



Ryan's Well Foundation



For Catholic Schools

 **BUILD**  **EDUCATE**  **MOTIVATE**

Ryan Hreljac was in Grade One at Holy Cross School in Kemptville, Ontario, when he learned that there were people in the world who didn't have clean water to drink. Determined to make a difference, this 6-year-old did extra chores and saved his pennies, and eventually raised enough money to fund the building of a well in Uganda. More than twenty years later, meet the Ryan's Well Foundation: a team of people inspired by a young boy's continued dedication to recognize and help those in need.

Schools everywhere, and at any time, are invited to connect with Ryan and the team, working together to raise funds towards current Ryan's Well Foundation projects. The **School Challenge** offers an exciting and unique opportunity for all students to get involved and create positive change in the world. RWF builds a water and sanitation project **while** schools are fundraising! Classes can receive regular updates with pictures and stories of the project direct from the field so students will know **exactly** where their money is used and can see first-hand the impact of their involvement.

There is a saying that goes, "**If you have enough, then you have enough to share.**" We all recognize that the past few years have been difficult for so many in our school communities. Ryan began this journey by sharing the pennies he earned and saved. We are now inviting Catholic schools, families, and communities to support the life work of Ryan's Well Foundation by contributing to the mission of getting clean water and sanitation to children around the world. Raising money, raising awareness, and inspiring children to know that they can make a difference ... it's all part of the School Challenge. Please join us! Take a peek inside this document for suggestions for mentor texts and activities, connections to Religious Education program expectations, and ideas for easy and effective ways to fundraise.



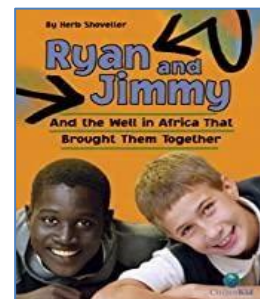
Ryan is also available to answer questions and communicate with school teams, students, and classrooms through email at ryan@ryanswell.ca



Be sure to check out our website ryanswell.ca for a wealth of newsletters, updates, current fundraising, projects, educational links, resources, stories, photographs, and more.



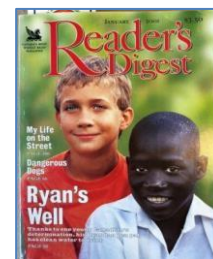
The following pages feature a collection of books and mentor texts for students of many ages to learn more about water, and for educators to engage them. Don't worry if you don't have the book in your classroom or school library. Each has a blue hyperlink that leads you to an online version!



This book is the true story of a six-year-old from CDSBEO who built a well halfway around the world and his life-changing friendship with a Ugandan boy.

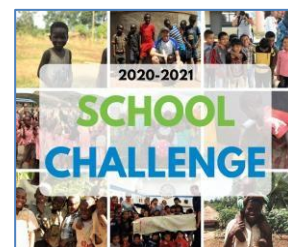


See Ryan on Oprah!
[Ryan Hreljac on the Oprah Winfrey Show - YouTube](#)



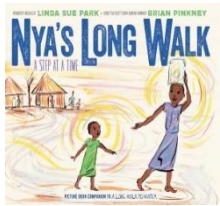
Read about Ryan's Well in Reader's Digest at [Ryan's Well \(readersdigest.ca\)](http://ryanswell.ca)

and also at <https://www.ryanswell.ca/about-ryans-well/ryans-story/>



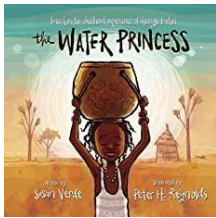
[Current School Challenge Project | Ryan's Well](#)

Mentor Text



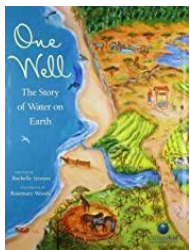
[Nya's Long Walk](#) by Linda Sue Park.

See [Nya's Long Walk \(video.link\)](#) or [Nya's Long Walk read by Carla Fortuna - YouTube](#)



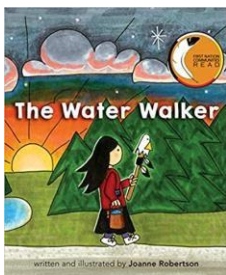
[The Water Princess](#) by Susan Verde.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UeFI7Y9QtK4>



[One Well](#) by Rochelle Strauss.

Intro video at [One Well - YouTube](#)



[The Water Walker](#) by Joanne Robertson.

