

## OMNIBUS BOOKS

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Author	Penny Matthews
Illustrator	Tom Jellett
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# Teachers' Notes Something about Water

Written by Penny Matthews  
Illustrated by Tom Jellett

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## Introduction

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*Just about everybody I know recycles stuff. They say they're MAKING A DIFFERENCE.*

*They say they're helping to SAVE THE PLANET.*

When Robbie asks his mum why they bother to recycle and she explains how important water is, Robbie decides it might just be worthwhile after all. And when Robbie learns how old water is — older than dinosaurs, in fact — he's immediately fascinated. Robbie begins to think about water in relation to the planet.

As Robbie learns about the importance of water, he becomes interested in saving the planet. He might only be contributing in a small way, but small things *can* make a big difference. And along the way, Robbie discovers some fascinating facts about water – important things like how condensation, evaporation, precipitation and collection work.

## Author

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Penny Matthews is the author of the award-winning *A Year on Our Farm* and many other picture books and beginner reader titles for children. She is a keen recycler.

## Illustrator

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Tom Jellett works as an illustrator for News Ltd on the *Australian* and *Daily Telegraph* newspapers. He has illustrated many children's books including *Hot Stuff* and *Fuzz*, *the Famous Fly* for the Solo series, and picture books *Harry Highpants* and *My Yellow Blanky*.

## Note on the Text

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Penny Matthews has written a wonderful, educational text for young children. The story demonstrates the importance of water, explains the water cycle in simple and easy terms and offers suggestions on how individuals can recycle this very important resource. Her warm and funny narrator, Robbie, is very engaging, and children will delight in learning about water with him. The preservation of our water is a very relevant and current topic and this is the perfect book to educate children. Tom Jellett's illustrations add another dimension

to the text, providing visual tools that teach children about water. His comic-strip style heightens the humorous element as do his bold, colourful characters.

## Something about Water

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### Before Reading

We all use water every day.

- What questions do you have about water? Create a graffiti wall on butchers' paper of all the questions you can think of.

### After Reading

- How many of your questions were answered by the book? Match the answers to the questions on the wall.
- Do you have new questions after reading? Add them to the wall in a different colour.
- Where could you look for the answers?
- Who could you ask to help?
- What keywords might you use to help you search?

## Something about Water and Me

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### Science

*My body*

- Draw or trace an outline of your body.
- Colour in how much of it is water.
- Draw glasses of water around the outline to show how much water you should drink each day to keep healthy.

### Literacy

- Think of a memory you have to do with water – a beach holiday, learning to swim, playing in puddles – and tell the story to your Learning Circle. (Use a timer or a bell to make sure everybody takes less than a minute!)
- Listen to some music with water-like sounds and write five lines of all the thoughts you have while listening.
- Make a big Opposites Chart of all the wet and dry words you can think of and find.

- Search for some crazy, unusual words about water and make them into a word game for your partner to play. Visit this website for ideas <<http://library.thinkquest.org/04apr/00222/text/words.htm>>.
- Use your thesaurus to find describing words for water. Use these words to create a cinquain (a five-line poem) about water. *Teaching Note: see sample format.*

*Water*

\_\_\_\_\_ (2 describing words)

\_\_\_\_\_ (3 action words)

\_\_\_\_\_ (2 describing words)

*Water*

## Maths

*Research project: How much water do I use in a day?*

- Measure the water you use in a day by keeping a water table. Include drinking, cooking, washing your clothes, your dishes and your hands, and flushing the toilet.
- Create a pie chart to show how much water you use for each activity.
- Display your pie chart and compare it with others in the class. What do you notice?

Information about saving water is available at <[www.savewater.com.au](http://www.savewater.com.au)> and for help with measuring your water usage, visit

<<http://www.samdbnrm.sa.gov.au/Portals/7/Water%20Conservation%20Resource.pdf>> for a Water Use Chart.

# Something about Water and My Family

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## Maths

*My house*

- How much water does my household use?
- How much rainwater could my house collect?

