



Water Splash

An early years education pack about water

Introduction

“Education for sustainability and development education in the Foundation Stage?”

“No, the concepts are too difficult and complex”

Such comments on the question of introducing development education and sustainability concepts in the Foundation Stage are common. Some practitioners, however, think otherwise, and find that by starting, with something familiar, and broadening out from there, children as young as three can relate to difficult concepts. With this approach, young children are able to consider their own experiences, develop a sense of responsibility within those experiences, and make connections between them and the different experiences of others.

Every child in the UK experiences water and its essential uses. Water holds a fascination for young children and most will be able to recall a host of experiences connected with it. It is, therefore, an excellent starting point from which to move children on from their own experiences to explore the experiences of others. Concepts of responsibility in relation to sustainability, conservation and personal safety, are also accessible for young children within an exploration of water.

This pack aims to support Foundation Stage practitioners in making such concepts and experiences accessible to the children in their care. It is designed to enable the children to explore the essential role that water plays in their lives, the availability of water to children in parts of the developing world, and the responses they can make in relation to responsible water use.

The materials could be used in circle time or story time or they could be linked to variety of activities and experiences. As well as water these could include health, living things, growing and many more. Each poster can be used as a stand-alone resource, or the whole pack can be used as a linked series.

Using this pack will support the delivery of the Stepping stones and work towards the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage – see table on page 3 for more details.

Oracy prompts appear on the back of each poster for immediate use with a group, and each poster is linked to a section of this accompanying booklet, which also includes:

- Background and reference information for practitioners
- Activity suggestions that can be done in one session, or developed over several
- Story ideas
- Suggested additional published resources linked to the topic

This pack has been produced by WaterAid working with the Education Forum of the Water Companies of the UK and with support from the National Day Nurseries Association.

Further information about water issues in the developing world can be obtained from WaterAid. Details of water supply and use in the UK can be obtained from Water UK and your local water company.

Section 1: The water cycle

Page 4-5

Section 2: Water conservation

Page 6-8

Section 3: Water safety

Page 9-11

Section 4: Water in other countries

Page 12-14

Links with Foundation Stage

Area of learning	Stepping stones	Links in this resource
Personal, social and emotional development	For self-confidence and self-esteem: “Have a developing awareness of their own needs...” and “...be sensitive to the needs... of others”	Section 2: Water conservation. Where children can identify the importance of water in their lives Section 4: Water in other countries. Where children can learn about the lives of others in relation to water
	For behaviour and self control: “Understand what is right, what is wrong, and why” “Consider the consequences of their... actions for themselves and others”	Section 3: Water safety. Understanding the importance of appropriate behaviour in and near water Section 2: Water conservation: Learning about actions that waste or save water
Communication, language and literacy	For language for communication: “...make up their own stories”	The story work activities in each section
	For language for thinking: “Use language to recreate roles and experiences” “Use talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas...”	Section 3: Water safety. Creating scenarios Section 4: Water in other countries. Role plays
	For writing: “Attempt writing for different purposes...such as lists, stories and instructions”	Story work in all sections Section 2: Water conservation. Making booklets and posters about saving water Section 3: Water safety. Writing safety code
Mathematical development	For calculating: “Use language such as ‘more’ and ‘less’ to compare two numbers” For shape, space and measures. “Use language such as ‘greater’... to compare quantities”	Section 2: Water conservation. Comparing amounts of water used for various tasks
Knowledge and understanding of the world	For exploration and investigation: “Investigate objects and materials...” “Find out about, and identify, some features of... events they observe” “Ask questions about why things happen and how things work”	Section 1: The water cycle. Activities exploring the water cycle Section 3: Water safety. Exploring water filters
Physical development	For health and bodily awareness: “Recognise the importance of keeping healthy and those things which contribute to this”	Section 2: Water conservation. Understanding the importance of water

Section 1: The water cycle

Practitioners' information

(For use with poster 1)

Recycling is not a new concept – nature has been recycling water since time began. The water cycle is a closed system, which means that we use the same water over and over again. Have you ever thought that the water you drink today may have been inside a dinosaur long ago?

We may not often think about the water we use and where it comes from, but if we are to introduce young children to the concepts involved in the water cycle, we need to remind ourselves.

Young children can be introduced to the various ways that water travels in its cycle. They love to hear and use the “proper words”, and if we are familiar with these ourselves, we can use them with children, making them accessible by explaining and exploring them with appropriate language and activities.

Evaporation is the change from liquid to vapour that occurs as water on the earth's surface is heated by the sun.

