What is Oxfam Water Week?

Started in 2011, Oxfam Water Week is a popular school project designed to help learners become active and engaged global citizens by taking informed, responsible and meaningful action.

Learners develop their thinking skills through learning about the symptoms and causes of water vulnerability, and are then supported to act on what they have learned. Oxfam Water Week supports Oxfam’s water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH) projects in countries around the world, wherever the need is greatest. In the past few years schools and communities have raised over £70,000 for Oxfam water projects in Mali, Niger, Liberia, South Sudan and Haiti. Hundreds of campaign messages have been delivered to the UK Department for International Development and even to Number 10 asking the government to help reduce water vulnerability.

Schools have told us that Oxfam Water Week is a great way to end the summer term, but you are welcome to plan your Oxfam Water Week for whenever works best for you.

Why water?

Water is a fundamental right for every person in the world, yet many people are without access to the water they need. Oxfam has been supporting communities to overcome water vulnerability for over 50 years.
What’s in Oxfam Water Week?

Assembly: Introduction to Water Week
The Introductory slideshow and film are optional materials which introduce Oxfam Water Week and are suitable for an assembly. They highlight some of the problems surrounding access to water and inspire learners to take action. Learners are encouraged to recognise the shared need of water in the lives of all people, everywhere and to empathise with those for whom access to water is restricted. The Introductory slideshow has been designed so that learners can present an assembly themselves to other classes or the whole school.

Oxfam Water Week slideshow
This slideshow accompanies the Oxfam Water Week session plan.

Optional film clips
There are eleven film clips in all. You are welcome to use as many or as few of them as you like:

- Introductory film clip
- Five Causes and symptoms film clips (see Background country information for further details)
- Five Solutions film clips (see Background country information for further details)

Background country information
A brief guide to each country featured in the Causes and symptoms and Solutions film clips.

Session plan: Learn and think about water vulnerability
The session plan is adaptable, depending upon the time available. However it is important that learners spend some time learning and thinking about water vulnerability before moving on to planning their actions. The slideshow and optional film clips help learners to identify causes and symptoms of water vulnerability. They are then encouraged to make links between these causes and symptoms using a water vulnerability tree. Finally, learners spend time thinking about and discussing possible solutions to water vulnerability. You might like to refer to the background country information for this session.

Oxfam Water Week action guide, campaigning guide and fundraising guide
The action guide helps learners explore and participate in Water Week campaigning and/or fundraising actions of their own choice, such as holding a sponsored water walk, inviting a key member of the local community to a sports day with races involving water or writing about the importance of a reliable water supply to their local MP. For further ideas and guidance, you might also like to refer to Oxfam Water Week’s separate campaigning and fundraising guides. Note that learners’ actions could take place in extra-curricular time as well as in lessons. Learners are encouraged to evaluate their actions; an essential step in their development as active global citizens.

Oxfam Water Week sensory journey
There is a sensory journey and suggested activities for learners with special educational needs. Some of these activities are suitable for adapting for younger learners aged 4-7.

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How are funds raised for Oxfam Water Week used?

All money raised during Oxfam Water Week goes towards Oxfam’s water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH) projects, supporting water vulnerable communities around the world wherever the need is greatest. Further information and support for fundraising and campaigning (including where to send any money raised) are provided in the Oxfam Water Week fundraising and campaigning guides.

Funds from previous Oxfam Water Weeks have been used to support communities in Haiti (2015), South Sudan (2014), Liberia (2013), Niger (2012) and Mali (2011). You can find further information, including videos about how funds were used in Mali and Niger, here.

How will Oxfam Water Week benefit my school?

For your learners

- Encourages young people to engage with issues and devise their own responses.
- Supports the development of enquiry, analysis and reflection skills.
- Develops learner voice.

For your school

- Supports the development of a wider school ethos.
- Has the potential for cross-curricular or cross-phase implementation.

For the wider community

- Helps build a vibrant and engaged school community.
- Learners can involve parents, youth or faith organisations, and other local schools.

Using Oxfam Water Week resources

Timing

You can use the Oxfam Water Week resources at any time of year, but many schools report that the second half of the summer term is a good time.

Subjects

Water Week is a flexible resource, so you can tailor it for you and your school. You can implement activities within normal lessons (for example in geography, science, citizenship or PSHE) or as a dedicated half day or day of activities.

Using our film clips

Depending on time available, you might like to use the Introductory film clip on its own. Alternatively you could show learners a selection or all of the Causes and Symptoms and Solutions film clips.

Slideshows

New information will appear on most slides when you click. The blue circle on the bottom left-hand corner indicates the slide is complete.

Fundraising and campaigning options

If you choose to raise funds for Oxfam Water Week, please send these to Oxfam using the form in the fundraising leaflet. Your school will then be issued a Water Week certificate to acknowledge your valuable contribution to our Water, Sanitations and Hygiene promotion (WASH) programme which
works in many water-vulnerable communities around the world. Pass on any campaign messages to your local MP. We’d also love to receive any photographs you take of your pupils carrying out Water Week activities. For examples of what other schools have done, see [here](#).

**Your resources**

Please share your Oxfam Water Week activities, photographs and any new resources you develop by emailing them to: education@oxfam.org.uk

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