

Grade: 5 & 6

It's 1804 and I need water

Students will be able to:

- understand how water played a key role in the settlement of Tasmanian towns
- learn the challenges of sourcing water for daily needs
- make comparisons with today's technology and engineering for water supply systems

Lesson Details:

1. A role play - sourcing water.

It's 1804 and students assume the role of early settlers determining a suitable place to settle in southern Tasmania. The roles are:

- Lieutenant Colonel David Collins
- Deputy Surveyor
- Harbour Master
- Marines
- Reverend Robert Knopwood

Using *The Water Getters* (Lloyd, 2008)*, review page two titled *The Run* and identify the contribution of each of the people listed above in looking for a new place. What attributes was Collins looking for in a new settlement. Why was Risdon not suitable? What was the single most important feature of the new settlement.

*TasWater can loan a copy of this book to you.

2. Sourcing water in the early days.

Hobart Town was settled on the banks of the Hobart Rivulet, where water was thought to be plentiful and of good quality. If you were rich, you could have wood stave barrels filled with water delivered to your home by a water carter.

There is an old stand pipe in front of 6 Lord Street, Sandy Bay - this was where water carters would fill their barrels. If you were poor you had to draw your own water and carry it back to your home. Research other ways people sourced water.

Curriculum Links

Grade 5

Science

- ACSHE083
- ACSHE217

Literature/Literacy

- ACELT608, ACELT610
- ACELY1698, ACELY1796

Geography

- ACHGK028
- ACHGK029
- ACHGS037
- ACHGS039

History

- ACHHK094, ACHHK095
- ACHHK097, ACHHS098
- ACHHS104, ACHHS106

Grade 6

Science

- ACSSU094, ACSSU219
- ACSHE100, ACSHE220

Literature

- ACELT1613

Geography

- ACHGK036, ACHGS041
- ACHGS044, ACHGS046

History

- ACHHK116, ACHHS117
- ACHHS123, ACHHS125

Lesson Details continued:

3. What were the demands on water in the early 1800's?

Hobart's population continued to increase and the plentiful water was in demand not only from residents, but industry as well. Get students to research the types of industries that relied on water at that time and how they used that water. For example:

- Tanneries
- Sawmillers
- Breweries
- Distilleries
- Ships
- Blacksmiths

Unfortunately, the Hobart Rivulet was also used by some of these industries as a place to dispose of their wastewater. The water became contaminated and people were drawing from it for drinking. What do your students think happened? Research the epidemic that occurred in the early 1850's in Hobart.

4. How do we make sure water is safe to drink today?

- We have separate plumbing for water and sewage
- Majority of reservoirs are covered
- Designed water treatment plants that remove organic material from water, aeration to assist with sedimentation collection, sophisticated filtration and chemical dosing for disinfection and fluoridation
- Wooden pipes were replaced with cast iron, which were replaced with cement which gave way to PVC and steel pipes used today
- Developments in pumping technology and switchboards means water can be transported a long way

Lesson Reflection:

1. What were the water challenges faced by early settlers?
2. Why were water borne diseases so prevalent in the 1850's in Hobart?
3. What were the common sources of pollution of the waterways in the 1800's?
4. Explain what has changed in that time to ensure water is safe to drink?



Did you know?

In 1831 consumption of beer was considered a safer alternative to drinking water. This is because beer was raised to boiling point twice during its manufacture.

More Information

Contact our Education Officers who can visit your classroom and share some engaging water activities with your students. Alternatively visit our website, complete an online request form and our Education Officers will contact you.

Email: education@taswater.com.au

Website: www.taswater.com.au

Additional Activities

Complete a study on how water has been used as a source of power. Consider the hydro-electric schemes in Tasmania and also the agricultural revolution that occurred through steam powered engines and implements. Think about the earliest trains, how were they powered? Water has had a profound impact on civilisation and economic wealth enjoyed by so many countries today.