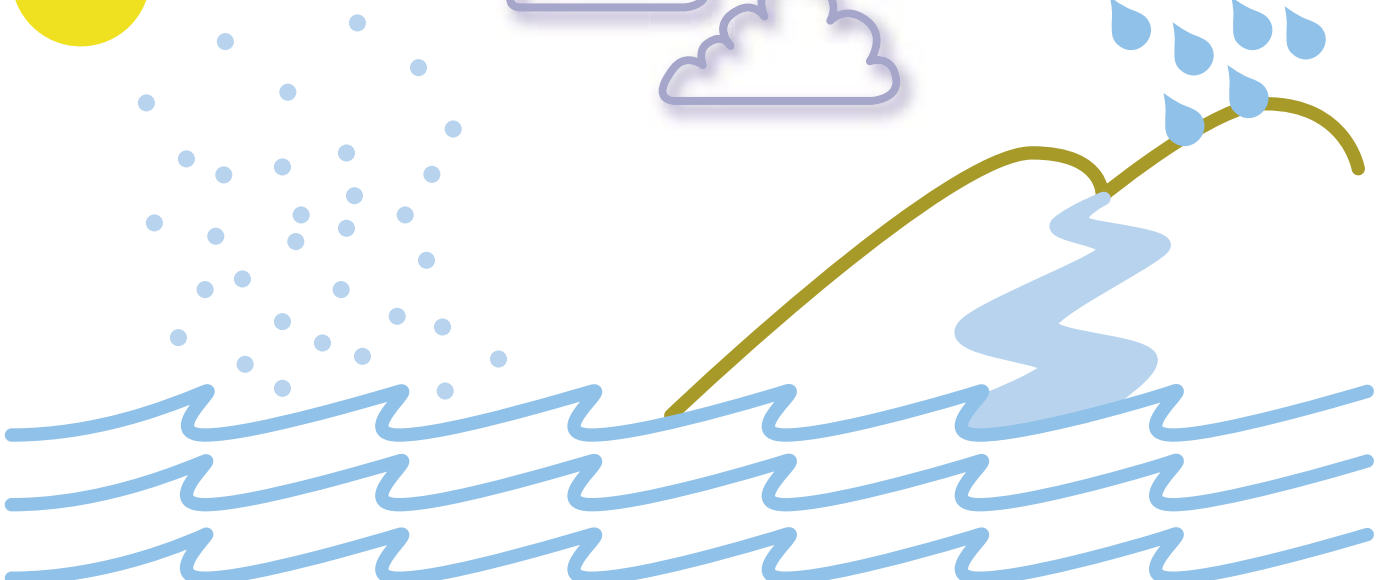
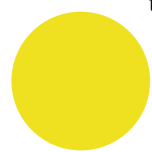
The vapour rises into the earth's atmosphere. As it cools **condensation** takes place, and clouds are formed, holding the water.

As these become too heavy to stay in the air, **precipitation** occurs in the form of rain, snow or hail.

Run off is the next stage in the cycle, as rain water and melted snow run into streams and rivers, which carry the water back to the sea.

Water covers two thirds of the planet, but only 2.5% of that amount is fresh water. Most of that is locked into ice caps and glaciers, leaving only 0.08% of the earth's water available for human use. Humans therefore intervene in the natural water cycle to use water for our own requirements.

In the UK, water companies are responsible for the treatment and distribution of water for public consumption, and for dealing with wastewater.



Links with the Foundation Stage:

Knowledge and understanding of the world – Stepping stones for exploration and investigation:

“Investigate objects and materials...”

“Find out about, and identify some features of...events they observe”

“Ask questions about why things happen and how things work”

Activities

What happens next?

- Divide the children into six small groups. Ask each group to paint one of the following pictures: sun, sea, river, rain, reservoir and a pipe leading to a tap
- Look at poster 1 with the children, and discuss the journey of the water
- Show the children their paintings and ask if they can sort them into the order of the water cycle (as in the poster)
- Ask the children to stand at the front of the group holding their paintings in a random order

Section 1: The water cycle

- The rest of the group can then suggest the correct sequence
- The children with the paintings change places as suggested until the correct sequence is achieved
- Ask children to tell the water story while referring to the pictures
- Prompt with questions like what happens first? What makes the water in the sea or river go up into the air? (Introduce evaporation). What happens next? How does the water come down again? (Introduce condensation) How does the water get from the reservoir into your tap?

Exploring evaporation by looking at shrinking puddles and asking where has the water gone?

- Go outside to look at either a natural or “prepared” puddle
- Draw around the edge in chalk
- Go back again later the same day. Has it changed? How? Draw around it again? Is it smaller?
- Ask where has the water gone? Give a simple explanation of water vapour and evaporation, telling the children that the sun makes the water get warmer, dries it up, and makes it go up into the air

OR

- Leave a shallow saucer of water on a sunny windowsill or near a radiator, and re-examine the next day. Discuss as above

AND/OR

- Measure some water in a clear container (a Pyrex saucepan would be ideal) and mark the level. Ask what happens if the water gets hot?
- Explain that you will make the water hot and then put the water into either a saucepan or a kettle and heat it up (appropriate safety measures will need to be taken)
- After the water has been boiling for a while, remove it from source of heat and pour the water back into the transparent container
- Compare the water level with the mark made prior to heating. Is it the same?
- Where has the water gone?
- Hold a piece of dark paper behind the container, to allow the children to see the steam rising
- Explain that heat turns the water into vapour/steam via evaporation

- If you have already done the shrinking puddle activity then relate the two activities together and explain that the sun makes the water get warmer – it dries it up – the water goes into the air, just like the water did in the kettle or saucepan

