

The Right to a Clean Environment

Lesson Plan:
Water

Grade Level: K-2



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The Advocates for Human Rights
330 2nd Avenue South, #800
Minneapolis, MN 55401 USA

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Lesson Plan: Water

Goal: To help students understand the amount of water they use each day and develop a plan for reducing their water use.

Objectives:

- Students will discuss water use with their families.
- Students will consider the amount of water they use every day.
- Students will develop a plan for using less water.

Essential question: How can we conserve water in our daily lives?

Time: 1-2 class periods

Materials:

- A gallon of water
- *Handout 1: Family Water Use*
- *Handout 2: Water Conservation Plan*

Vocabulary: conserve, environment, priority

Possible Subject Areas: Math, Science

Teacher Background:

The right to a clean environment is the right to live in an environment that does not jeopardize a person's health, livelihood or well-being. This right is closely connected with the right to health and the right to an adequate standard of living. For more information about the right to a clean environment, visit The Advocates for Human Rights' "Right to a Clean Environment Toolkit" at: http://www.discoverhumanrights.org/right_to_a_clean_environment.html.



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Activity 1: Water Priorities

(approx. 30 min. plus one night for the take-home assignment)

Procedure:

- 1. Take-Home Assignment.** Give each student a copy of *Handout 1: Family Water Use*. Ask them to talk about the questions with their family, and write down answers to share with the class the following day.
- 2. Discuss.** Once students have completed the take-home assignment, ask the class the following questions:
 - What are some of the ways that your family uses water?
 - Which one of these activities do you think uses the most water?
 - Did some of the ways your family uses water surprise you? (For example, did you know that your family uses water for cooking?)
- 3. Share.** Ask students to share their family's most important use of water. Write down each answer on the board, and make a tally for each use. Ask students to make a bar graph of the information, or make a bar graph as a class.
- 4. Discuss.** Ask students to answer the following questions using the graph:
 - Which use of water do most of the families consider to be the most important?
 - Which uses of water aren't represented on this graph? What does that tell you about those uses of water?
- 5. Repeat (optional).** Collect the same information for the use of water each family considers the least important. Make a bar graph, and discuss as a class.
- 6. Discuss.** To conclude the activity, ask students the following questions:
 - What do you think is the most important use of water in your daily life?
 - What do you think is the least important use of water in your daily life?
 - Are there any ways that you can use less water in your daily life?



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Activity 2: Conserving Water (approx. 30 minutes)

Procedure:

- 1. Visualize.** Place 1 gallon of water where all the students in the class can see it. Ask students to estimate how many gallons of water they use every day.
- 2. Explain.** Once students are done estimating, explain to them that the average person living in the United States uses about 70 gallons of water every day. The average household uses 350 gallons of water every day. Ask students to guess what household activity they think uses the most water every day. The answer is flushing the toilet, followed by washing clothes. (For statistics, visit the American Water Works Association website at <http://www.drinktap.org/home/water-information/conservation/water-use-statistics.aspx>).
- 3. Brainstorm.** Ask students to look at the gallon of water and imagine that they only had one gallon of water to last them an entire day. How could they cut back on their water use? Ask them to think about ways they might waste water now, like running the water when they brush their teeth, or taking long showers. Once students are done imagining, ask them to share their thoughts with the class, and write down a list of ways to conserve water on the board.
- 4. Take Action.** Give each student a copy of Handout 2: Water Conservation Plan. Ask them to choose one way that they can use less water in their everyday life. They should write their answer on the handout, and draw a picture of what their new behavior will look like. (Writing is optional for kindergarteners.) These plans can be displayed around the classroom, or sent home with students for them to hang up at home.



Handout 1: Family Water Use

Ways that our family uses water:

Our family's uses of water in order of importance:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Source: adapted from <http://water.org/learn-about-the-water-crisis/lessonplan/>



Handout 2: My Water Action Plan

Name: _____

How I plan to conserve water:

Draw a picture of what your water action plan looks like:

