



KIDS' CHURCH IDEAS

Here are some ideas which can be used for a children's church or Sunday School session. The session is set out as: games, worship, teaching, activities, response and prayer, although they do not necessarily have to be followed in that order. There are several suggestions in each section so that the most appropriate activities can be selected according to your setting and resources available.

GAMES

Please Note: You will either need a hall with a washable floor or an outside space to play these games.

Learning objective: In many parts of the world, people have to walk several miles to fetch safe clean water and then have to carry the heavy containers home again, often balanced on their heads, without spilling any.



◆ Water sponge relay

Organise the children into teams, each with a bucket of water and a large sponge. The first person should take their sponge full of water and run to the other end, where there is an empty bucket. The sponge is squeezed into the empty bucket, and the child runs back to the beginning, passing the sponge to the next person in the team. The next person fills their sponge with water and repeats the process until all the team have had a go. The winning team has the most water in their second bucket.



◆ Water cups relay

Organise the children into teams, each with a bucket of water and a paper or plastic cup. The first person should take their cup full of water and run to the other end, spilling as little as possible, to a second, empty bucket. The cup is emptied into the second bucket, and the child runs back to the beginning, passing the cup to the next person in the team. The next person fills their cup with water and repeats the process until all the team have had a go. The winning team has the most water in their second bucket.



◆ Water on heads relay

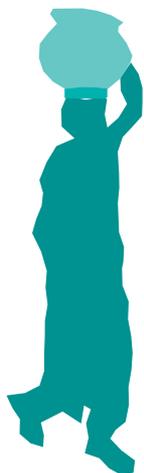
Organise the children into teams, each with a large bucket of water and a smaller bucket (like a sandcastle bucket). The first person should take their small bucket full of water and place it on their head, using their hands to steady it. They then walk to the other end spilling as little as possible, to a second, empty bucket. The small bucket is emptied into the second bucket, and the child runs back to the beginning, passing the small bucket to the next person in the team. The next person fills their bucket with water and repeats the process until all the team have had a go. The winning team has the most water in their second bucket.

SONGS

- ◆ 'Lovely Jubbly' - Doug Horley, *Lovely Jubbly* CD 2005
- ◆ 'Our God is a Great Big God' - Nigel and Jo Hemmingway, *God Loves Me* CD 2006
- ◆ 'Praise Him, you Heavens' - Russell Frager 1998
- ◆ 'Like the River Needs the Rain' - Doug Horley, *King of Heaven* CD 2002
- ◆ 'Praise Him, All Creation' - Frank and Betsy Hernandez, *Kids in Worship* CD 2000
- ◆ 'He's got the Whole World in his Hands'

TEACHING

- ◆ Watch the *Water is Life* video from the ACTION PACK and reflect on the importance of water in our lives and the lives of everyone on the planet.
- ◆ Watch a clip from a nature series (such as *Human Planet*, *Blue Planet* or *Planet Earth*) to understand the importance of water for life on earth. (There are many clips available at www.youtube.com/BBCearth.)

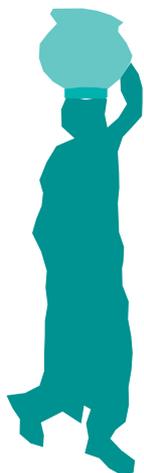




- Play charades, taking it in turns to act out the uses of water in everyday life.
- Do the WATERSHED Water Quiz from the ACTION PACK.
- Watch one or both of the case stories featured in the ACTION PACK. Use a large map of the world to find the places mentioned on the film and discuss the reasons why this part of the world doesn't have enough clean water. This could include factors such as climate, wealth, infrastructure, unfair distribution of resources etc.
- The week before the session buy two identical plants. Keep one well watered but don't water the other one. Compare what happens to the two plants over the course of a week, demonstrating the necessity of water to sustain life.
- Have a large glass of clean water next to a glass where a small amount of soil or sand has been stirred in. Discuss the importance of clean water for healthy living and the potential hazards of having to drink or wash in unclean or contaminated water. Slowly pour the dirty water through a filter paper such as a coffee machine filter and see how some of the visible impurities can be removed. Explain that the water that we drink has been through a complex filtering process to make it drinkable. WATERSHED money goes towards providing access to safe, clean water for things like drinking, washing and farming. (Alongside this you may want to show the 'Sand Dam Case Story' video to show how sand can be used as a filter to make clean water available for communities to use in these ways.)
- Print or write out Genesis chapter 1 on a large sheet of paper. Using coloured pens and highlighters, ask the children to annotate the text where they see references to water. What instructions does God give to humans about taking care of the world he has created?
- Print or write out Psalm 65: 9-13 and cut up into sections, eg, verse 9 'You take care of the earth and send rain to help the soil grow all kinds of crops.' Organise the children into small groups and give each group one section of the text. Using percussion instruments, instruments the children have made or sounds they can make with their voices or bodies, produce music for their part of the text. Then read the verses out, with the children providing the musical soundtrack accompaniment.