Exploring condensation:

- Show the children the hot water and the steam as above (paying appropriate attention to safety issues)
- Hold a mirror over the water and show it to the children
- What has happened to the mirror?
- What is on the mirror?
- What will it feel like?
- Allow the children to touch the mirror and discover that it feels wet
- How did the water get from the cup to the mirror?
- Remind the children of the steam and introduce evaporation Explain that the mirror is colder than the steam and so makes the steam cool down and turn back in to water via condensation
- Relate these experiences to the water cycle photographs



Useful books for exploring the water cycle

Information:

My Science Book of Water – Dorling Kindersley
Rain – MacDonald

Stories:

The Magic Bus at the Waterworks – by Joanna Cole
The Water’s Journey by Eleonore Schmid

Section 2: Water conservation

Practitioners' information

(For use with posters 2 and 3)

Water must be used wisely if there is to be enough to meet the needs of future generations. An awareness about the amount of water used in everyday tasks is the first step in developing a responsible approach to water use. Alternative ways of carrying out day to day tasks using less water can then be explored.

The following statistics and comparisons may help in this exploration, and can equip you for discussing these issues with children:

- Average water use in the UK is 135-150 litres per person per day. A lot of this goes down the toilet or is used for washing, but this amount also includes drinking, cooking, car washing and watering the garden
- Filling the bath takes about 80 litres of water – more than twice the amount needed for a five-minute shower. This comparison may be more meaningful, especially for children, if it is presented as buckets – 10 for a bath, 3.5 for a shower – or large (two litre) drinks bottles – 40 for the bath, 15 for the shower. (NB a power shower uses more water in five minutes than it takes to fill the bath)
- Interesting fact: if you showered rather than bathed every day for a week, you would save enough water to make 1680 cups of tea!
- Filling the kettle can use 2.5 litres of water, so we should always try to use the minimum amount of water required
- The washing machine uses at least 65 litres of water per cycle. A half load programme uses more than half the water of a full load, so where possible it is better to wait to run a full load
- Flushing the toilet can use up to ten litres of water if it is an old cistern. Putting a “hippo” in the cistern can save an average of 2.5 litres on every flush
- About five large bottles of water can go down the sink if you leave the tap running while you clean your teeth for two minutes
- Leaving a tap running wastes up to five litres of water per minute. Keep a jug of water in the fridge, rather than running the tap to get colder water
- A tap dripping once per second can waste four litres of water a day
- If you water your garden with a hosepipe or sprinkler, you can use 540 litres an hour. If you use a watering can filled with rainwater saved in a water butt, then no tap water is used at all



- Washing your car using a hosepipe can use as much as 300 litres (150 drinks bottles). If you use a bucket and sponge you will only use about 54 litres

More information and advice on responsible water use is available from:

- The Environment Agency. Visit their Waterwise website at www.environment-agency.gov.uk/savewater or phone the general enquiry line on 0845 933 3111
- Your local water company. To find out who your water company is visit www.water.org

Links with Foundation Stage:

Personal, social and emotional development – Stepping stones for behaviour and self-control:

“Consider the consequences of... actions for themselves and others”

Mathematical development – Stepping stones for calculating:

“Use language such as ‘more’ or ‘less’ to compare two numbers”

“Use language such as ‘greater’... to compare quantities”

Physical development – Stepping stones for health and bodily awareness:

“Recognise the importance of keeping healthy and those things which contribute to this”



Section 2: Water conservation

Activities

What is precious?

NB: *This activity may need introducing at one session, to be done at the next – a reminder letter to go home may help. In a whole class setting, it may take too long for every child to have a turn; you may therefore prefer to use it with small groups where this is possible.*

- Ask children what we mean by precious
- Invite suggestions of things that are precious
- Ask the children to think of something that is precious to them
- Ask the children to bring the actual thing if possible, or a drawing or other representation OR the children can draw their precious things as part of the session
- Children put their precious things into a large box, to which you have added a small non-transparent container of water
- Take out the objects one at a time, and invite the owner to tell everybody about their precious thing. Ask the children what it is and why it is precious to them
- Last of all take out the container of water, and tell the children that this is something that could be even more precious than all the other things we have looked at. It is very precious for everyone. It is so important that we cannot live without it
- Invite suggestions about what might be inside the container, before revealing the water
- Ask why water is so precious – what do we need it for?
- Relate to images on poster 2

What's missing?

