Hand out the pupil info sheet *Why is Water Precious?* [UNIT 1 RESOURCE A]

2 Pupils should skim read to find out what it is about.

3 Then pupils scan read to find out

- ★ What is the percentage of fresh water on the planet?
- ★ How does surface water differ from ground water?
- ★ How might climate change and population growth affect the availability of water in the future?

Alternatively, talk through the info sheet content alongside the ppt images provided.

ACTIVITY 2

Compass

Rose

Card Sort

15 minutes

1 Split the class into groups of 4 pupils. Hand each group a pack of 15 cards pre-cut from the card sort sheet [UNIT 1 RESOURCE B] plus an A3 size development compass rose sheet [UNIT 1 RESOURCE C].

2 Ask the pupils to share the cards out within their group so that everyone has at least 3 to read.

3 Tell the groups that they are going to categorise the card statements according to differing aspects of the water scarcity problem.

Explain the compass rose categories as follows:

N for Natural (at the top) – this might include climate and landscape factors.

E for Economic (on the right side) – this is for money issues and work.

S for Social (at the bottom) – this is to do with people.

W for Who decides (on the left) – this is to do with politics and government.

4 They should read the cards and between them decide where to place them on the diagram e.g. *20% of global increase in water scarcity this century due to climate change* could be located close to the Natural part of the compass.

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Plenary

15 minutes

Ask for volunteers to explain where they have placed one of their cards and why. Encourage others to question the decision and explain where they would have put it and why.

Determine where most of the cards are concentrated. Ask:

- ★ Do they reflect that most of the statements are about climate, people or money?
- ★ Are some possibly to do with politics and government?
- ★ Which are the three most concerning statements and why?
- ★ Are they in any way linked?

Finally, revisit the starter and take a vote on whether water is more precious than diamonds to the world.

Homework

5 minutes

Pupils to write a paragraph explaining why the scarcity of fresh water may become the biggest problem of the 21st century. [Extension suggestion: find out more about the UK's water situation from www.waterwise.org.uk or about global water and sanitation issues from www.wateraid.org]

Sustainability Focus

This unit introduces pupils to the need for the *sustainable use of natural resources*.

Note re Teaching Strategy

The *development compass* rose teaching framework was developed by Birmingham Development Education Centre. It encourages pupils to address a range of questions which explore the interrelationship between environmental, social, economic and political issues. There are no 'correct' answers, but pupils should be able to justify their choices.