



Testing the Water



Water is an important issue in our world. Here are some alarming statistics about water:

200 litres	The average amount of water used each day for cooking and washing by a person in New Zealand.
10 litres	The average amount of water used each day for cooking and washing by a person in one of the world's poorest countries.
1.4 million	The number of children who die every year from diarrhoea caused by unclean water and poor access to toilets and sewage systems.
884 million	The approximate number of people who do not have access to clean drinking water.
2.5 million litres	The approximate amount of water used to fill an Olympic swimming pool.
Every 20 seconds	How often a child dies from diseases caused by dirty water.
Six hours	The length of time it can take to collect enough water for a family in many countries.

Activity One: Statistics Game

- Divide young people into groups.
- Take 7 sheets of A4 paper and write the numerical information on this set of papers; 200 litres, 10 litres, 1.4 million people, 884 million people, 2.5 million litres, every 20 seconds, six hours (copy this set of 7 sheets so there is one sheet for each group).
- Take 7 sheets of A4 paper and write the statements on this set of papers; 'The average amount of water used each day for cooking and washing by a New Zealander', etc. (copy this set of 7 sheets so there is one sheet for each group).
- Young people work in groups to match up the statistic with the statement.
- Discuss the answers.

Activity Two: Agree/Disagree Continuum

Read out a series of statements and have young people place themselves at different points on an imaginary line depending on the extent of their agreement or disagreement. E.g. Standing at the very end of the line represents strongly disagree. Standing at the beginning of the line means strongly agree.

Sample statements to use:

We cannot give people overseas clean water.

Our government can make a difference.

Everyone should have the right to have access to clean water.

The facilitator then invites people at different points on the line to give reasons for their answers.

Activity Three: Using Catholic Social Teaching

Each group of young people is given a short passage from the Bible or Catholic Social Teaching. What do they think it means?

The Church has a responsibility towards creation... she must defend not only earth, water and air as gifts of creation that belong to everyone. She must above all protect mankind from self-destruction. (Caritas in Veritate (Charity in truth), 51)

And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward. (Matthew 10:42)

"The right to food, like the right to water, has an important place within the pursuit of other rights, beginning with the fundamental right to life. It is therefore necessary to cultivate a public conscience that considers food and access to water as universal rights of all human beings, without distinction or discrimination." (Caritas in Veritate (Charity in truth), 27)

Activity Four: Make a Water Filter

Go to wikihow.com and search for how to make a water filter. Make your very own water filter.