For this research you may need to use some mathematical formulas to calculate the size of the roof and so on. Work in small groups to find the most efficient way of working out these problems. For help, check out the following link

<[http://education.melbournewater.com.au/content/water\\_supply/saving\\_water\\_at\\_home\\_and\\_school/home\\_water\\_investigator](http://education.melbournewater.com.au/content/water_supply/saving_water_at_home_and_school/home_water_investigator)>. Click on the *water supply* tab, then *saving water at home and school*, then *home water investigator*.

*Teaching Note: each state has a site devoted to water saving ideas. Search for the one with activities most closely related to the circumstances of your school community.*

## Design

*Design a sustainable dream home*

Go to the website <<http://www.abc.net.au/science/topics/?site=science&topic=human>>, click *games*, then click *browse science games* and select *house*. This site provides a quick visual reinforcement of how each home of the future can be designed to make the most of our resources. Information levels 4–7. Language levels 6–7.

## Problem Solving in Groups

I want to save the water from my shower to use on the garden. In a bucket I collect the clean water that runs from the showerhead before the water is hot. The bathroom is on the second floor of the house. I have a bad back and cannot carry the bucket of water down the stairs. Near the bath is a window that overlooks the back garden. How can I use the water from the shower (and bath) to water the entire garden downstairs?

- In small groups devise a method to use the water without pumps or expensive technology.
- Explain your idea to the rest of the class.

## Writing

- Write a five-sentence report on water use in your home based on the information you discovered during your inspection.
- Create three water-saving goals your family could achieve.

# Something about Water and My Community

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## Thinking Hats

Using the six thinking hats, think about the situation for each of the following people when there is a shortage of water:

- a vegetable grower/farmer

- the manager of a community swimming pool
- the person who cares for the elephants at the zoo
- the owner of Pooch Salon – a dog washing service.

Use the green thinking hat to brainstorm water-saving ideas for each of them.

### Language

- What do the words Reduce/Reuse/Recycle mean to you when discussing water?
- Arrange the suggestions and ideas you came up with in the Thinking Hats activity into these three categories.

### Repair a Damaged River

Go to <[www.catchmentdetox.net.au](http://www.catchmentdetox.net.au)>. This computer game may be played by individuals, small groups or as a class. It comes with teacher notes and scoring capabilities, and it is complex and factual while being very interactive and thought provoking. It demands and builds logic, mathematical thinking, decision-making, compare and contrast skills, weighing benefits and drawbacks, and an understanding of water in the community and economy. Recommended for levels 5 & 6.

## Something about Water and My Region

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### Teaching Links

- For a list of ideas from UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization) on how to get involved in creating action in your community, go to <[http://www.wateryear2003.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=1610&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://www.wateryear2003.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=1610&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)>.
- Visit the Queensland Government site *Water: Learn it for life* at <[http://www.nrw.qld.gov.au/waterwise/resources/year\\_4\\_5.html](http://www.nrw.qld.gov.au/waterwise/resources/year_4_5.html)> for a series of downloadable worksheets on water topics such as making a rain gauge, being water wise at home, pollution and understanding catchments.
- To see how other students in Australia are making a difference in their communities through self-directed projects, go to <<http://www.rumad.org.au/>>.

### Community and Environment

- Use a fish bone chart to record all the water bodies there are in your community or region. For example, swimming pools, dams, billabongs and creeks.

- Each group needs to choose one of these water bodies, and placing it in the centre of your page, make a mind map that shows how many people/animals/groups in your community rely on it.
- Display each mind map around the classroom and do a PMI (plusses, minuses and interesting/implications) for each one.
- As a class decide on the one you think could be published in the school newsletter and submit it to the editor.
- Invite a member of your community to the school to talk to you about water issues. You may want to ask them some of the questions from your graffiti wall!

## Something about Water and My Country

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### Environment

- Source a map that shows the rainfall patterns for Australia. Create a transparent overlay of this on the photocopier.
- Find another map that shows population figures and do the same.
- Overlay one map on top of the other. What do you notice?
- Create some theories to explain what you see and give some evidence for each theory.

