



IN SEARCH OF WATER

Time	45–60 minutes
Level	intermediate
Skills	reading, speaking
Knowledge goal	to introduce the problem of the bad access to and poor quality of drinking water in some developing countries and its impact on people's and children's health and life in general
Materials	Ss' worksheets: p. S1 – Lead-in – topics p. S2 – Main activity – texts A, B, C

1 Lead-in

- Ask Ss to write down various things that can be liquid. Give them the example of “liquid soap”. After Ss have finished, they say their words or write them on the board.

Possible answers: drinks, cocktails, rain, colours, detergents.

- Ss stand up and make a circle out of chairs with one student standing in the middle. The number of chairs should be the number of Ss minus one. The person standing makes a statement about themselves in connection with one of the mentioned/written liquid things. Give them an example *I prefer using liquid soap to normal bars of soap*. All Ss for whom the statement is also true will stand up and must change their seats. While this movement is going on, the person in the middle should grab an empty chair to sit on. Then the new “chairless” student goes to the middle and makes another statement. If there is nobody for whom the statement is true, the person in the middle has to make another statement. Do this activity as long as Ss enjoy it.
- Tell Ss that now you will focus on water and common related topics. Make pairs/small groups and distribute the cards with topics from p. S1 to each group. One student in each group takes a topic and talks about it for 1 minute. Ask each group to appoint one person to time it.

2 Main activity

- Ss will focus on water-related problems which people in Ghana, Tanzania, and Zambia must face. Make sure Ss know where they can find these countries on the map.
- Ss make three groups. Hand out one text to each group (p. S2 – texts A, B, C). Their task is to read the text, underline the most important pieces of information and then draw a poster. Writing is not allowed. Ss can only draw a comics, use symbols etc. Set a 10–15 minute time limit.
- Display the posters on the walls and ask Ss to walk around the classroom individually and “decode” them. Encourage Ss to make notes on what each poster illustrates.
- Then the three groups get back together and compare their notes. They agree on the best understanding of the posters.
- Start with the group A and their poster. First, invite other groups to present their understandings. Then group A gives explanation to their poster. Then the next group takes their turn.

3 Follow-up

- Check Ss' comprehension:
 - What were the water-related problems you read about?*
 - How can poor access to water affect one's life?*
 - What can poor quality water cause?*
- Ask Ss to guess how many people in the world do not have access to safe water.
Correct answer: one in eight people in the world.
- Ss brainstorm on possible solutions to this problem.
 - What can be done so that more people have access to safe water?*
- Discuss their ideas.

4 Ideas for homework

- A.** Ss go through the website www.worldmapper.org and choose one map with a water-related problem. They can write a report on their findings, or make posters using the printed map and present it at the beginning of the next lesson.
- B.** Ss find out how they can get involved. For inspiration, ask them to check the WaterAid website http://www.wateraid.org/uk/get_involved/. Are there similar possibilities in your country?
- C.** Ss find out what the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are. How many goals are there? What does MDG4 deal with?

Recommended sources:

Millennium Development Goals – www.millenniumcampaign.org
BBC: The Water Debate – <http://news.bbc.co.uk>
Guardian – <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/water>
World Health Organization – <http://www.who.int/topics/water/en/>
UNESCO: World Water Assessment Programme – http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/facts_figures/index.shtml





bottled water	melting glaciers	water and a healthy lifestyle
water on Mars	floods	desalination
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A. No water, no school

Napoga Gurigo lives in the village of Tambuog in the Tongo hills of Ghana. She does not know her age but she is probably about 12. She is engaged and lives with her future husband's family. There is no clean water in the village so every day Napoga has to get up at 5.30am and walk to a muddy hole to get water for the family.

Normally it takes six hours to collect water as she must sit and wait before it accumulates in the hole and clears up a bit. Animals also drink from the same waterhole and the water is very muddy. When she has filled her buckets she then has to carry the heavy load home. Napoga likes the taste of the water collected from the hole although it is very dirty. She does not boil the water before drinking it. Napoga does not go to school; collecting water dominates her life.

In many countries children, particularly girls, are responsible for the collection of water. Girls as young as 10 years old may take the main responsibility for drawing and carrying the family's water. Collecting water is not only physically strenuous but extremely time consuming. One of the most serious effects is that girls are often not able to attend school.

Adapted from WaterAid – http://www.wateraid.org/international/what_we_do/the_need/2041.asp



B. Water, the killer

Twelve year old Erika Makalli lives in Mbalawala, Tanzania. She explains:

Before we got clean water in the village my life was very different. I was sick all the time and had horrible, itchy skin because I could never wash properly. I often had stomach ache and diarrhoea. I had to get up at 4 am and walk a long way to find water. It took two hours and I could only collect a little water to take home.

I hurried to get to school and couldn't wash or have any breakfast beforehand. Most of the time I missed school completely because I was sick or just too tired. There were so many diseases in this village. In fact, the school sometimes closed down because so many children were sick it couldn't open.

Children are most vulnerable to the diseases that result from a lack of water, dirty water and poor sanitation. In developing countries each child has an average of ten attacks of diarrhoea before the age of five.

Diarrhoea is the second most serious killer of children under five worldwide (after pneumonia) but in most cases it can be prevented or treated.

Adapted from WaterAid – http://www.wateraid.org/international/what_we_do/the_need/2041.asp

C. The elderly

Rosa Malambo was born in Zambia in 1947. She collects water from a hole in the sand near the river Magoye.

Rosa lost all four of her children and now has no-one to help her collect the water. The long distances travelled to watering holes can be extremely difficult for the old.

Mangalita Siamajele, also from Zambia, didn't go to school and so doesn't know how old she is. Maybe 60 years old.

I am so tired. Where I have come from is very far, walking with 20 litres on my head. I am old, I have a bad hip and am always tired, carrying this bucket twice a day, I need to get home, I need to rest.

But even with a water point closer to home, in built up urban areas competition at the well can leave those less able waiting for longer as the strongest people push in front. Awabo Osman, a 50 year old woman from Ghana says:

Over time the queue for the open well got worse and worse. If you weren't strong you couldn't get near the well as there were so many people crowding round. You had to be strong to push your way to the front and throw your bucket down the well. If you weren't strong enough then people would push you over.

Adapted from WaterAid – http://www.wateraid.org/international/what_we_do/the_need/2042.asp

