

Water changes everything

World Water Day is 22 March. This video explores the global water crisis, and how we can help everybody gain access to safe drinking water.

Tasks

Do the preparation task first. Then watch the video and do the exercises. You can also read the transcript.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

1. a faucet
2. a swamp
3. poverty
4. to be burdened with
5. to be exposed to
6. to restore
7. vast
8. contaminated

Definition

- a. the condition of being poor
- b. a tap; the thing you turn on to get water from a pipe (American English)
- c. an area of land covered by water where trees and plants grow
- d. to be unprotected from
- e. to carry something heavy
- f. dirty, polluted and unsafe for people to use
- g. to give something back that was taken away before
- h. extremely large

Task 1

Are the sentences true or false?

	Answer	
1. The water crisis only affects Sub-Saharan Africa, South-East Asia and Latin America.	True	False
2. The water that these women and children collect is often unsafe.	True	False
3. Some families are forced to drink contaminated water.	True	False
4. The water crisis has a direct impact on some children's reading and writing skills.	True	False
5. Only a small number of children who get water-related diseases die every year.	True	False
6. The water crisis can only be solved with modern technology and solutions.	True	False

7. More medicine is purchased as a result of safe water projects. True False
8. Safe water projects could mean that more children attend school. True False

Task 2

Complete the sentences with words from the box.

one

three

19

20

40

40

1. Nearly billion people live without clean drinking water.
2. Women and children often walk up to hours a day to collect water from the nearest swamp, pond or river.
3. The women are alone and burdened with pounds of water.
4. About every seconds, a mother loses one of her children to a water-related illness.
5. Africa alone could save billion hours each year.
6. Just dollars can provide one person with access to a clean water project in their village.

Discussion

What more could you do to help solve the water crisis? Do you think governments could do more to tackle this issue?

Transcript

Water. It's life's most basic need. But there's a water crisis in our world right now. Seriously, a crisis. Nearly one billion people live without clean drinking water. It's happening all over the world, especially in developing areas of Sub-Saharan Africa, South-East Asia and Latin America. It's a water crisis because it starts with water. But water affects everything – education, health, poverty, and especially women and children.

Let's look at a family caught in the water crisis. It's likely they live on less than a dollar a day. When they're thirsty they can't just turn on the faucet for a nice, cold glass of water – they don't have a faucet. Instead, the women and children go off to collect water. Many walk up to three hours a day to the nearest swamp, pond or river to gather water that's been sitting out in the open – exposed to all kinds of germs.

Time spent gathering water is time they can't spend learning to read, write, earn an income or take care of their family. Some women in Sub-Saharan Africa spend more time collecting water than any other activity they do in the day. And the walk isn't just hard, it's dangerous. The women are alone and burdened with 40 pounds [18 kg] of water. Many get hurt, sometimes they're even attacked. When they make it home, the little water they've collected isn't clean. Some families know their water is contaminated with germs that cause diarrhoea, dehydration, even death – but what choice do they have? Kids, especially babies, are affected most by these germs. About every 19 seconds, a mother loses one of her children to a water-related illness. And each day, almost a billion people are living this way. Until ... they get a little help.

The water crisis is solvable. There are solutions. Some are brand-new and innovative, like water filtration systems. Some are age-old, like drilled or hand-dug wells. These solutions bring clean water much closer to the people who need it. A safe water project near a village restores hours each day to a person's life. This time, it's opportunity. It's freedom to go to school and get an education, to work or start a business, to raise a family. Africa alone could save 40 billion hours each year – that's the entire annual workforce of France. Clean water means less disease. That's less money spent on medicine, which means more money for books and school uniforms. And if the water project is built near a school, it can increase attendance, especially among young girls.

The water crisis is vast, but we can solve it. Just 20 dollars can provide one person with access to a clean water project in their village. And this will mean more than clean water ... because water changes everything.

Join us.

Answers

Preparation task

1. b
2. c
3. a
4. e
5. d
6. g
7. h
8. f

Task 1

1. False
2. True
3. True
4. True
5. False
6. False
7. False
8. True

Task 2

1. one
2. three
3. 40
4. 19
5. 40
6. 20