



Water-recycling-in-Western-Australia

About this lesson

Students learn about the importance of water in rituals of different cultures.

Year level: Year 7

Theme: Water and the natural environment

Learning objectives

Students can:

- explore different cultures
- discuss the importance of water in rituals of different cultures
- write a project on a chosen topic.

Curriculum links

Geography

- The economic, cultural, spiritual and aesthetic value of water for people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and peoples of the Asia region [ACHGK041](#)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

- [OI.3](#) – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have unique belief systems and are spiritually connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways.
- [OI.5](#) – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' ways of life are uniquely expressed through ways of being, knowing, thinking and doing.

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia

- [OI.1](#) – The peoples and countries of Asia are diverse in ethnic background, traditions, cultures, belief systems and religions.

Things you will need

- Internet and various research sources
- Workbooks
- [Water in other cultures fact sheet](#)

Lesson description

Plan your lesson in consultation with Aboriginal staff or local community members. Please see our [Western Australian Aboriginal language centres contact list](#).

Discuss

- What are ways that we use water every day? List these on the board.
- What is the importance of water in rituals of different cultures?

Activity

- Ask students to choose one belief from the list on the [Water in other cultures fact sheet](#) (or from another source). Make sure there's an equal mix of students working on each topic to ensure a range of presentations.
- Students are to research economic, cultural and spiritual values in which water provides inspiration for ceremonies, customs and daily life of their chosen belief.
- Students create a detailed written and illustrated report using various sources, and present it in an approved presentation medium.

Reflect & summarise

Each student (or group) spends 5 minutes presenting their findings on their chosen topic, to the class.

Extension activities

Contact the [One World Centre](#) for books, videos and kits related to water and its roles in different world cultures.

Teacher background information

Why water is sacred to Aboriginal people

To understand the importance of Country to Aboriginal people in WA, it's essential to know something of their history and spiritual beliefs. Aboriginal people have lived on the Australian continent for around 60,000 years and have developed a close connection to and understanding of the environment.

To Aboriginal people, waterways and water are more than landscape features or natural resources. Water

is life. Water is sacred. Water is part of their body and soul. What is done to the land and water affects Aboriginal peoples' spiritually. They feel a responsibility to care for their land conserving it for future generations.

Water and the Dreaming

Aboriginal people believe land provides a link between the people and the Dreaming. This belief manifests itself in Creation, or Dreaming stories, one of which explains creation and respect for water in a dry land. The stories, handed down from generation to generation, often involve creative forces, and spirits or entities in animal or human forms. Some Dreaming stories about water feature serpent-like beings, which created many rivers and wetlands. In the South West of WA, this creature is called Waugal.

Significance of water related sites

Water and landscape features play an important part, not only in stories but also in dance, hunting, art local, customs, practices, and beliefs of Aboriginal people. Important sites are usually associated with nearby water sources such as rivers, soaks, springs, rock holes and billabongs. As they provide water, these places are abundant sources of food and medicines, and are used as ceremonial sites, camping areas, and trade routes pass through them.

Resources

- Sacred journeys notes from the Ganges, search Youtube
- Indigenous Australian talk about the mythical Rainbow Serpent, search Youtube

Did you know?

For many religions water has a central place in their practices and beliefs.

Key vocabulary

- **Belief:** Any cognitive content held as true.
- **Culture:** All the knowledge and values shared by a society.
- **Faith:** Institution to express belief in a divine power.
- **Religion:** Institution to express belief in a divine power.
- **Spiritual:** Of, concerned with, or affecting the soul.

Related links & other lesson plans