
ACTIVITY: WATER CHARADE

This activity is intended for 2nd-3rd grade but can be easily adjusted to your children's grade level and abilities. In fact, we encourage it! Have fun!

INTRODUCTION:

Comprehension of the critical role played by water in support of all life on Earth is an essential foundational element of the Inland Empire Resource Conservation District's (IERCD's) Water Conservation program. This activity is being provided to increase awareness of water uses and benefits.

SUMMARY:

Children will explore the many uses of water by sharing their ideas with the entire family. Children will express their own opinion and also categorize and record the information gathered by the family.

BACKGROUND:

Water is fundamental to life on Earth. Water is used to either manufacture or to grow the materials needed for nearly everything that we use and for many things we do; cleaning, drinking, or recreation.

MATERIALS:

- Imagination
- Paper and pencils

DIRECTIONS:

1. Ask children to think of ways that they and other people use water. Encourage them to take turns sharing their ideas.
 - a. Ask children to act out a way we use water with pantomime or hand motions.
 - b. Have entire family copy any hand motions.
 - c. The facilitating family member should record each concept/example and offer additional examples in the event that the family exhausts all ideas
2. Children should then engage in a discussion regarding ranking the uses of water based on the generated list, and specifically considering:
 - a. Which of the uses are important for our health?
 - b. Which are just for fun?
3. Repeat steps 1-2 for wildlife and plants. Ideas to suggest to children for pantomiming may include:

- a. Dogs and cats using their tongue to drink.
 - b. Some animals may need to get very low to drink from a watering hole such as giraffes, while elephants use their trunk without additional need to bend down.
 - c. The facilitating family member should ask the children to consider if there are examples of necessary versus frivolous uses of water in the wildlife/plant community.
4. For plants, you will likely need to facilitate at a higher level since children may or may not immediately understand how to mime water use in plants.
- a. Examples of critical water use in plants could include water "holding up"/supporting plants (since water is a huge component of plant composition), and conversely, plant droop/wilt in the absence of sufficient water.
 - b. Once you introduce these concepts, students can use their bodies to droop down and spring back up when watered, and facilitating family member concept recordation can accompany the charades.
5. As a wrap-up discussion, you may want to go over the lists with the family, examining at least the following questions:
- a. Which uses are essential for all living things?
 - b. What are the ways that people, plants and animals use water similarly? How are they different?
 - c. What are ideas for cutting back on water use? (Be sure to emphasize here that drinking less water is not ideal for cutting back! Rather children should focus on watering at a more ideal volume to match true plant need rather than typical overwatering, turning the tap off for dishwashing/teeth brushing, and sweeping outdoor hardscape rather than watering it, among other ideas).

EXTENSION:

You may separate into two groups or teams to play Water Charades:

- Each team will use their list of "ways we use water" and one person at a time will choose what use to present to the others on their team.
- Once a water use has been chosen it should be checked from the list so as not to repeat water usages.
- Set a time of 1 or 2 minutes for each water use presented.
- The team that has guessed the most uses presented wins.