

# Water 1st Curriculum



## Background:

Nature has given the earth enough water to sustain the people, agriculture and animal lives on this planet if it is used wisely, distributed equally, and overseen with care. Currently this is not the case and over 1 billion people are without access to clean drinking water. Some 2.6 billion people, 42% of the world's population, are without hygienic toilets. The lack of access of these basic services is the number one killer of children under age five and the leading cause of illness in the world.

## Objectives:

Students will:

- Understand the cycle of water
- Identify the usages of water in their own country
- Understand the issues of water in developing countries
- Understand how diseases are spread through water, lack of sanitation, and poor hygiene practices
- Examine the many effects water access has on women and girls
- Understand the relatedness of life in their country with life in a developing country
- Discuss ideas to promote global water equity



## Materials:

- Visual of the water lifecycle
- Water Usage Survey – handout
- Water Quotes and Facts Sheet
- 5 Gallon (or many 1 gallon) container(s)
- Ethiopia DVD
- Article describing life of a typical woman
- Discussion sheet on Women and Girls
- Youth Advocacy sheet for taking action

## Key Issues/Concepts:

- Water scarcity
- Gender Equity
- Leadership responsibilities
- Sustainable Solutions

## Subject Areas:

- Social Studies
- Environmental Science
- Math
- Geography
- Language Arts

## Vocabulary:

- Inequity
- Sustainability
- Conservation
- Hygiene
- Sanitation

## Teacher Presentation



1. Have overhead of **water life cycle** or draw with help of students the life cycle on the white board in their classroom. Supplement discussion with regional information about water treatment process in their local community (i.e Cedar River and Tolt Watersheds in Seattle area). Visit [www.drinktap.org](http://www.drinktap.org) and click on the "Find Your Water Utility" link for information about your local drinking water.
2. Once they have gained an understanding of the water life cycle, pass out **water usage survey** for students to get a realistic understanding of the amount of water they use on a daily basis. This can be done as a pre-lesson activity, done on an individual basis during class time, or as a group activity.
3. Now to segue into how water is viewed in a more global manner. Pass out "**water facts and quotes**" (printed and cut strips to be passed out – one to each student in class). Each student will stand and read their fact.
4. Discuss facts read to broaden their understanding about the impact the lack of clean water has on people around the world.
5. Show Ethiopia film to illustrate the life of people without access to clean water. (View on our website, or email us at [info@water1st.org](mailto:info@water1st.org) to get a free DVD copy)
6. Have follow-up discussion on the film about:
  - a. Who did they see carrying the water?
  - b. What does the water look like?
  - c. Where do animals get water?
  - d. What are the results of unclean water?
7. Have a discussion about **water and gender** inequity, the impact of water collection on women and girls.
8. Now make the discussion closer to home. Where would your students go to get water if they did not have access to clean water?
  - a. Review the fact that 1.1 billion people are without access to clean drinking water, (1 out of 6 people), and 2.6 billion (1 out of 3 people) are without access to sanitation.
  - b. Use a 5 gallon container or several 1 gallon containers to illustrate the difficulty entailed in carrying water for many miles.

Where would students go to the bathroom if they had no toilet?

  - a. What does this do to the water supply?
  - b. How does this affect the health of their community?
  - c. What is given up in their lives by time spent getting water?
9. Have students do follow-on activity.
  - a. **Writing assignment** – grades 5-8 (choose from writing assignment reference sheet.)
  - b. **Art activity** – grades k-3
  - c. **Science activity** – grades 4-12
10. Have students come up with a plan on how they can help make a difference on this issue through **Youth Advocacy and Involvement**.