NB: *Preparation – collect together the following items: washing up bowl, washing-up liquid, dishcloth, dirty plate, cup, and cutlery; flannel and soap; toothbrush and toothpaste; drinking glass and bottle of squash.*

- Explain that you've got a few jobs to do that you didn't have time for at home
- Set out various scenarios like washing up, making a drink, having a wash etc
- Discuss whether or not these jobs can be done now? Is something else needed to make it possible? Yes! Water
- Does it matter if these things are not done? Why? (All are necessary for keeping healthy)
- Relate to images on poster 2

- Ask if there are other things we need water for that are not shown on the poster
- Emphasise the important place water has in our everyday lives



Happy/sad face

NB: *Preparation – a simple stick puppet or a large circle of paper with a happy face on one side and a sad face on the other. For a small group activity, happy and sad face stickers or post-it notes for each child in the group will also be needed.*

- Introduce the happy puppet or face with a name. Eg “I want you to meet my friend Sammy”
- Explain that although Sammy looks happy now, sometimes s/he gets very sad. Show the sad face and invite suggestions about things that might make Sammy sad
- Accept suggestions, adding that what makes Sammy particularly sad is wasting things
- Ask what we mean by waste and discuss examples like not eating all the food we help ourselves to, taking more materials than we need like paint and paper
- Tell the children that Sammy gets very sad when water is wasted. Can we think of any ways we might waste water?
- Discuss how we can save water instead of wasting it. Eg make sure we always turn the tap off properly when we've finished washing our hands or cleaning our teeth
- Display poster 3. For a small group, children can put their happy or sad face stickers on the pictures to show which things make Sammy happy and which make Sammy sad. For a whole class, use the puppet. The children can either decide which face is appropriate for each picture, or alternatively choose children to hold up the puppet and display the appropriate face
- Discuss the children's choices, giving some simple ideas from the information on page 5



How much? How many?

NB: *Collect as many two litre plastic drinks bottles as you can. You will need at least five. Or alternatively you can turn this in to a game that the children take home and play with their parents when they are in an environment with a sink, shower, bath, washing machine etc.*

- Display poster 2
- Show a drinks bottle and ask the children how much water they think some of the tasks take, measured in bottles. Eg how many bottles of water would it take to flush the toilet?

Section 2: Water conservation

- Using the bottles to help them visualise, tell the children some of the amounts of water that are needed for everyday activities. Eg every time we flush the toilet we use about four bottles of water. When we have a bath we would need about 40 of these bottles. If we have a shower we would use about 15. When Mummy or Daddy do the washing in the washing machine it uses about 35 bottles.
- Draw the number of bottles as you talk about some of the tasks
- Discuss how much water we might use every day at nursery or school. Eg I wonder how many times we flush the toilet altogether? Set up a recording system for one session where every time the children use the toilet, they put a empty cotton reel in a pot. Count the empty cotton reels at the end of the session and work out how many bottles of water they would have used that day by flushing the toilet
- Explain that flushing the toilet is a good use of water because it keeps the toilets clean and helps to keep us healthy, but sometimes we use more water than we need to – we call this wasting water
- Discuss how we might waste water. For example forgetting to turn the tap off when we've finished washing our hands or cleaning our teeth (if a tap runs for one minute, then over two bottlefuls of water are wasted)
- Look at poster 3 and compare some of the amounts of water needed to do different activities in different ways (eg bath compared to shower) in terms of the number of bottles of water
- Ask the children which they think is the best way to do each task
- Older children could make posters or books to take home with pictures of water wasting and water saving activities



Using stories

The theme of responsible water use can be continued through story time. Many books and stories, whilst not primarily about water, contain references to it. Those with more explicit references to water are listed below. Ask the children to listen out for any mention of water as you read the story. Every time water is mentioned discuss how it was being used and whether or not it was being wasted.

Use the posters 2 and 3 as a basis for making your own story about water. You could look at how a child uses water throughout the day and include lessons learnt about water conservation.

Useful books for exploring water use

Stories:

Mrs Plug the Plumber by Allan Ahlberg
Mrs Lather's Laundry by Allan Ahlberg
Charlie's House by Reviva Schermbrucker
Doing the Washing by Sarah Garland
Mrs Mopple's Washing Line by Anita Hewitt
Five Minutes Peace by Jill Murphy
Andrew's Bath by David Mc Phail
Mrs Wishy-Washy – a Storychest book
The King With Dirty Feet – an Indian tale – from a short story collection of that title, compiled by Mary Medicott

Information:

Homes – Longman book project
Water in the House – Longman book project
Toilets – Longman book project

Section 3: Water safety

Practitioners' information

(For use with posters 4 and 5)

Water is fun, and most children love it, but it is also dangerous. It is therefore important to teach young children about keeping safe in relation to water.

Water Safety can be viewed in various ways – in terms of safe behaviour, and safety rules and codes relating to using, or being near water, and also in relation to safe drinking water. Awareness of the dangers associated with ice is also a feature of water safety.

Every year in the UK about 500 lives are lost as a result of drowning, and drowning is the second most common cause of death from injuries in children under 14. About half of drownings occur in rivers, streams and canals, about 20% in the sea, and another 15% in lakes and reservoirs. It is, however, also possible to drown at home. In 1999 5% of drownings occurred in the bath and 3% in the garden pond. There is potential danger for a small child from things which are familiar, and can therefore be perceived as safe, such as washing machines, paddling pools, garden ponds, water butts, baths and basins.

Every winter people die as a result of falling through ice, and records show that young children are among those most at risk.

