

ACTIVITY TWO: WHERE DOES OUR WATER SUPPLY COME FROM?

This **LANGUAGES** activity introduces the concept of 'catchments' and that every single one of us lives within a catchment. It also looks at water sources and encourages learners to consider how we can protect and care for them.

Everyone lives in a catchment. A catchment is the area of land that collects the rain for one main river and all the streams and other rivers that flow into it. Each river has its own catchment and different catchments are separated by mountains or hills.



Water is essential for all of us. We drink it every day, we use it for cooking, washing, cleaning our bodies, watering plants and vegetables, flushing the toilet and many other things. It is essential for our good health and it is very important that we only drink water that is clean.

Where does all the water we use come from?

Ground water. When water falls to the Earth as rain, some of the water is slowed down by plants and grass and slowly sinks into the ground. It is cleaned as it passes through the soil and some of it may end up in an aquifer. An aquifer is a natural rock formation that acts as a sponge to store water underground. Groundwater can collect in huge underground lakes and some water has been in these lakes for many years. When the groundwater comes to the surface, it forms springs, wetlands or lakes. Did you know that most of the world's freshwater is actually underground!!

Springs. Groundwater sometimes bubbles to the surface as a spring. Springs provide us with clean water so we must make sure that they are protected and carefully looked after. Imagine how muddy and dirty the water would be if we let a herd of cattle trample over a spring!

Wells. If the underground water is close to the surface, it can be reached by digging a hole. This is often done in dry river beds. The water in the well can be brought to the surface using a bucket on a rope. People who collect water from wells must make sure the bucket and rope are clean otherwise they will dirty the rest of the underground water.

Boreholes. Sometimes groundwater is very deep or the ground is very hard and so the water can only be reached by using a machine and drilling a hole into the ground. These deep wells are called boreholes. Water is brought to the surface by a pump.

Rainwater harvesting. Where there is no groundwater, or if it is very dirty and not good to drink, collecting rainwater is another way we can get water. The rainwater can be collected off the roof of a house or school building by using gutters and tanks.

Dams. They store river water which can be used for crops, industries and our own homes.

After reading the information above to your class, ask the learners the following questions:

1. Do you know where the water you drink at home comes from?
2. How do people that live near you get their water?
3. Do you think the water that you drink is clean?
4. How do you know?
5. Do any of you live on a farm where you get your water from a river or borehole?
6. What does the water taste like?
7. How many of you have been swimming or sailing or even fishing on a big dam?
8. Did you know that many people will use that water for drinking?
9. Have you seen any rivers or streams or ponds that are very dirty?
10. What did you see?
11. Did you see many plants, animals or insects in the dirty river/stream/pond?
12. Have you seen any rivers or streams or ponds that are very clean?
13. What did you see?
14. Did you see any plants, animals and insects in the clean river/stream/pond?

In the previous lesson, the class explored ways in which water could be saved. It is also very important that the learners consider how to protect and care for the water sources that supply the very water they use each day.

15. What can we do to care for dams, rivers, ponds and streams and even the sea and the beach, when we go fishing, sailing or swimming?

Question 15 should encourage learners to think about how they enjoy many water sources, such as dams and rivers, and how they can make sure that their individual actions do not contribute towards polluting water sources (such as not leaving litter, both near a water source and in the water source, after a picnic or fishing tackle after a fishing expedition with the family).

Depending on your group, the discussion that may arise from Question 15 could lead the class into taking some environmental action such as a river or stream clean-up, or adopting a river and keeping it free of invasive, alien plants. Even if Question 15 does not lead to any class or group environmental action, it should leave the learners knowing that, as individuals, they CAN all make a difference and that their individual actions are very important in keeping our water sources clean.

Criteria to assess learners during this languages lesson

Criteria	Exceeded requirements of the Learning Outcome	Satisfied requirements of the Learning Outcome	Partially satisfied requirements of the Learning Outcome	Not satisfied requirements of the Learning Outcome
The learner listened to the questions and responded appropriately				
The learner listened to the exercise on water sources without interrupting the teacher				
The learner was able to share his/her personal experiences of water sources				
The learner was able to offer solutions and/or comments about their environmental actions when enjoying fun activities near or around a water source (question 15)				