### Industry

Industries use vast amounts of water to manufacture goods. Even making books uses water and can pollute water, because of the inks and paper used. This book was created using 'green' eco-friendly inks and paper.

- Why might the publishers have decided to do this?

### Research

What else can you find out about industries that use water or release chemicals into the water as part of their work processes?

- Choose an industry and create a short fact sheet to give a snapshot view of the industry and the changes it may be making to improve its water use.

# Something about Water and My World

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## Story and Discussion Starters

### *Speaking, Listening and Writing*

Look in the newspapers or on the net for a story about water. Think about what you could write a story on. Here are some questions to start off a discussion on your issue:

- Why should we investigate this?
- What do we already know?
- How does this affect us?
- What do we want to find out?
- What feelings do we have about it?
- What would happen if ...?
- What guess could we make about ...?
- What are we likely to see when ...?
- How can we explain ...?
- What do we want to focus on?

Visit the portal at <<http://www.unesco.org/water/>> for information on water around the world. Something raised in the discussion could be used as part of your story or it might lead in to your work in the next section, Putting It All Together.

## Putting It All Together

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After all the research and thinking you have done about water, there may be one topic or idea that interests you more than the others. This is your chance to share your thoughts and ideas with the rest of the class (or the school). Decide on an area that fascinates you and negotiate this with your teacher. Remember that your ideas will be presented visually.

You may choose to:

- make an animation
- create a digital story (using Photostory or similar software)
- make a short film using a video camera or your mobile phone
- make a PowerPoint
- make a picture book
- put together a comic strip style presentation (for great inspiration look at some of the ways the illustrator, Tom Jellett, has presented information visually!)

👉 start a blog, wiki or ning.

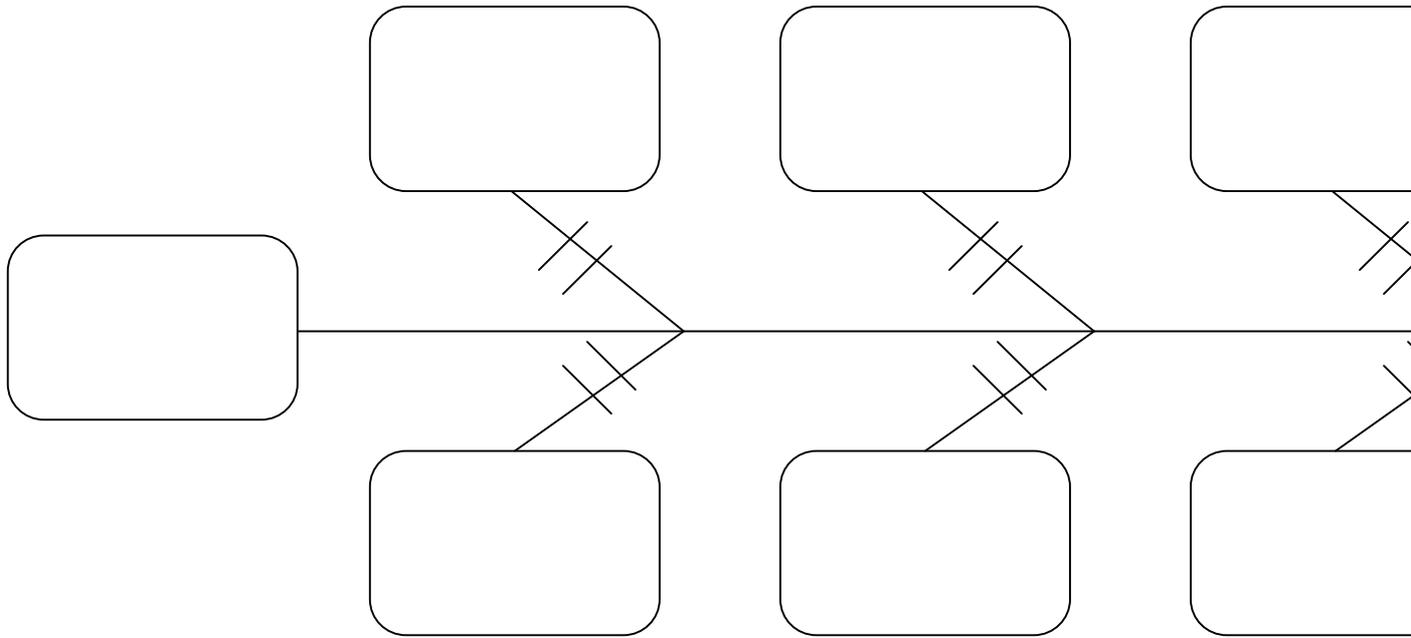
Check with your teacher about length, how it will be assessed and who will see it and when. Use a storyboard to rough out your ideas. Whichever presentation method you choose, you need to consider the following points:

