Water We Doing Here

About This Lesson

Academic Question: How many ways can we save water today?

Objective(s):

- To discuss how water is used every day
- To brainstorm how water can be saved every day

Product/Application: Discuss with the students on where freshwater comes from in their local area. Brainstorm ideas on what they could do to save water in the future.

Getting Started

Supplies:

- Thin kitchen sponges cut into approximately 2 x 3 in. squares, one for each student
- A medium sized plastic bowl with a lid, large enough for all of the sponges to fit into easily with water

Process (Activities):

1. Develop an interrupted case study scenario appropriate to your region, based on the background information provided above. Present this to students before beginning the exercise.
2. To calibrate how much water is needed in the bowl, fill the empty bowl approximately ½ to 3/4th full, and mark the water line with a water-based pen. Carefully add sponges, squeezing them so that the water is absorbed. If there is not enough water, add more in measured amounts (by the cup), until all of the sponges are full. It is ok if there is water left over in the bowl. When finished, pour out all of the sponges. Fill the bowl to the water line plus the additional water measured earlier. Mark the water line with a permanent marker. This is the water line to be used for this activity in the future. Squeeze out the sponges and allow to dry. The sponges can now be stored in the bowl.
3. To perform this activity in the classroom, start out discussing the amount of freshwater available to us on earth. Although the surface of the earth is approximately 72% water, only 2% of that is freshwater. And of that 2%, only a fraction of that is available to us for use. Fill the bowl to the waterline, explaining that this represents all of the water we have for daily use.
4. Give each student a sponge. Walk around the room with the bowl, asking each student to place the sponge in the water and tell how he/she used water today. If you have a large classroom, you might extend use period to “this week” or “this weekend”. There should

be no two answers alike. Discuss how by each of us using water, all the available resources have been "absorbed".

5. Now walk around and have each student take out one sponge and tell how he/she has (or could have) saved water. Each student squeezes out all the water in the sponge into the bowl with each answer. There should be no identical answers.
6. With all of the sponges out of the bowl, the water should be a little murky and lower than the original water line. Discuss how even when we are careful to conserve water and clean the water we use, the water is not completely clean and we still did not return all of the water back to its original levels.

Assessment/Evaluation: Have the students create a diagram (or the teacher can create a quiz) matching up wasteful water usage problems and their solutions.

This module was originally developed as part of the "Hurricane Recovery Workshops for Students", held in Corpus Christi in 2017.