



Water Conservation

Reading Worksheet — Level F | tahricteaches.com

Water is the most fundamental resource on Earth, yet humanity continues to treat it as if it were limitless. Less than one percent of the planet's water is readily accessible freshwater, and this fragile **supply** must sustain agriculture, industry, and a global population approaching nine billion. As climate patterns shift and aquifers shrink, the urgency of conservation has moved from environmental rhetoric to economic necessity.

Agriculture accounts for roughly seventy percent of global freshwater withdrawals, making it the single largest area where efficiency gains can be achieved. Traditional flood irrigation, while inexpensive, wastes enormous quantities through evaporation and runoff. Modern drip systems and soil-moisture sensors can **reduce** consumption by up to sixty percent without sacrificing yield, though the initial investment remains a barrier for smallholder farmers in developing regions.

Urban consumers also bear significant responsibility. Leaky pipes in aging municipal infrastructure can lose up to a quarter of treated water before it ever reaches a household tap. Homeowners can contribute meaningfully by installing low-flow fixtures, harvesting rainwater, and replacing thirsty lawns with native, **drought**-tolerant plants suited to the local climate.

Industry, too, must adapt. Manufacturing a single pair of denim jeans requires nearly ten thousand liters of water, much of which becomes contaminated and difficult to **recycle**. Forward-thinking companies are adopting closed-loop systems that filter and reuse process water repeatedly, dramatically lowering their environmental footprint while also cutting operational costs over the long term.

Ultimately, meaningful conservation depends on a cultural shift as much as a technological one. Governments must price water to reflect its true scarcity, schools must teach stewardship from an early age, and individuals must recognize that every small habit—a shorter shower, a fixed faucet, a fuller dishwasher—**aggregates** into a global impact. The choices made in this generation will determine whether the next inherits a world of abundance or one defined by thirst.

A. Vocabulary

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. supply ____ | a. responsible management and care of resources entrusted to one's care |
| 2. reduce ____ | b. artificial supply of water to land for growing crops |
| 3. drought ____ | c. state of being in short supply |
| 4. recycle ____ | d. prolonged period of abnormally low rainfall causing water shortage |
| 5. aggregate ____ | e. combine or add up into a larger total |
| 6. aquifer ____ | f. basic physical systems and structures needed for a society to function |
| 7. irrigation ____ | g. total amount of something available for use |
| 8. scarcity ____ | h. make smaller in size, amount, or degree |
| 9. stewardship ____ | i. process used materials so they can be used again |
| 10. infrastructure ____ | j. underground layer of rock or soil that holds groundwater |

B. True or False

- | | |
|--|---|
| ___ 1. More than half of Earth's water is readily accessible freshwater. | ___ 2. Agriculture accounts for about seventy percent of global freshwater withdrawals. |
| ___ 3. Drip irrigation systems can cut water use by up to sixty percent. | ___ 4. Aging city pipes can lose up to a quarter of treated water before delivery. |
| ___ 5. Making one pair of jeans requires roughly one thousand liters of water. | ___ 6. Closed-loop industrial systems filter and reuse process water. |
| ___ 7. Flood irrigation is generally more efficient than drip irrigation. | ___ 8. The passage suggests pricing water to reflect its true scarcity. |
| ___ 9. The author claims technology alone will solve the water crisis. | ___ 10. Drought-tolerant native plants are recommended over traditional lawns. |

C. Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: aquifer, irrigation, scarcity, stewardship, infrastructure, drought, recycle, supply

1. Farmers in arid regions rely on efficient _____ systems to deliver water directly to plant roots.
2. A prolonged _____ in the region forced authorities to impose strict rationing on households.
3. Decades of over-pumping have caused the underground _____ beneath the valley to drop alarmingly.
4. Crumbling municipal _____ leaks millions of liters of treated water every single day.
5. Teaching children about environmental _____ helps build a culture of responsibility from a young age.



D. Comprehension Questions

1. Why does the author argue that improving agricultural water use offers the greatest potential for conservation?
2. What role does aging urban infrastructure play in water loss, and how can households help offset it?
3. According to the passage, why is a cultural shift just as important as new technology in solving the water crisis?

E. Discussion Questions

1. Should governments charge higher prices for water to encourage conservation, even if it makes life more expensive for low-income families? Why or why not?
2. In your own community, which group—farmers, factories, or households—do you think should be required to make the biggest changes to save water, and why?

Answer Key

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A. Vocabulary: 1-g, 2-h, 3-d, 4-i, 5-e, 6-j, 7-b, 8-c, 9-a, 10-f

B. True/False: 1-F, 2-T, 3-T, 4-T, 5-F, 6-T, 7-F, 8-T, 9-F, 10-T

C. Fill Blanks: 1-irrigation, 2-drought, 3-aquifer, 4-infrastructure, 5-stewardship

D. Comprehension:

1. Because agriculture consumes about seventy percent of global freshwater, even small efficiency gains there produce larger savings than improvements in any other sector.
2. Leaky municipal pipes can waste up to a quarter of treated water, but households can offset losses by installing low-flow fixtures, harvesting rainwater, and planting drought-tolerant landscapes.
3. Because meaningful conservation requires governments to price water realistically, schools to teach stewardship, and individuals to adopt daily habits that collectively produce global impact.