



Daily life in an Indian village

A simulation about the importance of water and the difficulties in obtaining it

This lesson introduces students to ideas about what it is like to live in a place where water is not necessarily clean or readily accessible, and promotes discussion about how this may influence life in positive and negative ways. Students are given a list of tasks to complete that represent different

aspects of daily life. All children have the same tasks, but some children have easier access to a water supply than others. This simulation game is designed for groups of 10-30 children, aged 7 years and over. It should take about 45 minutes to an hour to run.

You will need:

- ▶ Two different water sources:
 1. An outside water source that is slightly dirty (such as a large tub of water with impurities), a fair distance away from the main area, or a stream or pond with safe access.
 2. A tap close by your main area.
- ▶ A number of props to use for simulating the tasks – unwashed potatoes, a large cooking pot, wash cloths, wash bowls, small containers for carrying water such as plastic cups or small buckets, toys such as yoyos, balls or skipping ropes, a blackboard and some school books, a pot plant or a garden nearby that can be watered, a rope for a clothes line and pegs.
- ▶ Signs saying: water, kitchen, garden, laundry, and school.
- ▶ A large display copy of the sequence in which students must do the tasks.
- ▶ Small dot stickers for recording when students have completed tasks.

Setting up the room:

Set up a number of areas around the room to simulate the places where students will do the tasks:

- ▶ A kitchen where they will wash potatoes and place them in a pot.
- ▶ A laundry where they will wash pieces of cloth and peg them on a line.
- ▶ A school where they will do some learning tasks and then play some simple games.
- ▶ A garden where they can water a plant or plants.

The areas will need to be spread around the room (or outside the classroom) for the game to work well.

How to play:

For small groups, children can play individually, or for larger groups, they can work in teams of two or three.

- ▶ Explain to the children that they will be pretending to live in another place that is different to where they live now. They are going to have some tasks to complete. Each task must be completed in order, and each person/group has the same tasks to do. When each task is completed, they will get a sticker — the more tasks completed, the more stickers they will get.
- ▶ Show the list of tasks, explain each task and show the equipment needed:
 1. Collect drinking water: bring water and put it in a bottle or cup.
 2. Prepare food: bring water, wash the potatoes and place them in a large cooking pot.
 3. Wash clothes: bring water, wash a cloth and hang it on the washing line.
 4. Gardening: bring water and water the garden/ plant.
 5. Go to school: choose one of the books and read it to a friend. Write a maths problem on the board for someone else to do.
 6. Play: choose a game from the box and play it for 5 minutes.
- ▶ Tell the children to report to the scorer (the person with the stickers – yourself or a helper) each time they complete a task. Send them back to complete the task properly if needed. (e.g. if the potato is still dirty, cloth not washed, etc.)
- ▶ Explain that most of the tasks require water that the children will need to collect. Tell the children that they can only carry the small container (cup) to and from the water source. Hand out the cups. Show the children the water sources, and tell them who is to use each one. (As a guide, one child or group out of 10 should have access to the closer water source.)
- ▶ Play the game.

Debriefing

Discussion after the activity is vital to helping students learn the most from their experiences. Make sure you allow plenty of time for these discussions.



Collecting water in Rajasthan, India
Photo credit: Dirk Guinen, AusAID

Suggested questions:

- ▶ How many tasks did children complete?
- ▶ What was it like to have to carry water from far away? What were the good and bad things about it?
- ▶ Who completed the most tasks? Why? Who completed the least tasks? What were some of the difficulties people had?
- ▶ Did you have to wait in line to get water? How did that make you feel? Explain that people collecting water often have to wait a long time. Sometimes the water doesn't flow all the time, or it runs out.
- ▶ What tasks did you miss out on if you didn't finish everything? How would this affect you?
- ▶ What could we learn from people who are in this type of situation?
- ▶ What actions do you think we could take to make this situation better?

Taking it further

To find out more about situations where water collection is an ongoing struggle, direct students to the websites of development agencies such www.usaid.gov.au, www.wateraid.org, www.oxfam.org.au, or www.worldvision.org.au.

The Global Education website (www.globaleducation.edu.au) has case studies and teaching activities under the water heading.

This activity is adapted from TEAR Australia's *Working together in an Indian village* resource package. Further resources that can complement this activity, including the DVD *Life in an Indian Village*, are available from the TEAR Australia website: www.tear.org.au/resources/items/working-together-in-an-indian-village-resource-pack-and-dvd/