Adults can take actions to limit the potential dangers in the following ways:

- Do not leave children alone in or near water of any kind (including frozen ponds), for any time at all – it can take less than two minutes for a child to drown, from the moment their head is under water
- Use fencing and covers on private swimming pools and garden ponds
- Cover water butts
- Do not leave water in paddling pools, baths or buckets
- Keep bath plugs out of children's reach
- Teach children to swim

Although adults are mainly responsible for water safety, if children are aware of the potential dangers they can learn about their own responsibility for keeping themselves safe in and near water and ice. Children also need to learn about safe and unsafe sources of drinking water. This could be linked to information and activities in section 4 relating to access to safe drinking water in other parts of the world.

The posters and activities in this section are designed to support you in teaching children about the dangers associated with water, and leading them to recognise what they can do about water safety.

For more information on issues of water safety visit the water safety section on these websites:

www.rospa.co.uk

www.childsafetyeurope.org (Be Waterwise site)

Or contact your local water company.

Links with Foundation Stage:

Personal social and emotional development – Stepping stones for behaviour and self-control:

“Understand what is right, what is wrong, and why”

“Consider the consequences of their... actions for themselves and others”



Section 3: Water safety

Activities

Am I safe?

- Discuss whether or not water is something safe or dangerous for children? Could we get hurt in any way, or have accidents to do with water?
- Ask the children to look at each of the pictures on the poster and discuss whether or not the child in the picture is safe or not
- Talk about why the children in some pictures are not safe, and how things could be changed to make them safe
- Children may be able to act out their scenarios

Who is safe?

Set up scenarios with small dolls or models with water – eg at the water tray or with trays of water on tables. These could represent swimming pools, rivers and other water sources. The children can help to build the scenario by bringing material from the garden to make a river bank etc.

- Place the dolls in different situations – eg on their own at the edge of the water, swimming in the river etc.
- Discuss whether or not the dolls are safe
- Invite the children to move them and add other dolls to show their own ideas of how to turn the unsafe scenarios into safe scenarios
- Discuss the changes made

Safety rules:

Have a large sheet of paper divided down the middle with a happy face one side and a sad face the other.

- Discuss the things that are good and bad in relation to keeping safe around water
- Write up the children's ideas, and/or draw a picture under the appropriate face, to make your own water safety code

Ice safety:

Have ready: ice in various forms to show the children, a transparent bowl or tank, a sheet of thin plastic or similar, pictures in books and photographs showing winter weather with frozen ponds, and small dolls or model figures.

- Discuss what happens to water when it gets very cold
- Explore the ice together and observe the changes as it melts, introducing appropriate vocabulary including freeze, ice, melt, solid and liquid
- Show the children the pictures of winter weather and talk about what has happened to the water in the pond, asking is it still water? Where is the water?
- Fill the container with water and float the plastic on top, explaining that it is like the ice on the pond
- Explore the fact that there is still water underneath
- Discuss whether or not it would be safe for the dolls to play on top. Why?
- Talk about ice melting, getting thin, cracking, etc
- Talk about the “dos and don'ts” with regard to ice

Dirty water, clean water

(This activity is also linked to section 4 – water in other countries)

Set out various transparent containers of water, some with clean water and some with obviously dirty water, eg with dirt, sand, stones or mud added.



- Give the children stickers showing happy and sad faces
- The children use the stickers to show which containers would be safe and unsafe to drink from. Discuss choices – why can't we drink this water? What might happen if we did?

- Could we make the dirty water clean? How? Discuss ideas and talk about filtering, treating the water and adding chemicals
- Try a water filter experiment (see opposite)
- Even if the water looks clean, is it always clean? Talk about not being able to see germs that can cause diseases. Talk about boiling water to kill the germs that we can't see

