

WATER JUSTICE STORY CIRCLE

Objective:

The Water Justice Story Circle is a resource-light activity designed to teach primary-aged children about water justice through storytelling and group discussion. This activity encourages creative thinking and empathy while discussing the importance of equitable access to clean water.

Equipment Needed:

- **Chalk or Tape:** To create a circle on the ground (if outdoors) or a designated space (if indoors).
- **Marker and Whiteboard/Poster Paper:** For writing down key points and ideas during the discussion.
- **Picture Cards or Drawings:** Optional visuals to aid storytelling and engage children.
- **Optional:** 2 x Glasses/cups with water and 'pollutant' (can be anything non-hazardous).

Activity Setup

1. Use chalk or tape to create a circle on the ground outdoors or designate a circle in a clear space indoors.
2. Prepare picture cards or drawings related to water sources, communities, and challenges for visual aids (optional).
3. Gather the children in the circle, ensuring everyone has a clear view of the center.

Activity Steps:

Introduction (5 minutes):

Begin by briefly discussing what water is and why it's important for our daily lives.

Introduce the concept of "water justice" as everyone having access to clean and safe water, just like in a fair game where everyone has an equal chance to play.

Storytelling (10 minutes):

Start a simple story related to water justice. For example, "Once upon a time in a village, there were two friends named Ailis and Liam. They loved playing by the river..."

Use visuals or drawings to enhance the storytelling and capture the children's attention.

Passing the Story (10 minutes):

After a few sentences, pause the story and invite a child to continue the story from where you left off.

Continue passing the story around the circle, with each child adding a sentence or two.

Facilitator can guide the discussion and introduce the following injustices:

- One friend had to travel much further for drinking water than the other each day,
- One friend has to pay for clean drinking water while the other gets it for free,
- One friend's water is clean when they get it, the other's is unsafe to drink.

(Optional: This step can be acted out with two volunteers and two glasses of water, one that is potable and another that has a pollutant in it.)

Discussion (10 minutes):

Once the story concludes, guide the children in a group discussion:

Ask questions like:

- “What challenges did the characters face regarding water?”
- “Was it fair that only some characters had clean water?”
- “How do you think the characters felt about this?”

Encourage children to share their thoughts and listen to each other.

Drawing and Sharing (10 minutes):

Provide each child with a piece of paper and markers.

Ask them to draw a scene from the story that represents fairness and water justice.

After drawing, invite volunteers to share their drawings and explain their choices.

Reflection (5 minutes):

Summarise the key points from the discussion:

- “Water is important for everyone.”
- “Sometimes, people don’t have enough clean water, and that’s not fair.”
- “Water justice means making sure everyone has access to clean water.”

Educational Takeaways:

- **Empathy:** Children develop empathy by understanding the challenges some communities face in accessing clean water.
- **Critical Thinking:** Through discussions, they critically analyse the fairness of situations and consider different perspectives.
- **Creativity:** Drawing scenes from the story encourages creative expression and visualisation of concepts.
- **Awareness of Water Justice:** Children learn the idea of water justice and its significance within different ways of life. Emphasise that there is diversity within Ireland as well as globally.

Remember to adapt the story and discussion to suit the age and understanding of the children. The activity promotes active participation, collaboration, and a memorable learning experience without requiring elaborate resources.

