# Learn and Think About Water Vulnerability

**Age range:** 11-14 years  
**Time:** 50-75 minutes

## Outline
Learners study what it means to be water vulnerable. They then develop their understanding of symptoms and causes of water vulnerability and the links between these. Finally they explore some short and long-term solutions to water vulnerability.

## Learning outcomes
- Recognise that access to safe, clean water is a basic human right.
- Be aware that many people are denied this right, making them water vulnerable.
- Name some of the symptoms and causes of water vulnerability.
- Make links between some of these symptoms and causes.
- Identify short and long-term solutions to water vulnerability.

## Resources
- Learn about water slideshow

Optional:
- Film clips
- My Water Diary
- Introductory slideshow

## Curriculum links
- Citizenship (Rights & Responsibilities): National Curriculum for England
- Social Studies: Scottish Curriculum for Excellence
- ESDGC (Choices and Decisions) and PSE (Active Citizenship): National Curriculum for Wales

## Keywords
- Water vulnerable
- Symptom
- Cause

## Introduction to Water Week
You might like to show the *Introductory film* and slideshow before the main session. These resources introduce Oxfam Water Week, highlight some of the issues surrounding water and inspire people to take action. Additional information and suggested questions are provided in the notes page for each slide. Note that new information will appear on most slides when you click. The blue circle on the bottom left-hand corner indicates that the slide is complete.
Session outline

Activity 1 (5 mins)
*What does water vulnerable mean?*

Show slides 2 and 3 which introduce learners to the idea of being water vulnerable. Allow time for discussion and for learners to ask questions. Note that new information will appear on most slides when you click. The blue circle on the bottom left-hand corner indicates that the slide is complete.

Activity 2 (35-55 mins)
*What are the symptoms and causes of water vulnerability?*

Show slides 4 to 17 which help learners identify causes and symptoms of water vulnerability. Allow time for discussion and questions.

1. Give pairs of learners A3 copies of the *Water vulnerability tree* on page 4. Explain that the issue they will be thinking about is water vulnerability, and ask them to write this on the trunk.
2. Explain that the branches represent the symptoms of water vulnerability, such as having to travel a long way to collect water. Ask learners to fill in as many different symptoms as they can.
3. Explain that the roots of the tree represent the causes of water vulnerability. Ask learners to fill these in, for example by writing ‘Drought’ or ‘Climate Change’. Examples of causes and symptoms are provided on page 5.
4. Ask learners to add other causes and symptoms of water vulnerability if they can and then rotate learners around the classroom to view others’ work. Use their observations as the basis of discussion about the links between causes and symptoms.

*Extension*: if time allows, you might like to show learners some or all of the five *Causes and Symptoms* film clips.

Activity 3 (10-15 mins)
*Responding to water vulnerability*

Show slides 18 to 21 which provide some information about possible short and long-term solutions to water vulnerability.

Ask learners to draw fruit shapes onto their water vulnerability trees and write down some possible solutions on these. For example, for ‘Drought’ they could write ‘Build irrigation systems to bring water in from elsewhere’. For ‘Climate Change’ they could write ‘Campaign to reduce carbon emissions’ and so on. Examples of responses are provided on page 6.

As before, ask learners to display their water vulnerability trees for the rest of the class to see and then rotate around the classroom. Facilitate further discussion about the different solutions, highlighting which responses are short term and which are long-term.

*Extension*: if time allows, you might like to show the pupils some or all of the five *Solutions* film clips.
Follow up ideas
Oxfam Water Week resources include an Action Guide with ideas for learners to get involved in campaigning and fundraising activities for Oxfam’s water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH) projects supporting water-vulnerable communities around the world, wherever the need is greatest.

The action guide provides background information about Water Week: our shared need for water, what it means to be water-vulnerable and some ways in which communities are responding to these problems. Learners are encouraged to work in groups to consider and choose potential actions that they could take during Water Week to support water-vulnerable communities. Useful tips and guidance are provided on how to plan different campaigning and fundraising actions. If time permits more than one activity could be completed or different groups of learners could work on different activities. Participants are also supported to evaluate their actions, an essential step in their development as active global citizens.

The Teachers’ Guide provides brief background notes to Water Week, summarises the action guide and suggests further sources of information and curriculum-making resources.

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