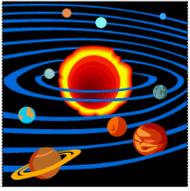




### The Water Planet



Planet Earth is very special! It is the only planet in our solar system that has liquid water on its surface. This is one reason why there is life on Earth! 97% of all water is **salt water** found in seas and oceans. The rest is **fresh water** found in places like rivers, streams, glaciers, lakes and even underground. Whether salty or fresh, water supports all life on our planet. Since 71% of Earth is covered with water, it is sometimes called the **Water Planet**.

### A Survival Need



Human beings use water in many ways. The most **essential**, or necessary uses are for drinking and for growing food. Without food and fresh water, we wouldn't be able to live or **survive**. Unfortunately, a lot of people in the world—about one billion (1,000,000,000)—don't **have access to**, or aren't able to easily get safe drinking water. They either have to walk very far to fill a jug with water, or they drink from a local water supply that is **polluted** or dirty, and it makes them sick. By comparison, most people in the United States have access to good quality drinking water right from the faucet or **tap**. This makes us very fortunate!

### Everything Else Too...



Other uses for water include growing crops to feed **livestock** like cattle, pigs and chickens, and for growing cotton for fabric. Water is

also used for taking a bath or shower; washing clothes; watering gardens; filling swimming pools; watering golf courses; cleaning machines in factories; and many other uses. In fact, water is needed to **manufacture**, or make, just about every single thing we use, whether it's clothing, computers or candy!

### "Eating Up" our Water



A lot of the water we **consume** or use isn't for drinking, but for growing food. Water is needed to grow **plant-based foods** like fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts and seeds. Water is also needed to grow the plants livestock will eat before they are turned into meat, or provide us with products like cheese, milk and eggs. It takes a lot more water to raise animals for food than to raise plants for food. This is especially true of big animals like cows. That's why eating less beef can save hundreds of gallons of water at each meal!

### San Francisco's River Water



Approximately 85% of San Francisco's fresh water supply comes from the **Tuolumne River**. This river is fed by the pure, melting snows of the **Sierra Nevada Mountains**. As the river flows towards San Francisco, it gathers and is stored in the **Hetch Hetchy Reservoir**, which is managed by the City of San Francisco, 167 miles away. Every time you turn on your tap, you are using Tuolumne River water that was once snow! Many wild animals like the bobcat, black bear, salmon, gray fox and

mountain kingsnake also depend on the Tuolumne River. They need it for their food and water supply. Whenever we save water in San Francisco, we're providing more water for these wild animals that depend on the Tuolumne River!

### More Precious than Gold



While it seems like we have an endless supply of water, we don't. One reason is that people are using up fresh water faster than it is being **replenished**, or refilled by natural cycles of rain and snow. This **overuse** of water means we could run out of fresh water in certain parts of the world, including areas in the United States. Not only that, but California is a dry state. That means our state naturally goes through long periods of time when enough rain does not fall. This is called a **drought**. Since California tends to have droughts from time to time, we must do everything we can to **conserve**, or save our fresh water supply. Can you imagine not having enough water to use in your daily life?

### Let's be Water Wise!



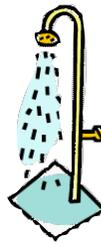
We all have the power to save water. Teach your family that saving water is good for people, plants, and animals, and also saves money on the water bill!

Lead by example. Each drop you save adds up to a river!

**1. Turn off the faucet.** Water is precious! Don't let it run! Turn off the tap when washing hands, brushing teeth or doing dishes.



### **2. Take a shorter shower.**



Compete with friends to see who can take the shortest shower. (Hint: Turn off the shower when shampooing your hair. Turn it on to rinse.) Each minute you shorten your shower can save up to 5 gallons of water!

**3. Wash full loads.** Be sure the washing machine is full before using. And ask yourself if an item can be worn one more time before being washed.



**4. Fix leaky plumbing.** Small drips add up to wasted water and money! Ask your family to fix leaky faucets and toilets, and install water-efficient plumbing fixtures.



**5. Sweep, don't hose.** Clean outdoor areas like the sidewalk and driveway by sweeping with a broom, not washing down with the hose.

**6. Don't let the hose run.** When watering plants or washing the car, use a spray nozzle that lets you control the water flow when you need it.

### **7. Make better food choices.**

Since raising cows for meat uses so much water, try to eat less beef when you have the choice, like at a restaurant.



### **8. Don't use the toilet as a trashcan.**

Toilets are only meant for human waste and toilet paper. Never flush trash down the toilet, including baby wipes.

These will clog the pipes and cause problems at the Water Pollution Control Plant. It's also wasteful because each flush can use 2 or more gallons of water!





# Let's Save Water!

## Student Comprehension Questions

1. About one billion people in the world do not have access to safe drinking water.  
What does this mean?  
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2. Besides drinking and cooking, name five other uses for fresh water:  
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3. What percentage of San Francisco's water supply comes from the Tuolumne River?  
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\_\_\_\_\_
4. Name five wild animals that also depend on the Tuolumne River for their water supply:  
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5. Why is it important to conserve water in California?  
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6. What are three ways to conserve water?  
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7. What do you think is the easiest way to conserve water? Why?  
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1. About one billion people in the world do not have access to safe drinking water.

What does this mean?

*It means they cannot easily get safe drinking water. They either have to walk very far to fill a jug with water, or their local water supply is polluted or dirty.*

2. Besides drinking and cooking, name five other uses for fresh water:

*growing crops; taking a bath or shower; washing clothes; watering gardens; filling swimming pools; watering golf courses; cleaning machines in factories; manufacturing*

3. What percentage of San Francisco's water supply comes from the Tuolumne River?

*85 %*

4. Name five wild animals that also depend on the Tuolumne River for their water supply:

*bobcat; black bear; salmon; gray fox; mountain kingsnake*

5. Why is it important to conserve water in California?

*California is a dry state and tends to have droughts.*

6. What are three ways to conserve water?

*turn off the tap when brushing teeth; take a shorter shower; wash full loads; fix leaky plumbing; sweep, don't hose; eat less beef; don't use the toilet as a trashcan*

7. What do you think is the easiest way to conserve water? Why?

*(subjective answer)*