

# **WATER FOR LIFE: NATIONAL WATER WEEK**

## **15-21 OCTOBER 2006**

### **Website resources**

[www.nationalwaterweek.org.au](http://www.nationalwaterweek.org.au) (National Water Week)  
[www.awa.asn.au](http://www.awa.asn.au) (Australian Water Association)  
[www.waterforlife.nsw.gov.au](http://www.waterforlife.nsw.gov.au) (Water for Life campaign, New South Wales)  
[www.sydneywater.com.au/EnsuringTheFuture/WaterSchool/index.cfm](http://www.sydneywater.com.au/EnsuringTheFuture/WaterSchool/index.cfm)  
(Sydney Water)  
[www.education.melbournewater.com.au/](http://www.education.melbournewater.com.au/) (Melbourne Water)  
[www.epa.qld.gov.au/environmental\\_management/water/waterwise\\_toolbox](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/environmental_management/water/waterwise_toolbox)  
(Waterwise Queensland)  
[www.watercorporation.com.au/education/index\\_teachers.cfm](http://www.watercorporation.com.au/education/index_teachers.cfm) (Waterwise WA)  
[www.thecouriermail.news.com.au/extras/waterforlife/index.htm](http://www.thecouriermail.news.com.au/extras/waterforlife/index.htm)  
(Courier Mail newspaper 'Water for Life' guide)

### **CLASSROOM AND HOME ACTIVITIES**

#### **A day without water**

Ask the students to write a short story imagining that, for a whole day, they have no access to water. Encourage them to explore what would happen, what they would miss out on, how they would cope and how they would feel.

#### **Poster design**

Encourage the students to think of the slogan '**Protect, Conserve and Get Involved**'. Have the students work in pairs to design posters to display around the school.

#### **Rain dance**

Have students search the internet to find out about the different cultures—including Australia's indigenous communities—that believe in 'rain dances'. Let them share their findings with the class, teaching the dance to the rest of the class if they can discover the steps.

#### **Class survey: rainwater tanks**

While it might not be too common for students to have rainwater tanks at home, discuss the benefits of installing rainwater tanks at home or at school. Have students discuss the pros and cons of installing rainwater tanks. Students could also design a new rainwater tank to suit an available space at home.

#### **The ripple effect**

Ask the students to drop a coin or small object into a bowl of water and observe the ripples it makes. Ask them to sketch the ripples on paper and discuss the idea that what happens at the centre of the bowl affects the whole bowl of water. Use this as a basis for discussing that when we waste water there is a 'ripple effect'.

#### **'Protect, Conserve and Get Involved'**

Have the students draw up 3 columns with the headings Protect, Conserve and Get Involved. Ask them to list what they can do as individuals, as a family and as a school to promote water conservation. What devices could they install to save water?

## Make a rain gauge

You will need:

- two jars—one wide and one narrow
  - a felt-tip marker that writes on glass
  - a ruler
  - some water.
1. Fill the large jar with water until it reaches a height of exactly 5 centimetres. The large jar will be the rain gauge.
  2. Pour the water from the rain gauge into the taller, narrow jar. The tall jar will be the measuring glass.
  3. Use the felt-tip marker to draw a line at the water level on the measuring glass, then divide the distance below the line into ten equal intervals. Each mark on the measuring glass represents 5 millimetres of rain.
  4. Empty the measuring glass (recycle the water by pouring it onto a pot plant).
  5. Keep the rain gauge outside on a level platform, high enough for the rim to be 30 centimetres off the ground. Check your rain gauge at the same time each morning by pouring any rainwater into the measuring glass and reading the measurement.

Find a school in a different area of your state to act as a 'pen pal' school. Email them the rain gauge experiment and ask them to record their rainfall. Compare your results.

## Water cycle

- Use the internet to find information about the **water cycle**. Explain what this is to the rest of the class. These website resources will help you:
  - [www.dse.vic.gov.au/ourwater/education/Senior/WaterCycle/FrontPage.htm](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/ourwater/education/Senior/WaterCycle/FrontPage.htm) (Department of Sustainability and Environment Victoria)
  - [www.watercare.net/wll/wc-watercycle.html](http://www.watercare.net/wll/wc-watercycle.html) (Watercare)
  - [www.sawater.com.au/SAWater/Education/OurWaterSystems/The+Water+Cycle.htm](http://www.sawater.com.au/SAWater/Education/OurWaterSystems/The+Water+Cycle.htm) (SA Water)
  - [www.southeastwater.com.au/games/education\\_kidsroom\\_wcactivity.asp](http://www.southeastwater.com.au/games/education_kidsroom_wcactivity.asp) (South East Water)
  - [www.teacherstoolkit.net.au](http://www.teacherstoolkit.net.au) (Lesson Plans)

## Recycled Water

More than 62% of voters in Toowoomba (Queensland's largest inland city) have overwhelmingly rejected a proposal to add recycled effluent to the city's water supply. The basic process was to collect wastewater and put it through a series of purifying treatments including ultrafiltration, reverse osmosis, and oxidation. The treated water would be pumped into a dam, where it would rest for three to five years before reaching residents' taps. The technology is already used in California and Singapore.

- While this might be a sensitive issue, discuss with students why this water option needs further consideration. Have groups of students use the internet to research and investigate this topic. This site might be useful:  
[www.epa.gov/Region9/water/recycling/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/Region9/water/recycling/index.html)
- Set-up a class debate 'What action should Australia take to ensure a continuous supply of water'.
- As an extension, have two groups of students seek information about the recycling process in California and Singapore.
- Revisit the Science Week topic *Our Dry Continent*, that appeared in Issue 3.