

You Be The Judge

www.groundwater.org

Who should get the water?

You decide in this problem solving activity.

Key Topic: Water management

Grade Level: 6 - 12

Duration: 30 - 50 minutes

Items Needed:

- Pitcher/jug of water
- Cups for each person
- Poster board (optional)
- Markers (optional)

Objectives:

We make decisions every day. What should I wear, what should I eat, etc. There are also many decisions we make each day that have an effect on the environment. Should I use a reusable bag or disposable one? Should I take a short shower or a long one?

Water resource managers and community leaders also make many decisions each day. Should water use be restricted? Should a certain amount of water be allocated to certain people or to everyone? Discuss the provided scenarios and decide who should get the water. You be the judge!

Activity Steps:

1. Fill a pitcher or jug with water. Make sure there is a limited amount of water so that not all cups can be filled.
2. Give each student a cup.
3. Pass around the pitcher, asking each student to fill their cup. This will allow them to meet their water needs. (Example: a full cup = everyday household use.)
4. Tell them that sometimes there is not enough water available for everyone's needs. Ask the students to express how they feel.
5. Ask what they could do to make sure they all get water.
6. Repeat the activity, this time with water allocations. (Choose one or combine both of the options below.)



- First in time, first in right. Have the students arrange themselves in order by their birth date.
 - Use the Water Use cards to determine who gets how much water. Randomly pass out the cards. Students can use the information on the cards to discuss and campaign for more water or why others should get more and some should get less.
7. Discuss the results and other ways the water could be allocated.
- Those with more important uses get more. Who decides what's more important?
 - Equal shares, everyone gets some but some will get less than what they need.
 - Apply water restrictions and use water conservation practices to reduce the amount needed/used.
 - Other ideas



Water Use Cards

Copy and cut out the cards below or make posters representing different water uses. Distribute to groups or individuals for the activity. You may choose to predetermine the amount of water each user is allocated beforehand or let the participants decide.

Dairy Farmer

You own a dairy farm and grow alfalfa and corn. Your milk and crops are sold and distributed to consumers nation-wide. You also grow other seasonal produce that you sell at the local farmer's market. You and your family use water every day. You also need water for your livestock and for irrigation for your crops. Since you have a successful business and want to support your community you invest in other local businesses and give to local charitable organizations.

Business Owner

You own a papermaking company. The company provides many jobs for the people living in your town. You and your family use water every day. You also need water for your business which provides paper to businesses nation-wide. Since you have a successful business and want to support your community you invest in other local businesses and give to local charitable organizations.

Hydroelectric Engineer

You work for and represent a hydroelectric company that supplies power to the area. You and your family use water every day. The hydroelectric plant uses water to create power but no water is actually consumed in the process. The water is used and released. You enjoy time boating and fishing at the local lake.

Mayor

You are the mayor of the town. You and your family use water every day. You encourage successful businesses to come to the area as it provides jobs and economic sustainability. You set an example as a good citizen, including conserving water in your home. You also enjoy getting fresh produce from the local farmer's market.



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Teacher

You are a teacher at the local school. You and your family use water every day. Your spouse works at the paper company and you enjoy spending time at the parks, swimming, and playing golf on the weekends.

Farmer

You own a small farm and raise pigs. You and your family use water every day. You also need water for your livestock and for your crops. You sell most of your produce and pork locally to stores and at the farmer's market.

Water Superintendent

You are the superintendent for the local water utility. You and your family use water every day. You use many water conservation practices in your home. You also enjoy spending time at the lake on the weekends.

Parks and Recreation Manager

You manage and represent the local parks department. You and your family use water every day. The parks department needs water for the parks, swimming pool, golf course, and local recreation area which includes a lake and picnic area.

Small Business Owner

You run and own the local super market. You purchase your products from national companies but also from local producers as well. You and your family use water every day.

Non-profit Manager

You work for and represent the local water conservation organization. You and your family use many water conservation practices at home and teach others how they can also make changes to reduce their water use. You enjoy spending time outdoors.

