

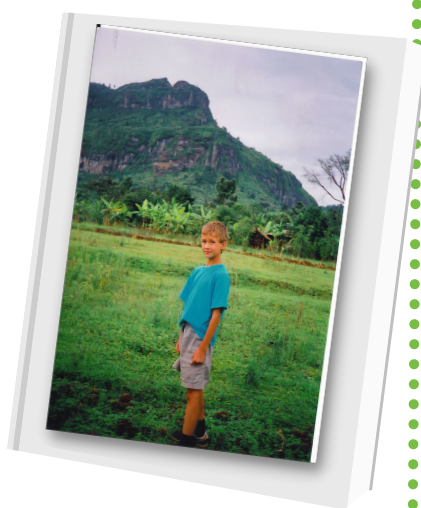
Ryan's Well

In The Classroom



Our Story

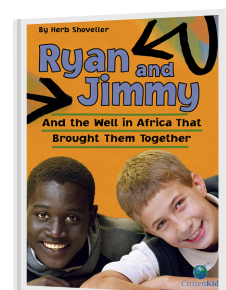
Ryan Hreljac (pronounced "Hurl-Jack") was in Grade 1 at Holy Cross School in Kemptville, Ontario, Canada, when he learned that there were people in the world who didn't have clean water. Stubborn and naive, this six-year-old did chores, saved his pennies, and rallied his classmates and community. He raised enough money to construct a well in Uganda, Africa. Over twenty years later, the Ryan's Well Foundation is still going strong, and has provided clean water to over 1.3 million people in 17 countries!



Learn more



Did you know that Ryan shared his story on Oprah...twice? You can see the full clip on our [YouTube channel](#).



Ryan and Jimmy and the Well in Africa that Brought them Together is the true story of Ryan building a well in Uganda, and how Jimmy, his Ugandan penpal, became his brother. [Click here](#) to see how you can get your copy.

What we do



BUILD

Clean Water,
Sanitation, and
Hygiene Projects.



EDUCATE

On the
Importance of
Access to Safe
Water and
Sanitation.



MOTIVATE

To Get
Involved and
Make a
Difference.

What's inside

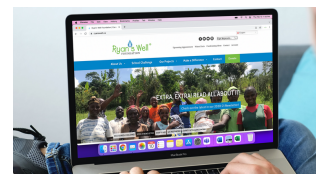
Mentor texts to teach your class about water issues, along with:

Descriptions and accompanying audiobook/read-along versions.

Guiding questions.

Activity ideas to accompany these texts in the classroom.

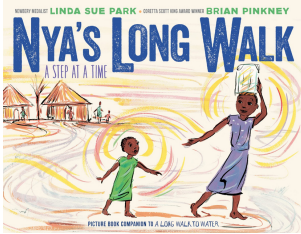
Fundraising ideas and stories from some amazing students.



[Our website](#) is a great place to find a ton of information about our project work, fundraising ideas, and SO much more.

Books About Water to Use In Your Class

Mentor Text



[*Nya's Long Walk*](#), by Linda Sue Park

Description

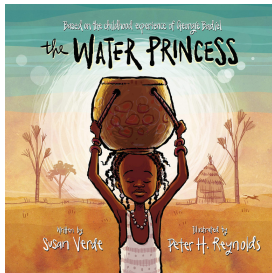
Nya and her sister, Akeer, must walk a long way every day to collect water for their family. When Akeer becomes sick and cannot walk any further, Nya must somehow find a way to carry both her sister and the water. Nya knows that, with a little determination and perseverance, she will be able to make it home and get help for Akeer.

Guiding Questions

- What are some things that were challenging for Nya?
- How did she reach her goal?
- How does this story make you feel? Why do you feel this way?
- In some countries, young girls are responsible for getting water. What might they be missing because of these duties?

Activity Ideas

- Think of some challenges you or people you know have had. How did you deal with or overcome them?
- Carry various sizes of containers of water for different distances. What does that feel like?
- Consider math connections, such as measurement.

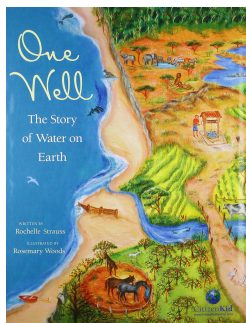


[*The Water Princess*](#), by Susan Verde

Princess Gie Gie rules over a beautiful, African land. She dreams of having water that is cool, crisp, and clear. But the water she and her village have is far away and very dirty. No matter what she does, Gie Gie cannot make the water come closer, or become clearer. How will Gie Gie get clean water?