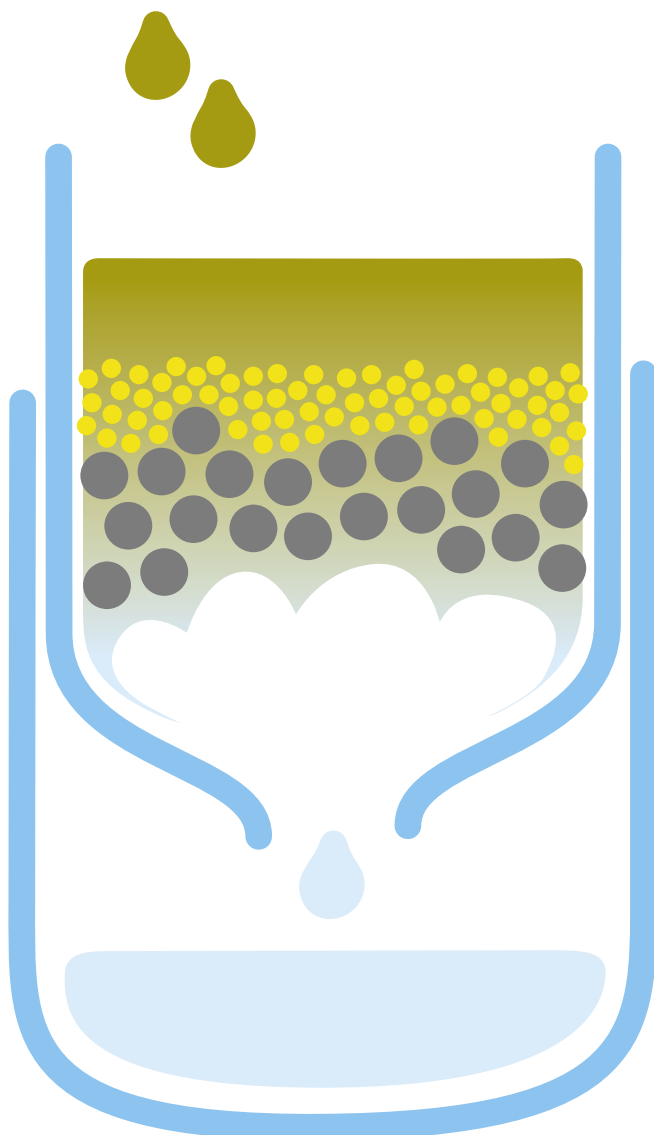


Section 3: Water safety

Story work

Through discussions with the children using the safe and unsafe scenarios on poster 4, create happy/sad stories about children in safe and unsafe situations with regard to water

- Use questions and ideas to help develop the story: One day *name* and *name* went to the seaside with their Mum and Dad... What happened when they got there? Did they stay near Mum and Dad? Did they go into the sea on their own? What happened? What should they have done? Is that a happy or sad story? How could we change the story?
- An adult writes the story as the children create it
- The stories can be made into a book with children's illustrations, called Our happy and sad water stories



Water filter experiment

You can make your own water filter to show how water treatment helps to remove some of the things found in water.

You will need:

- A large plastic bottle
- Scissors
- Washed sand
- A large jar
- Washed gravel
- Cotton wool
- Water
- Soil

What to do:

Step 1:

Cut the top off the plastic bottle at a point just above the middle. Place the top half of the bottle upside down in the bottom half

Step 2:

Layer the materials in the top half like this:

1. Cotton wool
2. Washed gravel
3. Washed sand

This is your water filter

Step 3:

Now mix together some soil and water in the jar to make dirty water.

Step 4:

Slowly pour the water on to the filter and see what happens!

Section 4: Water in other countries

Practitioners' information

(For use with posters 6 – 8)

No living thing can survive without water. It is the most basic need for survival, and yet today over one billion people (one sixth of the world's population) do not have access to clean water.

In Asia, at least one in three people are without safe drinking water. In India, for example, over 170 million people lack access to safe water, and 72% of the people do not have adequate sanitation (toilet facilities).

Of all the people living without access to safe water 48% live in Africa. In Malawi, Nigeria, and Tanzania for example, it is available to little more than half the population, and in Ethiopia only 24% of the population have water. Many hours are spent, and great distances walked, daily to collect water.

In the developing world, the average daily water consumption for one person is 10 litres, compared to the UK average of 135 litres.

A lack of clean water causes 2.2 million deaths a year, and has a huge impact on the quality of life. Around the world, diseases related to the lack of clean water and inadequate sanitation cause a child to die every 15 seconds. Many children are unable to go to school because so much of their time is spent searching for, and collecting, water for their families – or because they are too sick from drinking dirty water.

The lives of children and whole communities can be transformed by the provision of a safe water supply close to their homes.

While information of this kind may have an impact on adults, it will not be of great meaning to children in the early years. When presented in an appropriate way, however, very young children are able to make a real response. This section will support you in using this information in ways that are accessible to them. Having considered the importance of water in their own lives, young children can empathise with those for whom this essential commodity is not so easily obtained.

The back of each poster in this section carries specific information concerning the people in the pictures, as well as oracy prompts.

More information on development issues relating to water is available from:

WaterAid, 47-49 Durham Street, London, SE11 5JD.
020 7793 4500. www.wateraid.org



Activities

What's missing?

You may have already used this activity in the Conservation section on page 7. It is, however, also a good introduction to this section, and should be repeated to reinforce the importance of water in our everyday lives.

NB: In preparation collect together the following items: a washing up bowl, washing-up liquid, dishcloth, dirty plate, cup, and cutlery; flannel and soap; toothbrush and toothpaste; drinking glass and bottle of squash.

- Explain that you've got a few jobs to do that you didn't have time for at home
- Set out various scenarios like washing up, making a drink, having a wash etc
- Discuss whether or not these jobs can be done now? Is something else needed to make it possible? Yes! Water
- Does it matter if these things are not done? Why? (All are necessary for keeping healthy).
- Ask if there are other things we need water for that are not shown on the poster
- Emphasise the important place water has in our everyday lives
- Where do we get the water to do these jobs?
- Lead from the activity into the key question: what happens if you haven't got a tap in your home?
- Ask the children if they think that everyone needs to do the sort of things we've been looking at like washing and drinking
- Discuss how children who do not have a water supply in their home accomplish these everyday tasks
- Show posters 6 and 8 and discuss the different ways that people get their water

