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GobarTimes

Green Schools Network

ACTIVITY SHEET

Why talk about



river pollution?

when we know everything about it. It has been happening for years now.

We even went to the local river and cleaned it up - our own river pollution action programme. We know the culprit are the industries which dump the effluents in the rivers, which make it dirty. And also the culprits are the people, who live by the banks of the river and do their 'bad stuff' next to it and even wash clothes in it.

Ya! I remember, the school even did a campaign around the issue and we put up posters in the area to make people understand that they shouldn't throw things into the river.

Isn't that the entire story of river pollution? Well... not really!.And that's what we explore in this issue. Find that its not only the people living by the banks or the dirty industry guys who pollute the river, its also us...

Name.....

School Name

Class..... Date.....

Gobar Gyan: Traditionally cities, towns and even villages settled keeping in view the water requirements and it would not be a gross generality that most of the cities and towns are actually settled alongside rivers, rivulets, lakes or other water bodies. Fresh water was taken from upstream and the waste given out downstream.

The intrinsic capacity of the river to clean itself helped the river to clean itself a few miles downstream. But the this capacity was overloaded, when cities grew in size and the amount of waste dumped into the rivers went up.

Activity: Find out the river/rivulet, which flows next to your city/town or village. If there isn't one, you are sure to find a lake in your city.

Name of the river/rivulet/lake/water body : _____

While many people live in cities by rivers but unfortunately, not many of us have really seen our city river upclose or touched the water of the river. Make a visit to the river of your city.

Talk to your parents or people around and find out, where does the water in the river/lake come from? (Obviously it comes from upstream!).

Does your city/town get its water from the same river/lake? You may have to call the agency, which supplies water to your house to find this out?



Hi! I am Pandit Gobar Ganesh.

You will find me in Gobar Times—a magazine that tells you how your everyday life is linked to the world around you. Hooked, huh? If you want to know more about me and GobarTimes visit us at

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Where does the wastewater of your city end up? Call up the Municipal Corporation or better still trace the water from your home to the colony - out of the town?

Gobar Gyan: While industries and people throwing garbage are obviously sources of pollution of rivers, nearly 80% of river pollution in India is due to excreta! And who is responsible for all this? Not those who defecate in the open, as they have no access to toilets. But, those who have toilets- the middle class and the affluent. This is because with every flush we use more and more clean water to dispose our faeces and urine (over 10 litres) increasing the quantity of sewage.

So, the rivers are full of this muck. What say? So, the next time you do a campaign in a slum near a river, remember, its your colony, where you should be doing that, to make them aware of the ill effects of flushing. Many people are now working at toilets, which do not require water for flushing. Read Gobar Times, July 31, 2007 for more information.

Activity: Go to the toilet of your house and measure the volume of your flush tanks:

Volume of flush tank no. 1 = _____
Volume of flush tank no. 2 = _____
Volume of flush tank no. 3 = _____



Now, do this task, which you must not have done before in life. On one holiday, when you are home, find out how many times do people flush in a day and find out the total amount of water flushed:

Number of times the flush was used = _____

Total water flushed = Number of times the flush is used X volume of flush tank
= _____

Now, based on an estimate of the number of people in your colony you can actually estimate the amount of water going down the sewage drain in your colony.

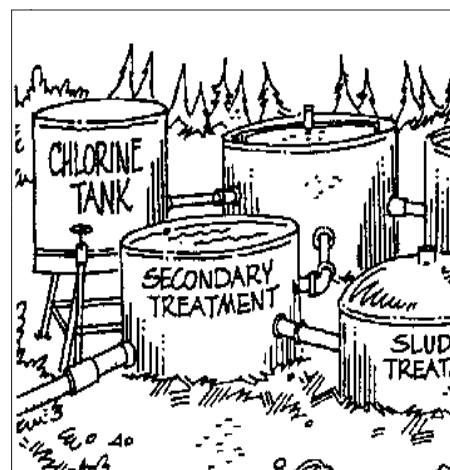
Go to a nearby shop, which sells sanitary fittings for toilets and bathrooms and ask them if they have any designs which use less water? How does it work?

Gobar Gyan: Logically, all the sewage from the colonies need to go to units called the Sewage Treatment Plants or STPs. The sewage is treated here before being released into the river, so that the river can take the pollution load.

But there are few problems. Firstly, there are not enough STPs to treat the sewage generated by the city and secondly, event the existing STPs aren't able to do much as there are problems of transportation of sewage.

Activity: But it would be a good idea to actually visit a STP in your city/town. Call up the municipal body and find out the location of the STP and take down its telephone number.

Call up the manager of the STP and ask them that you would like to visit the STP. You can also ask your teacher to arrange a visit to the STP.



Where is the STP located? (near the river, far off place etc)

Speak to the engineer on site and ask the following questions:

What is the total capacity of the STP?

What kind of treatment is given to the sewage, which comes to the plant? The various stages

Make sure that you have a look at the point where the sewage enters the plant and the point where it is disposed off into the river or nearby body.

Find out how many STPs does your town/city has? _____

Activity: Any river or water body would have certain people attached to it for livelihood? They would be the best people to tell you about the real effects and causes of river pollution? And its fun to interact with them. Catch hold of a fisherman/woman, boatman/woman or a farmer by the riverside and find answers to the following questions:

Name: _____

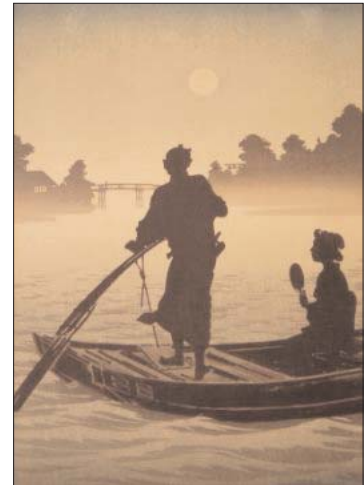
Profession: _____

How long has he/she been in the profession? And what changes did s/he find in the situation of the river?

What according to them are the major sources of pollution of the river?

What kind of birds/fish or other biodiversity is there in the river?

After collecting information from the above sources, think of a campaign you can do around river pollution in your city/town. Click photographs while you are interviewing people and share your interviews with schoolmates and the larger community. Use films on river pollution to generate awareness. 'Faecal attraction' is a film produced by the Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi, which speaks about a variety of issues on river pollution. Do write us at the below mentioned address to know more about the film.



If you found the activity sheet interesting, E-mail us at eeu@cseindia.org or write to:
Activity Sheet, Centre for Science and Environment, 41 Tughlakabad Institutional Area,
New Delhi-110062 or Call 29955124 Extension 219