- Imagine your life without water.
- How does Gie Gie make the best of the long daily walk for water?
- How would Gie Gie and her village be different if the water was closer and clearer?

- View [this video](#), narrated by students from Toronto.
- Gie Gie walked four miles (about 6.5 kilometres) a day - the equivalent of 70 football fields. Set up and walk laps in the school yard that would cover the same distance.

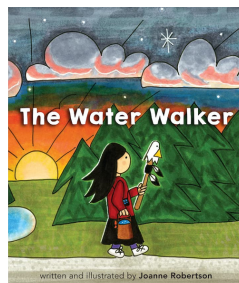


[*One Well*](#), by Rochelle Strauss

Water can do so many amazing things! It can help to grow plants, create energy, be a home to so many creatures, and even keep you alive and healthy. All the water in the world is connected in some way, and we all need to preserve, conserve, and protect our water. We all have a part to play in taking care of the world's water, and this book will help show you what you can do to help!

- What are some of the purposes of this text? Is it a story?
- As you hear a passage from the text, what images come to mind?
- The text has some guiding questions and suggestions on page 30-31.

- Create trivia questions with some of the many facts and statistics from the text.
- The book is organized into many subtopics. Invite students to listen to a section of the text from [this video on YouTube](#), and report three things they learned, two things that surprised them, and draw one picture.



[*The Water Walker*](#), by Joanne Robertson

Nokomis, an Ojibwe woman, loves Nibi (or water), and thanks it every day for all that it does for her, and for all life. However, she sees how others disrespect the water, waste it, and pollute it. Nokomis and others walk every spring for seven years to raise awareness of the need to protect our water. Without Nibi, there is no life, and Nokomis asks us what we will do to protect it.

- "Water will be worth more than gold." What does Nokomis mean by this statement? Why is she worried?
- What action does this text require us to do? To consider?
- Are there ways you could use less water? Would that be a good thing? Why or why not?

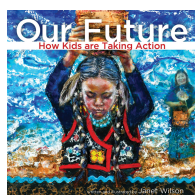
- How do you use water? At home? At school? Write each usage on a separate sticky (i.e., brushing your teeth, washing your hands, etc.).
- Give an estimated quantity to the amount of water you use per sticky. Research the cost of gold today. If you had to pay gold prices for water, how much would what you use daily cost you? How valuable is water to you?

Books About Water to Use In Your Class

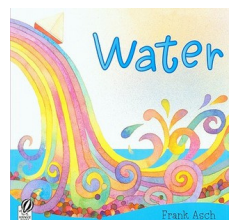
Mentor Text



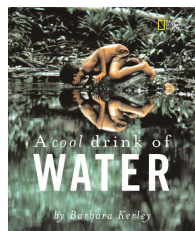
[We Are Water Protectors](#),
by Carole Lindstrom



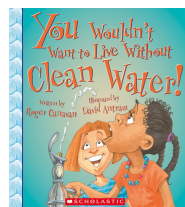
[Our Future](#), by Janet
Wilson



[Water](#), by Frank Asch



[A Cool Drink of Water](#),
by Barbara Kerley



[You Wouldn't Want to Live Without Clean Water](#), by
Roger Canavan

Description

Strikingly illustrated, this book tells the story of a strong Indigenous girl, who rallies others to fight the "black snake" that threatens all water on the earth. She is determined to protect her village, animals, and all life from the black snake of pollution. Inspired by Indigenous-led movements to protect the earth's water.

This is the true story of Autumn Peltier, a young Canadian activist who spoke in front of the United Nations to raise awareness of the need for clean water for Indigenous populations, and to fight against water pollution.

With beautiful, colourful illustrations, this book explores water in all its forms – from clouds, to dew, to snowflakes – and encourages readers to appreciate the beauty of the water that is all around them.

Water comes from many places other than just your kitchen tap. People all over the world access water from a variety of sources – from wells, to rivers, to rainwater. No matter where they get it, everyone needs water.

This book takes readers on a journey to see the many ways in which scientists and governments created ingenious ways to make sure that everyone has access to the clean, safe water we all need to survive.

Guiding Questions

- Do you know of, or can you find examples of, the "Black Snake" threatening the earth and water in Canada?
- Do you feel that the situation was handled well? Why, or why not?
- What would you do differently to deal with this situation/conflict?
- What action can we take?

- What are some of Autumn's concerns?
- Watch [this CBC interview with Autumn](#). What statements does Autumn make that are meaningful to you? To Canadians and to the world?

