

Text A: Ryan's Well

\$70 is a lot of money. No? Well, to a six year old Canadian, Ryan Hreljac, in 1988 it was.

Ryan's class was studying social issues and how six year olds could help people in need. They learned about how others lived in the world. While getting water for Canadians was as easy as turning on the tap, many children in Uganda had to walk 5 kilometers to gather water for their families. "Some children walk up to six hours a day leaving little time for school – not to mention having fun!" A gushing river of questions flowed over the next week in school and Miss Angela tried her best to answer everyone. Everyone that is, except Ryan.



Ryan was deep in thought. "How could people live like that? Why don't they move? Could I help?" he thought. Then it was as though Miss Angela was reading his mind. "Okay class, \$70 is enough to drill a well for an entire Ugandan village. I know it is a lot but we are going to work together to collect the money."

"I'm going to do it!" Ryan was certain that he was going to make a difference to those children. During dinner Ryan asked his question.... "Can I have \$70 to help build a well in Uganda?" There was silence and a look of disbelief on Ryan's dad's face. "Why won't you help me to help others?" Ryan pleaded.

Finally, his parents negotiated with Ryan. "If you're really serious about raising \$70," his mum sighed, "you can do extra chores around the house." She thought that would be the end of it.

She was wrong. Over the next month, six year old Ryan was more determined than ever. He vacuumed, cleaned, washed and did all kinds of other chores. When Ryan had saved \$70 he could hardly contain his excitement, smiling from ear to ear. As the school fundraiser date had come and gone, he went with his parents to the organization called WaterCan to hand over the hard earned cash. His parents were proud that their son had followed through with his plans to make the world a better place, and thought that was the end of it...

"A drill actually costs \$2,000. The \$70 will only buy a small pump that sits on top of the finished well, not the well itself," explained Gizaw Shibr, the manager. Ryan's smile quickly faded. He remained silent and solemn over the next few days, but then he started his chores again.

"I'm not giving up," he told his parents.

His parents were sad that their son would have to learn a difficult lesson. Sometimes, even when you try your hardest, some things are still impossible. "I'm going to do it," was the only thing he would say. Ryan was more determined than ever...

Ryan's struggle to help the world continued over the following months until finally he had a breakthrough! A local newspaper published the story and his family received donations addressed to 'Ryan's Well'. The money flowed in and Ryan achieved what his parents thought was impossible. All the hard work paid off. Ryan's well was drilled next to the Angolog Primary School in northern Uganda. As a reward for his hard work, Ryan went to the town of Angolog with his father and Gizaw Shibr. Upon arriving at the village, an old man stood up to greet them. "Look around at our children. You can see they're healthy. This is because of you and our friends in Canada. For us, water is life."

"Ryan," his mum said tearfully. "I am so proud of you."

Text B: Poem - Give and Take

[Adapted from the poem "Make Friends with a Tree", by Brian Moses]



The lungs of the earth
A tree gives us life
Shelter, air and food
The umbrella for life

Cutting, chopping, killing
For paper, house or table
Why not treat a tree politely?
We can do it! Yes, we're able.

What do trees do for us?
What do we do for trees?
We take, take, take
They just ask for a simple 'please'

A tree will always listen,
Tell your troubles to a tree.
To the mystery of life
A date palm may hold the key.

A tree can tell us tales,
A tree is the knowledge of your past,
So in this world of destruction
Help the trees to always last.

Text C: Environmental Heroes Needed to Save the Environment

[Adapted from The Gulf News, UAE]

Abu Dhabi: Authorities are calling for 'environmental heroes' to come forward and pledge to help save energy and the environment for the sake of future generations.

A nationwide energy sustainability campaign called 'Heroes of the UAE' was introduced to help reduce the UAE's high ecological footprint and energy consumption. The campaign is vital as the energy consumption of the UAE residents is ranked the highest in the world.



"Simple and small actions will go a long way if they are collectively made," said Razan Al Mubarak, Managing Director, EWS-WWF.

"A Sustainable UAE, Every Child's Right" is the motto of the campaign that targets all communities and residents of the country. The environmental heroes are playing a very big part in reducing the UAE's carbon footprint. Individuals are encouraged to reduce water and electricity use in their homes.

Some schools have started with simple initiatives to encourage students and adults alike. Many schools in Abu Dhabi have been teaching children how they can save energy at school and at home. Sara Al Ahbabi, a Grade 6 student, explains how she has helped her mother to reduce their energy and water consumption by having showers rather than baths each day.

The computers around the school now have stickers to remind everyone to switch them off at the end of the day.

Furthermore, the new school buildings in Abu Dhabi are fitted with sensors in all the rooms so the lights automatically switch on and off when someone enters or leaves the room. This initial cost will hopefully save energy and benefit all in the long run.

On the other hand, Majid Al Mansouri, Secretary-General, EAD said, "According to our State of Environment Report, Abu Dhabi's electricity demand has increased in the past 10 years. Firstly the tourism industry has greatly contributed to the higher use of electricity. The number of new hotels has doubled in the Abu Dhabi region. This contributing factor increases the UAE's carbon footprint. It is very important that energy consumption in these areas be controlled if we are to see an overall impact."

"Another contributor to the footprint is carbon dioxide emissions. The number of cars and transportation has increased with the higher population in Abu Dhabi. Any attempt to reduce this energy use must deal with the amount of oil and natural gas used," he said.

The environmental agencies argue that while it is very encouraging that schools are trying to reduce energy and water consumption, the bigger companies need to take responsibility to make a real difference.

Text D: Visual

[Source: Google images]