Description

Young Nya takes little sister Akeer along on the two-hour walk to fetch water for the family. But Akeer becomes too ill to walk, and Nya faces the impossible: her sister and the full water vessel together are too heavy to carry. As she struggles, she discovers that if she manages to take one step, then another, she can reach home and Mama's care.

Princess Gie Gie's kingdom is a beautiful land. But clean drinking water is scarce in her small African village. And try as she might, Gie cannot bring the water closer; she cannot make it run clearer. Every morning, she rises before the sun to make the long journey to the well. She dreams of a day when her village will have cool, crystal-clear water of its own.

All water is connected. Every raindrop, lake, underground river and glacier is part of a single global well. Water has the power to change everything -- a single splash can sprout a seed, quench a thirst, provide a habitat, generate energy and sustain life. How we treat the water in the well will affect every species on the planet. One Well shows how every one of us has the power to conserve and protect our global well.

This is the story of a determined Ojibwe Grandmother and her great love for Nibi (water). Nokomis walks to raise awareness of our need to protect Nibi for future generations, and for all life on the planet. By her example she invites us all to take up our responsibility to protect our water, the giver of life. See [The Importance of Water: Book reading of Water Walker and closing Water Reflection - YouTube](#)

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?

- 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?

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

- "Water will be worth more than gold"? What does Nokomis mean by that 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?

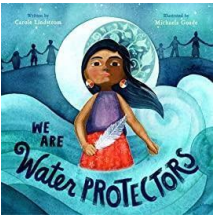
Ideas

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

- View the video below narrated by students from Toronto. [Reflecting on The Water Princess - YouTube](#)
- Gie Gie walked four miles a day, the equivalent of 70 football fields. Set up and walk laps in the school yard that would cover the same distance.

- 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 at [One Well: The Story of Water on Earth \(for classroom use\) - YouTube](#) and report 3 things they learned, 2 things that surprised them, and 1 picture to draw.

- How do you use water? At home? At school? Write each usage on a separate sticky i.e. Brushing your teeth, washing your hands.
- 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?

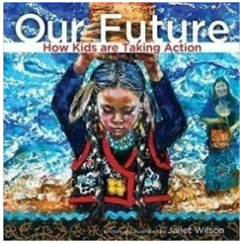


[We Are Water Protectors](#) by Carole Lindstrom.

Inspired by the many Indigenous-led movements across North America, *We Are Water Protectors* issues an urgent rallying cry to safeguard the Earth's water from harm and corruption—a bold and lyrical picture book vibrantly illustrated by Michaela Goade. See also [We Are Water Protectors by Carole Lindstrom READ ALOUD -RING AROUND RONINA~ - YouTube](#)

- 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? Why not?
- What would you do differently to deal with this situation/conflict?
- What actions can we take?

- The Author Talks [Carole Lindstrom, "We Are Water Protectors" - YouTube](#)
- 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. Recreate it using a different medium.

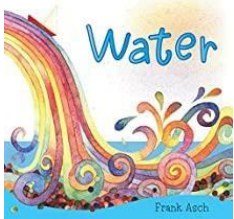


[Our Future](#) by Janet Wilson.

Young people from across the globe are raising awareness about what issues matter to them most. Among them is Canadian Autumn Peltier, who spoke in front of the United Nations to raise awareness about water pollution and clean water for First Nations.

- What are some of Autumn's concerns?
- What statements does she make that are meaningful to you? To Canadians and to the world? View [The teen fighting to protect Canada's water — meet Autumn Peltier - YouTube](#)

- The book's final pages give ideas for how young people can try and make a difference in their own lives and communities.
- Hear Autumn's UN address [World Water Day: Indigenous Canadian teen addresses UN General Assembly - YouTube](#)

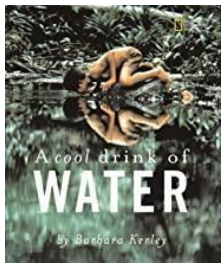


[Water](#) by Frank Asch.
[Story Time: Water by Frank Asch - YouTube](#)

Water is beautiful and useful and, in its many forms, vital to life. Simple text and vivid illustrations encourage young readers to appreciate one of our most precious resources. [Read- Aloud: Water By- Frank Asch - YouTube](#)

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

- Create various works of art about water. Find music to accompany them.
- View ["Water" by Frank Asch - YouTube](#) for another readaloud.
- Write a prayer of thankfulness for water.
- Find and share scripture passages about water.