Water role-play

- Discuss how many times we have used water or turned the tap on today
- Focus on the time between waking up and coming to nursery or school
- Ask the children what they used water for
- Explain that we are going to mime or act out some of those things
- Tell the children to lie down and pretend to be sleeping in bed
- Call "wake up!" or make an alarm sound



Section 4: Water in other countries

- Lead the children in miming their morning routine
- Choose children to show their mime to the class, while other children guess what they are doing
- Some groups may prefer to use “Here we go round the mulberry bush” or a similar song to mime these activities altogether
- Discuss if children everywhere do the same things. Ask what is the same and what might be different?
- Look at the posters and discuss what they might do if they were one of those children
- Mime the routine of the children in photographs – eg getting up and going to fetch water from a well or dirty source before they can use it for the things we have already mimed
- Mime doing the same tasks in different ways – eg pouring water over ourselves from a pot, rather than having a bath or shower
- Stop on the way to talk about the distance and time taken, and about feeling hot, tired, thirsty, etc
- Approach ‘water hole’, and ask whether or not we could get water to drink from here
- Let the children discover there is no water there
- Explain that this can really happen, that water sources may dry up. Why? Discuss lack of rain, etc. Also explain that even if there was water here as it is unprotected it too is unsafe to drink. What can we do now?
- Say that you have heard there is a well or tap in the next village and that we will have to walk on and get some clean water there
- Take the longest route possible to the ‘well’ and continue the role-play, talking as you walk
- When they get to the ‘well’, let the children fill their cups
- Explain that their cups represent buckets or water pots, which are very heavy. We must carry them home carefully, without spilling a drop. The water is very precious because we have walked so far to get it
- Take a winding route back to classroom, talking again about the walk, and about carrying a heavy bucketful of water
- Children can then pour their water into a common bowl or bucket
- Discuss how we felt about that – encourage children to see what a difference it makes to people lives if that is what they always have to do to get clean water

Walk for water – a role-play exercise

NB: Time is needed for preparation. An outside area is preferable, or a very large room. You will need: a plastic cup or beaker for every child and two buckets: one empty, labelled ‘water-hole’, and one full of water, labelled ‘well’. Place these as far apart as possible in the area you will use making them slightly hidden if possible, perhaps behind trees, or a wall.

- Explain that we are going to pretend to be children who do not have a tap in our home, but we still need water
- Discuss how we can get water. Where can we go? How far might it be? How long might it take? Explain that people often have to walk a long way to find water
- Look at posters 6 and 8, and set the scene for the role-play
- Give each child a cup or beaker, explain that this stands for the bucket or water pot the people in the posters really carry
- Emphasise that we are pretending, and that we are not really going to drink the water we might find
- Go outside and walk to a source of dirty water like a school pond or a puddle in playground. (This could be a shallow dish of dirty water, that you have placed there if a natural source is not available, or you are doing the activity indoors)
- Express pleasure that we have found some water so soon
- Ask the children if we can get a drink here? Lead to recognition that the nearest water may not be fit for drinking and that we must try to find clean water. Talk about the health dangers if we drink dirty water. (NB If asked remember that millions of people do have to drink this water)
- State that there is a water hole further on; perhaps we could try there?
- Take a roundabout way to the ‘water hole’ bucket

See also the “Dirty water, clean water” activity in section 3 – water safety



Section 4: Water in other countries

Story work

Story outline

Begin a story along the following lines:

- It is four o'clock in the afternoon, and it is very hot. *Name* and *name* have been to school, but now they have come home and it is time to do a very important job. They are going to fetch something that everyone must have to stay alive – can you guess what it is? Water!
- Using the posters as stimuli work with the children to create your own story. The following questions and ideas may help:
- Describe the walk to the water source. What would they see on the way? What might they talk about? How long would it take? Do they play on the way?
- Describe the scene at the well or pump (for clean water) or water hole (for dirty water). Will there be many people there? Who do they see there? Do they queue up? How long must they wait? How do they collect the water?

Possible variations – and develop your own

- The children stop to play, lose track of time, take too long, get into trouble when they get home – mother is worried, cannot cook the family's dinner without the water etc
- They see something interesting off the path in the undergrowth, perhaps they follow an animal, and then get lost and take a long time
- They trip and spill the water on the way home, having to go back and refill their pots

The story could then be acted out.

