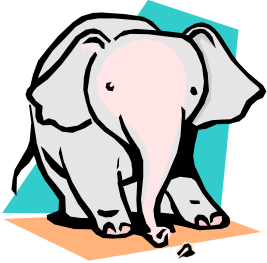




We all Need Water!



Water is a **resource** or supply every living thing needs to survive. Without water, we wouldn't have rivers, elephants, or even pizza for that matter!

That's because water

supports all the plant and animal life found in nature, and it's also used for growing food, watering our parks, and helping factories produce the things we use. Just about everything on this planet—whether natural or not—depends on water in some form or another!

Our Water Footprint



The amount of freshwater used to **manufacture**, or make, an item is called a **water footprint**. For example, the water footprint of a cotton tee shirt is about

525 gallons. That's the amount of water needed to grow cotton for the tee shirt, and to run the factories that spin the thread, weave the fabric, and sew the shirt. The size of a water footprint varies depending on the item. One serving of beans has a water footprint of 60 gallons, yet one quarter-pound hamburger has a water footprint of 625 gallons! Water footprints—the total amount of freshwater used—can be measured for individual people, businesses and even cities and countries.

Managing our Water



Carefully balancing all uses for water helps us meet most of our water needs. For example, water in a river sustains life for the fish and plants

that live in that ecosystem. Farmers also need water from the river to grow food, and cities need water for people, landscapes and businesses. Since water is needed for a lot of different things, thousands of people in California work to **manage**, or make decisions about, how to best use our water resources.

Growing Food



California has one of the biggest **economies** in the world. That means that a lot of money is made from **industry** or business that occurs in our state. One

of California's biggest businesses is **agriculture** or growing food. As a matter of fact, California is the fifth largest supplier of food and other agricultural products in the world! It **exports**, or sends these products out to other states and even other countries. California's large agriculture industry requires a lot of water. Whether water's used to grow peas and strawberries, or it's used to grow hay and grains fed to animals like cows, pigs and chickens, all food we eat relies on water.

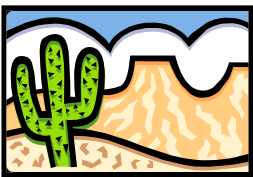
Gone Fishing



Fishing is another big part of California's economy. California's rivers are home to fish like the rainbow trout and salmon. These fish are part of a river's natural ecosystem.

Animals like bears and eagles depend on these fish for food, as do many people who go fishing. When rivers don't get enough water, (because of overuse, drought or **regulations** that rule when and where the water can flow) their fish can't survive. Then the fishermen, restaurants and other businesses that depend on fishing, can't earn a living. The bears and eagles also run out of their food source, and that affects the whole balance of nature, wildlife and people!

All Dried Up



California is a dry state that regularly experiences **droughts**. This is a long period of time when little snow or rain falls in an area.

Sometimes, to keep rivers flowing during drought, water must be added from another source. This could be a river upstream, or it could be a **reservoir**—a large area like a lake that is especially created to hold freshwater for people to use. But even large reservoirs start to run out of water if it hasn't rained in a long time. Because California is a dry state, we need to pay close attention to the amount of water taken out of our rivers for agriculture, cities and other uses. We must balance the needs for our farmland and cities, with keeping the rivers flowing for fish and other animals that depend on them.

Using Water in the City



California has many **urban areas**. These are large towns and cities like San Francisco, San Jose, and Los Angeles. Most of California's **population**, or

number of residents, live, work, and study in urban areas. Because of this, towns and cities use a lot of water. **Municipal uses** of water include what city departments use on behalf of the city itself, such as: fire fighting, watering parks, or cleaning city streets. **Household uses** of water include what people use in their homes for things like: doing dishes, flushing toilets, or watering gardens. The average San Francisco resident uses about 60 gallons per day. This is less than the average use in the rest of California because homes in other cities usually have much larger gardens and lawns than those in San Francisco. Also, due to its geography, San Francisco has fewer hot days than most other areas of the state.

The Juggling Act



Sometimes it's hard to juggle all our different water needs. The state and city agencies in charge of how we use our water work hard to make sure we are being smart with our water.

They understand how important it is that we have enough water during droughts, enough water to grow our food, and enough water to keep our natural areas and their inhabitants healthy!



Our Water

Student Comprehension Questions

1. What is a water footprint?

2. Why is it important that people in California work to manage our water resources?

3. Name two industries that depend on water and are a big part of California's economy:

4. When rivers don't get enough water, their fish can't survive. What happens as a result?

5. What are some municipal uses of water?

6. What are some household uses of water?

7. What do you think is the most important water need? Why?



1. What is a water footprint?

A water footprint is the amount of water used to manufacture an item. Water footprints can be measured for individual people, businesses, and even cities and countries.

2. Why is it important that people in California work to manage our water resources?

It is important to manage our water resources because water is used in California for so many different things.

3. Name two industries that depend on water and are a big part of California's economy:

agriculture and fishing

4. When rivers don't get enough water, their fish can't survive. What happens as a result?

The fishermen, restaurants, and other businesses that depend on fishing, can't earn a living. The bears and eagles also run out of their food source, and that affects the whole balance of nature, wildlife and people!

5. What are some municipal uses of water?

fighting fires, watering parks, cleaning city streets

6. What are some household uses of water?

doing dishes, flushing toilets, watering gardens

7. What do you think is the most important water need? Why?

(subjective answer)