- What do you think is the author/illustrator's purpose?
- How are the elements of visual art used to give a deeper meaning?
- Two pages do not have any text. What words can we compose?
- Which pages resonate with you. Why? In what way?

- What are some of the more difficult ways people must get water? Easier ways?
- What is an important message for you from the book?
- Which locations are more familiar to you? Which locations may have a communal source for water?
- Which places would you like to visit? Why?

- This book has a strong voice of science and facts. Why is it important to pay attention to science and research in our lives? How can we do so?
- What did you already know about your water footprint (see pp. 20-21)? Didn't know?
- What information is cause for concern? For hope?

Activity Ideas

- Listen to [this talk on YouTube](#) by the author.
- Take the pledge on the last page of the book.
- Create your own class pledge to protect water.
- Choose your favourite water colour illustration from the book. Re-create it using a different medium.

- The book's final pages give ideas for how young people can try to make a difference in their own lives and communities.
- Listen to [Autumn's UN address](#).

- Create various works of art about water. Find music to accompany them.
- Watch [Water, by Frank Asch](#) for another readaloud.

- Use a t-chart or Venn diagram to discuss the pros and cons of bottled water.
- Read the two pages titled "A cool drink around the World." Illustrate and describe a place you find water in your world.
- Ryan's Well Foundation has helped more than 1.1 million people have access to clean water. Find and learn about some of these locations.

- Create a timeline for how you use water over the course of your day (p. 21).
- Try some of the "You Can Do It" activities, such as:
 - Collecting drips from a tap (p. 17).
 - Build an aqueduct (p.19).
 - Make a water filter (p. 25).

The School Challenge is on!

Every year, schools have the chance to participate in the **School Challenge program**. Students from around the world work together to fundraise for a clean water project at another school abroad – it's students helping students! You'll also receive updates right from the project site, so you can see the difference you're making in real time! To learn more about the program, visit our [School Challenge page](#).

Success stories



Martina D'Astolfo's grade five class at Searingtown Elementary School in New York created their own well, and developed daily dress themes: "Nickels and Neon," "Pennies and Pajamas," "Denim and Dimes..." They raised \$3,189.00 USD for clean water projects!



Mrs. Mason's grade 5 and 4/5 classes at Guardian Angels School created and managed an online store selling coffee and spices, and raised over \$1,100!



Mrs. Friend's grade three class at Middle Creek Year Round Elementary school in North Carolina raised \$625 for the School Challenge project with a popsicle sale – which is now becoming an annual event – a "cool" way to make a difference!

Creative Fundraising

1

Instead of buying bottled water, donate the amount the water would cost to the School Challenge.

2

Do an odd job around the house (like Ryan did), and donate your earnings to the School Challenge.

3

Collect old baby photos from classmates (or, even better, your teachers and principal), post them, and have people pay to guess who's who! A prize for the person who guesses the most correctly.

4

Hold an auction! Collect donations of goods or services to be sold at competitive prices. The highest bidder on any item wins.

5

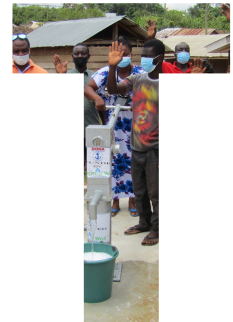
Walk, run, skip, spin, ski, skate, swim, rollerblade, dance, yoga... you get the idea! Use your favourite sport or activity to collect donations and pledges.

Check out the [Ryan's Well Foundation website](#) for even more fundraising ideas!



Cool Classroom Ideas

- 1 Use sticky notes to record the ways we use water, and sort and re-sort them under different headings. Add more ideas as the School Challenge unfolds.
- 2 Play charades or mime the ways we use water. Then mirror them facing a partner – one person leads and the other follows. Switch roles.
- 3 Fill or partially fill a variety of containers with water and guess how much volume is in each.
- 4 Share an online mentor text or Ryan's Well video with your family.
- 5 Watch "[When Passion Meets Vision.](#)" How can you share what you've learned (i.e., a pamphlet, an advertisement, a magazine cover, a poster, etc.).
- 6 Search the internet for other articles and videos about Ryan's Well. Share them with others.



Video Chat with Ryan!



Engage your class with a video chat from Ryan! Help your class get motivated, or learn more about the water crisis. Ryan would be happy to answer any questions they may have!

Send him an e-mail at ryan@ryanswell.ca, or [request a video chat on our website](#).