ACTIVITIES

- Print or show the photographs available in the ACTION PACK. Ask the children to brainstorm words or ideas that come to mind as they look at the pictures. Using the water drop template at the end of this resource, the children could write a poem in the shape of the droplet using their initial ideas. These 'shape poems' could then be decorated using coloured pencils and displayed.
- Set up bowls of water or a baby bath with bath toys, plastic cups, sieves etc and let the children play with water.
- On a large sheet of paper, draw wave patterns which could then be filled in using collage materials of different blues and greens. Use a range of textures, eg, tissue paper, shiny paper, sequins for each wave.
- Make bubble paintings using shades of green and blue paint. The paint mixture should be watery with some washing-up liquid added. The children can then blow into the paint using a straw to produce coloured bubbles. A piece of paper is then placed on top of the bubbles so that a bubble print is made.
- Cut a water droplet shape out of the middle of a sheet of A4 or A5 black card. Strips of coloured tissue paper in shades of green and blue can be stuck across the droplet shape using glue or sticky tape to make a stained glass window or sun catcher effect.
- Design a poster to remind people about ways in which we can all save water and use it wisely, eg, use washing-up water to water plants. These posters could then be laminated and displayed around your church building. Use the Water Saving Actions resource in the ACTION PACK for ideas.
- Ask each child to bring in a water bottle or provide one for them. Make a bottle holder out of craft foam. These could then be decorated with collage materials or felt tipped pens.





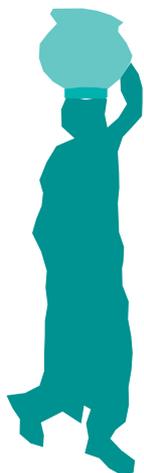
RESPONSE

- As the children begin to understand the importance of access to water for farming, they could be encouraged to grow their own produce. This produce – eg, tomatoes, strawberries, peppers – could then be sold to raise money for WATERSHED. These could be grown in a garden, in tubs or window boxes at the church. The children could each be given a packet of seeds to take home and grow, then bring the produce in to sell.
- Have a fast from all drinks except water for a week (ensure that the children understand the importance of drinking plenty of water, though!) The children could fast from their fizzy drinks and squash and the wider church could fast from tea and coffee. The money that would have been spent on these other drinks could then be donated to WATERSHED.
- Using air-hardened clay, make a water droplet shape approximately 10–15cm long. Make a hole for a piece of twine or ribbon at the top of the droplet and paint the droplet in watery colours, eg, greens, blues, purples. These wall hangings could then be sold to raise money for WATERSHED.
- Make plant waterers by cutting the bottom off a 500ml plastic drinks bottle and removing the lid from the top. The top of the bottle is placed upside down into the soil next to the plant and the bottle is filled with water, acting as a reservoir. These plant waterers could be decorated with permanent markers, collage materials and sold in aid of WATERSHED.



PRAYER

- Seat the children in a large circle around a map of the world. Give each child a cup of water. As they drink their cup of water, thank God for the beautiful world that he has created and remember that God told humans to take care of it. Pray for people in those parts of the world that do not have clean, safe water and ask God to help us to be ready to respond through projects like WATERSHED.
- Provide a wide bowl of water and some pebbles. Ask the children to come and drop a pebble into the water, watching the ripples spread out. As they watch the ripples, remind the children that our actions are like ripples that affect other people and spread out. When we use more than our fair share of resources, or waste resources like water, our actions affect the world we live in. However, our actions can be good – such as conserving resources and raising money – and those ripples affect other people in a positive way. Pray that God will help us produce good ripples.
- Make a large cloud out of white or silver paper as well as lots of smaller blue, droplet-shaped pieces of paper. Ask the children to pray and think about ways in which they could help people who do not have access to clean water – eg, by raising money, by raising awareness, by thinking about their own use of water. If the children feel they can commit to helping in some way, they could write on a droplet their name and what they are going to do. The droplet could be stuck on to the larger cloud as an act of commitment.





watershed

GIVE WATER
GIVE LIFE

