

HOW TO ORGANISE YOUR CAMPAIGNING ACTIVITY



Each year group at Fulmer Infant School in Buckinghamshire explored a variety of different learning activities. Year 1 pupils learned about saving water and shared their 'Water Can Change Lives' messages with their families. All pupils were involved in building models, painting posters and writing letters to politicians.

What is it?

This 'Water Can Change Lives' campaigning activity is part of Oxfam's wider campaigning for a fairer world, where everyone has the water they need to stay healthy and grow food. Young people can join the campaign by communicating what they've learned about the importance of a reliable water supply and explaining what action they think should be taken to support water-vulnerable communities.

What's the point?

Taking part allows young people to see that their actions can make a difference and have an influence on decision makers. Pupils can write their own messages to the UK government and send them to their local MP.

How it works

- Print out and photocopy a watering can template for each of your students choosing to join the campaign (you could enlarge these to A3).
- Ask pupils to create their own messages for the UK government, based on what they have learned.
- Post them to your local MP.
- Please let Oxfam know about any messages that you send.

Get everyone involved

The more messages sent to the government, the more powerful a campaign is. See how many people you can get to write one – they could be completed in the classroom, on a stall at lunchtime, or would make a great activity to be completed at the finish line or along the route of a Water Walk.

Water Can Change Lives activity not for you?

Pupils could organise other campaigning activities, such as writing a letter to their MP, putting on a colourful stunt, or holding a school debate. Alternatively, pupils could fundraise instead! There are loads of ideas at www.oxfam.org/waterstories

What should the messages say?

The most powerful are those which pupils write themselves. There are two sections on the 'Water Can Change Lives' template:

1. **During Oxfam Water Week I've learned...** Pupils could outline one or two key points they have learned about the importance of water to stay healthy and grow food. Pupils could refer to the case study from Liberia to illustrate the importance of irrigation in helping farmers to grow food and make a living.
2. **The action I think our government leaders should take is...** Pupils could ask their local MP to support Oxfam's water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) projects. Remember the UK government has just become the first G8 country to promise 0.7% of its budget for aid and can use its influence to ask other countries to take action too. Pupils could think about how important it is to spend aid money on water projects in water-vulnerable communities.

Get creative

Instead of, or as well as, writing campaign messages, there are many other ways for pupils to make their voices heard. Here are a few ideas:

- Present a Water Week assembly or PowerPoint to another class, parents or a neighbouring school.
- Design and display 'Water Can Change Lives' posters.
- Make a 'Water Can Change Lives' video to share with others. This could include an explanation of how pupils would deal with water issues if they were in charge.
- Organise a stall at your school or a community event to raise awareness about water vulnerability.
- Hold a debate about the importance of water to stay healthy and to grow food.
- Write to your MP, MEP, MSP or AM and ask them to support the campaign or invite them to attend any of the above events.

Do keep a record of any campaigning action and let us know what you're doing so that we can add it to our campaign. You could also invite your local newspaper to attend one of your Water Week campaigning events.

Do something to help change the world

You might like to photocopy this page to give to your pupils to explain how campaigning works and how they can take action during Oxfam Water Week.

How campaigning helps people who are water-vulnerable*

Your actions can help to:

- Convince countries to share out the world's resources fairly (e.g. by providing more irrigation).
- Persuade world leaders to respond to climate change (e.g. by reducing carbon emissions or helping countries adapt to floods).
- Make more people aware of the problems, so they can put pressure on decision-makers.
- Help people who are water-vulnerable to call for change.

Campaigning ideas

Campaigning can be anything that will get your message in front of the people you want to influence. It could be:

- Signing a petition.
- Writing a letter.
- Wearing a message on your t-shirt.
- Sending a message to your MP.
- Organising a colourful event that gets local media attention.
- Talking to friends and family about how they can make a difference.

How campaigning during Oxfam Water Week will help

We're asking decision-makers to support people who are water-vulnerable. And you can help us. There will be thousands of pupils like you taking action all over the UK. Just tell us what you have done in your school – together we'll show the UK government how passionate young people are about this issue.

Three simple steps to show decision makers you care about water.

1. Write your 'Water Can Change Lives' message for decision-makers. Tell them why they should take action.
2. Get as many people as you can to write messages.
3. Send these messages to your local MP, so they know how much you care.

(Your teacher has a blank 'Water Can Change Lives' template for you to photocopy and write your messages on.)



*To find out what being 'water-vulnerable' means see the Oxfam Water Week 'learn' film clips.