What is Oxfam Water Week?

Started in 2011 our popular Oxfam Water Week is designed to help young people become active and engaged global citizens by taking informed, responsible and meaningful action.

Students 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. If these dates are not ideal for your Youth Ambassador group, you can 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.

Water Week 2016

6-10 June
(Scotland)

4-8 July
(England and Wales)
Learning and thinking about water vulnerability

The accompanying workshop plan provides activities and resources for learning and thinking about water. The plan is adaptable, depending upon the time available. However, it is important that young people spend some time on learning and thinking about water vulnerability before moving on to planning their actions.

- **Introduction to Water Week**

  The Introductory film and slideshow introduce Oxfam Water Week, highlight some of the problems surrounding access to water and inspire students 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 could use it to present an assembly themselves to other classes or the whole school.

- **Workshop: Learning and thinking about water vulnerability**

  In this session, students are introduced to the idea of being water-vulnerable. 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. They are asked to record their ideas on a water vulnerability tree. Students are then encouraged to spend some time thinking about and discussing possible solutions to water vulnerability.

- **Using our 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.

**Taking Action**

The action guide encourages students to explore and participate in campaigning and/or fundraising actions. These actions could happen in extra-curricular time (e.g. as an Oxfam Youth Ambassador) or as part of Citizenship or similar lessons.

- **Introduction: Page 1**

  The first page of 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 issues.

- **Thinking about action: Page 2**

  Students are asked to identify and consider potential actions they could take during Water Week to help support water-vulnerable communities. A list of suggested ideas are provided as a starting point. They then need to work as a group to decide on the actions they will take.
• **Planning your action: Page 3**

This page provides guidance on planning an action, including useful tips for organising an assembly and holding a fundraising event. All money raised during Oxfam Water Week will go 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:

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/water-week-act-resources

• **Planning and reviewing your action: Page 4**

This page has information on how to campaign for Oxfam’s Water Week. Students can communicate what they have learned about the importance of a reliable water supply and explain what action they think should be taken to support water-vulnerable communities. Students can write their own messages to the UK government and send them to their local MP.

Finally participants are encouraged to evaluate their actions; an essential step in their development as active global citizens.

**Find out more**

The workshop plan and action guide have been adapted from the Oxfam Water Week resources for schools. The main Water Week project page has additional resources, information and activities to help young people to learn and think about water, and to inspire them to take action.

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/school-projects/water-week

**Oxfam Youth Ambassadors**

For more information about Oxfam Youth Ambassadors go to:

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship/promoting-action/youth-ambassadors

**Your resources**

Please share any new resources you develop by contacting your regional Education & Youth Coordinator or emailing education@oxfam.org.uk