- Who is it for? – Who are they? What do they like? What will work for them?
- What is it for? – How do you want to affect your audience? Do you want to make them laugh, think, change their mind, be more informed?
- What is the most effective use of pictures, voiceovers, sound effects, music? (Be careful about copyright – you might have to write your own music.)

Visit <[http://www.wateryear2003.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=6166&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://www.wateryear2003.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=6166&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)> for heaps of photos of water you might like to use in your project. Remember to say where they came from.

Have fun! To display all the work you have done, you may like to organise a *Something about Water* evening at your school or you may choose to share your work on the web or intranet.

# Fish Bone Organiser



# Storyboard Name

Topic:  
Name:

Title:  
Class:



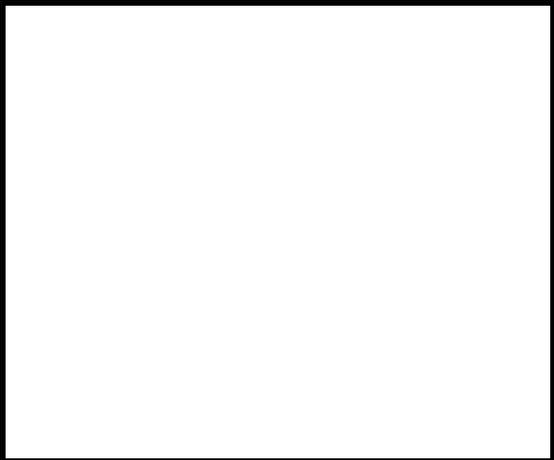
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Music:



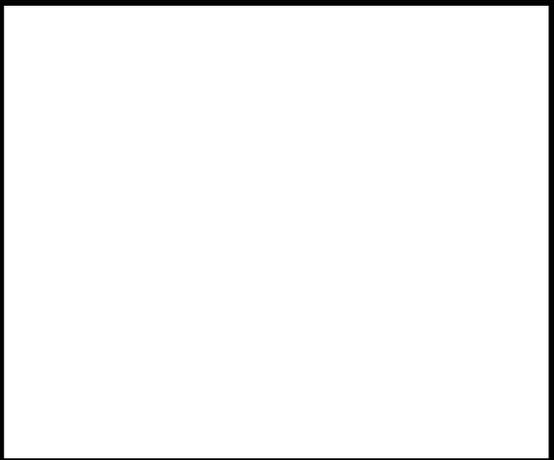
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SFX:



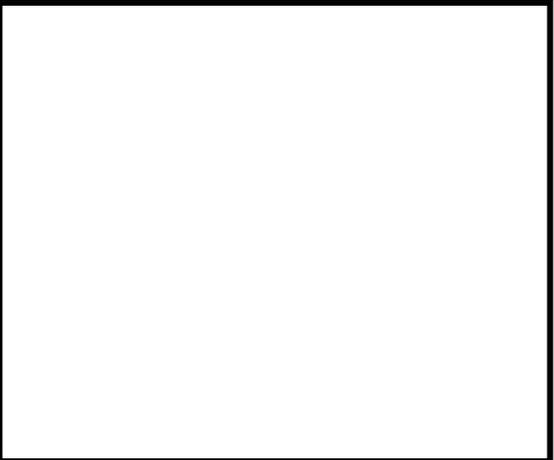
Shot 3:  
Music:



Shot 4:  
Music:



Shot 5:  
SFX:



Shot 6:  
Music: