

How Much Water Do You Use a Day?

Objective

- To demonstrate to students' how much water is used a day for different activities
- To help students come up with ideas to conserve water around their home

The Activity

Part 1

In this step of the activity students will have the opportunity to be creative and make their own ocean in a bottle. Each student should be provided with a 2L pop bottle to house their ocean. Items such as sand, pebbles, shells can be added to create the substrate. Add a tiny bit of blue food colouring to water and add it to the bottle. Add some foam fish to the bottle so that they can float around and if you choose blue glitter can also be added to make your ocean sparkle. Seal up the bottle tightly so that no water can escape.

Part 2

Part 2 of the activity helps to demonstrate to students just how much water the average North American uses on a daily basis for certain activities.

1. Provide each student with a number of round coloured stickers. You will need a lot of these for this activity.
2. Inform students that brushing their teeth uses approximately 6 litres of water a day. This is 3 of their 2L bottles of water. Have them add 3 stickers to their ocean in a bottle.
3. Tell the students that flushing the toilet uses about 20L of water. Have them add 10 stickers to their bottle.
4. Ask students how many 2L bottles of water they think it takes to run the dishwasher. Tell them that it is about 40 litres and have them add 20 stickers to their bottle.
5. Finally, inform the students that taking one shower requires 40 2L bottles full of water. Have them add the stickers to their bottle.

At this point, the student's bottles will be fairly covered by stickers.

Post Activity Discussion

Ask students if they can think of any other activities that humans use water for on a daily basis. Some other activities include drinking, cooking, and washing laundry. Explain to the students that there are about 6 billion people on the planet and have them think about how much water humans must be using.

Have students suggest ways in which we can reduce the amount of water we use. Some possible answers include:

- Checking faucets and pipes for leaks
- Installing water-saving shower heads and low flush toilets
- Take shorter showers
- Turn off water when brushing teeth
- Only run the dishwasher for full loads
- Water your lawn only when it needs it and only during the early parts of the day
- Use a broom, not a hose, to clean the driveway, garage, and sidewalks

Have students think about how the world would change if we no longer had clean, fresh water.

One Fish at a Time