

Change for Children Association

Water to Survive: A Look at Water Inequality





Water to Survive – A Look at Water Inequality

Overview of the Activity:

Students learn about the reality of water inequity in Canada and Nicaragua, and the challenges that people face when they do not have enough water to survive.

Grade Level: Elementary (Kindergarten to grade 3)

Time Needed: 20 minutes activity, 10 minutes discussion (30 minutes total)

Materials Needed:

1. Priority Sheet (Usages of Water) – see attached (separate sheets for K-2 / 2-3)
2. 4-8 Labelled Plastic Cups – download labels as separate attachment
3. Ziploc bags labelled CANADA and NICARAGUA
4. Jelly Beans (65 Jelly Beans in Canada bag, and 12 Jelly Beans in Nicaragua bag)

RULES OF THE GAME

1. Using the “Priority Sheet” students rank the MOST important use of water to the LEAST important use of water.
2. Students collect their “Water supply” – (Daily Use Cups & Jelly Beans) – one bag represents Nicaragua’s water supply, the other represents Canada.
3. Line up the cups.
4. Put 5 Jelly Beans from the water supply aside – these are POLLUTED water. Explain to students that they should only use them if absolutely necessary.
5. The Daily Life Requirement is:

Drinking – 5 Jelly Beans

Cooking – 5 Jelly Beans

Bathing – 5 Jelly Beans

6. Students decide as a group where to put their water supply (Jelly Beans). Depending on the country, they will either have too much water, or not enough to meet the Daily Life Requirement. In Nicaragua, students will be forced to use POLLUTED water.
7. Switch countries, and repeat activity with different water supply.

8. Questions & Discussion

- a) What was the MOST important Daily Task and use of water? What was the LEAST important use of water?
- b) How was Canada's water supply different than Nicaragua's water supply?
- c) How did it make you feel when you had enough beans for all your Daily Tasks?
- d) How did it make you feel when you didn't have enough beans for all your Daily Tasks?
- e) What did your group do when you didn't have enough water? Is it safe to drink the polluted water?
- f) Do you think we use too much water in Canada?
- g) What are some ways you conserve and protect water?
- h) Do you think water is a human right?

Label the use of water from the MOST (1) important to LEAST (4) important.



Washing clothes



Cooking



Drinking



Bathing

Label the use of water from the **MOST** (1) important to **LEAST** (8) important.



Watering the Lawn



Cooking



Brushing Teeth



Washing Clothes



Drinking



Washing Car



Bathing



Flushing Toilet



Drinking

5 Jelly Beans



Cooking

5 Jelly Beans



Bathing

5 Jelly Beans



Brushing Teeth

1 Jelly Bean



Flushing Toilet

5 Jelly Beans



Washing Clothes

7 Jelly Beans



Watering Lawn

15 Jelly Beans



Washing Car

12 Jelly Beans



Water Inequality Facts

- The United Nations estimates that an average human needs 30 litres of water a day to survive – that's 5 litres of water for cooking and cleaning, and 25 litres for bathing and keeping clean
- In Canada, the average person uses about 340 litres of water per day (that's the equivalent of THREE BATH TUBS)
- In Africa and Latin America, the average person uses only 3 – 5 litres a day (that's the equivalent of a PUDDLE of water at the bottom of a bath tub)



- In Nicaragua, where many communities do not have public sanitation facilities (sewages & waste treatment plants), children have a high chance of becoming sick from drinking the water
- 80% of all diseases in developing countries is related to contaminated water
- In Nicaragua, it is actually costs **MORE** money to buy a bottle of water than it does to buy a bottle of Coke! Water is expensive! Do you think water should be for sale?



- On July 28, 2010, the United Nations General Assembly overwhelmingly agreed to a resolution declaring the human right to “safe and clean drinking water and sanitation.” The resolution was presented by the Bolivian government.