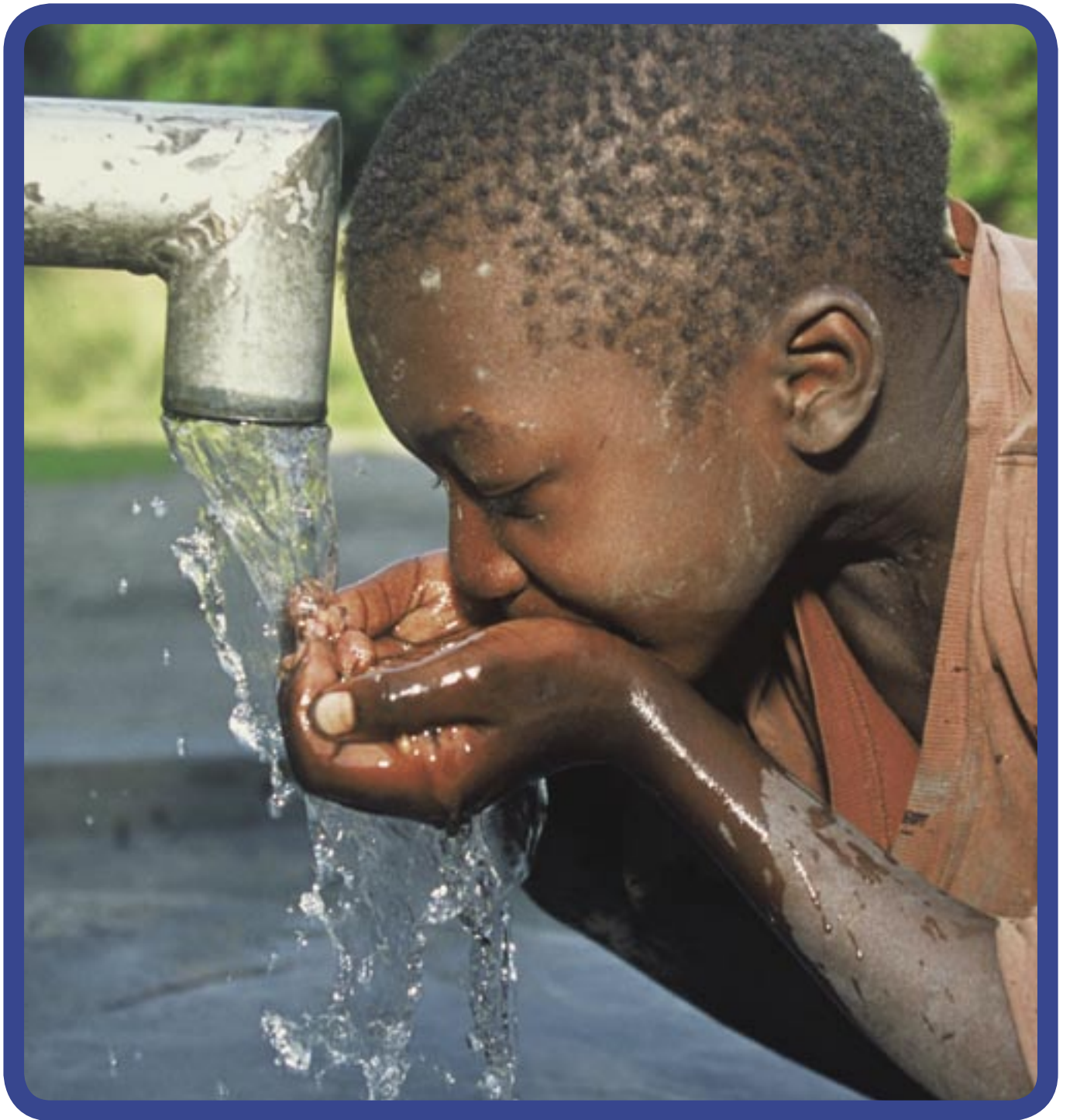


Same and different

- Use poster 8 alongside poster 2, to find similarities and differences. Look at how the same task like bathing children, is done in different ways and discuss why
- Referring back to the water role-play, and using poster 8 develop a “day in the life” story comparing the ways that we use water with the ways that the children in the posters do the same tasks
- Use books about children's lives in other places, such as *Geeta's Day* by Prodeeta Das (ISBN 0-7112-1234-1) or others from the Frances Lincoln “From Dawn to Dusk” series, asking the children to point out each time water is mentioned. Discuss – do we do that? Do we use water in that way? How do we do that job?

Useful resources for exploring water in other countries:

Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain by Verma Aardema
The First Rains by Peter Bonnici
Oxfam Primary Topic posters – Water



WaterAid – water for life

WaterAid is the UK's only major charity dedicated exclusively to the provision of safe domestic water, sanitation and hygiene education to the world's poorest people. These most basic services are essential to life; without them vulnerable communities are trapped in the stranglehold of disease and poverty.

WaterAid works by helping local organisations set up low cost, sustainable projects using appropriate technology that can be managed by the community itself.

WaterAid also seeks to influence the policies of other key organisations, such as governments, to secure and protect the right of poor people to safe, affordable water and sanitation services.

WaterAid is independent and relies heavily on voluntary support.

WaterAid, 47-49 Durham Street, London, SE11 5JD. 020 7793 4500. www.wateraid.org
Charity registration number 288701.



Water Splash



An early years education pack about water

Written by Pam Hand for WaterAid with suggestions, ideas and feedback from the Bridge End House Nursery, Brighouse, West Yorkshire, Playday Nursery, Newton Aycliffe, Durham and Crocus Early Years Centre, Saffron Walden, Essex.

Picture credits:

Pam Hand, Severn Trent Water, WaterAid/Abir Abdullah, Jim Holmes, Caroline Irby, Alex Macro, Caroline Penn, Suzanne Porter, Jon Spaul and Wessex Water