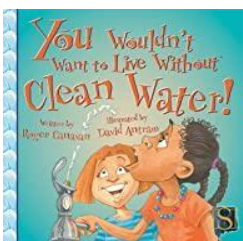


[A Cool Drink of Water](#) by Barbara Kerley. [A Cool Drink of Water - YouTube](#)

Whether they squeeze it out of a burlap bag, haul it home from a communal tap, or get it out of their kitchen faucet, people all around the world are unified by their common need for water. ["A Cool Drink of Water" by National Geographic and Barbara Kerley - YouTube](#)

- 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?

- 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 Foundations has helped more than one million people have access to clean water. Find and learn about some of these locations.



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

We could not live without water. One of the greatest challenges for scientists and governments today is to make sure that everyone has access to the clean, safe water that they need.

- 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 p. 20-21) Didn't know?
- What information is cause for concern? For hope?

- 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); and make a water filter (p. 25).

Some Connections to Religious Education Curriculum Expectations



BUILD EDUCATE MOTIVATE

Grade, Unit, Lesson			Specific Expectation	I Can Statement
1	4	1	ML3.3: We can be examples of holiness.	I can name something I can do as a sacrifice / something I can do to help others during Lent.
2	4	2	LS2.3: We respect the gift of our human dignity.	I can explain that I can help others through social action.
3	3	6	BL3.2: Christ is present through our service.	I can understand that whenever I help others, Christ is made visible.
4	4	3	ML1.3: We live the 10 commandments.	I can identify ways the school, parish, and community reach out to help others.
5	5	4	LS2.3: We can be involved in social charity.	I can identify projects in which I can participate that will assist those in need.
6	5	6	LS1.2: We are called to serve.	I can describe the call to serve by applying the See, Judge, Act model to a real-life situation.
7&8	5	6	LS2.2: We can promote social change and serve the common good.	I can explain the importance of global solidarity in addressing world problems.



Ryan is welcoming requests for virtual in-class visits! Email him directly at ryan@ryanswell.ca



A space is in development on our website that will be used to share and celebrate learning experiences, fundraising ideas, testimonials and impact statements with others!

Some Starting Points for Classrooms

- Utilize the 2014 Gr. 3 EQAO Practice test about Ryan's Well. (p. 15-18)
- Learn to sing songs about water or find recordings on the internet.
- Practice Christian meditation to ocean sounds, rain, or the sounds of running water.
- Say a prayer of thankfulness for water while you are washing your hands, or a prayer for people who need clean water.
- Use sticky notes to record ways we use water and sort and resort them under different headings. Add more ideas as the school challenge unfolds.
- Play charades or mime the ways we use water. Then mirror them facing a partner: one person leads and the other follows. Switch roles.
- Fill or partially fill a variety of containers with water and guess how much volume is in each.
- Share an online mentor text or Ryan's Well video with your family.
- Are you an Eco-school? You might be able to use some of your Ryan's Well School Challenge activities to earn Eco-schools points.
- Watch "When Passion Meets Vision" [When Passion Meets Vision: The Ryan Hreljac Story - YouTube](#). How can you share what you learned? (a pamphlet, an advertisement, a magazine cover, a poster...)
- Search the internet for other online articles and videos about Ryan's Well. Share them with others.
- Check out the Ryan's Well Foundation website for information and updates.

A Few Ideas for Fundraising

- Instead of buying bottled water, donate the amount it would cost to the School Challenge.
- Have a popcorn sale.
- Do an odd job around the house, like Ryan did, and donate your "pay" to the School Challenge.
- If your family sells something on Kijiji, they may decide to donate some of the funds to Ryan's Well.
- Give up a treat, especially during Lent or Advent, and donate the value of what it would cost.
- Collect loose change or return empty bottles.
- Donate part of your allowance.
- See also: [Fundraising Ideas Ryan's Well Foundation](#)

A Water Prayer for This Journey Together

Dear God, we know that you made us of love and for love, and that all that we do to help others is a reflection of your love for us. We are so thankful that we live in a place where there is always enough clean water to drink, especially since we know that there are many whose lives are much more challenging than ours. We want all children and families around the world to receive the gift of clean water, and we pray that our efforts will help to make that happen. Jesus said, "... I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink ... Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Know that our good work is being done out of love for you and for all your children. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who came to us as the living water. Amen.