

What's So Serious about a Dripping Tap?

Focus

You've just heard one of your parents complain about the leaking tap in the bathroom sink... who left it dripping this time? You think, "so what's the big deal anyway?" Let's find out...

In your small group (3 -5), read the instructions carefully and decide how you will investigate the problem of the dripping tap located in the classroom, nearby garden bed or another school-based location.

Procedure

- The group's task is to measure and write down the amount of water that drips from this tap in one minute.
- Work out how much water will drip in one hour.
- How would you find out how much water would drip in one whole day?
- Decide how you will record this information. eg. Table/graph?
- Brainstorm some ideas in your group. (check brochure "How many Buckets")

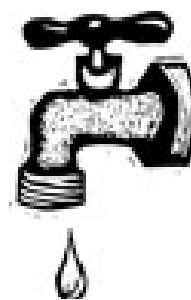
Results

- What did you learn from this investigation?
- What does this mean for the environment?
- List some other questions you might have about water that you would like to investigate
- Where does the water go?
- Is this the best way to use it?

NOTE: If using the alternative approach to the Investigation, Pick up from the previous introductory investigation where the group's task was to measure and write down the amount of water that drips from this tap in one minute.

EXTENSION

- Q How many taps are in your house? What if every tap in your house leaked at this same rate?
- Q What happens if you turn the tap on harder?
- Q If there is time redo some of the calculations to see what happens.
- Q Why is it important to fix a leaking tap?
- Q What are some things you could do at home to help save water?
- Q How would you calculate how much water was used in a 3 minute shower?



Resources

- Stopwatch
- Graduated cylinders
- Beakers for measuring time and volume
- Sheet for recording data; use words, numbers, graphs and drawings
- Card with the set task for each group of students

Source: *The Dripping Tap*, Taken from: Koch, J., 2000. *Science Stories – A Science Methods Book for Elementary School Teachers*. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston.