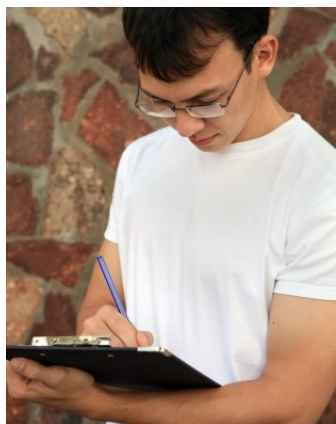


Project Refill Initiative Ideas



Conduct a Disposable Water Bottle Audit

As a first step it will be useful to find out how many plastic water bottles people use at your school. Set up a system to collect the water bottles that staff and students use for a set period of time (one week to one month). Count the number of bottles collected to create a baseline for how many people are currently using bottled water. After your campaign you may want to conduct another plastic water bottle audit to see the impact of your campaign. In addition, the collected bottles can be incorporated into an educational display after you've tallied them (see below for display ideas). More details on how to conduct a water bottle audit can be found in the [High School Climate Challenge Bottled Water Reduction Info Kit](#).



Take a poll

Consider conducting a poll to find out more about why people drink bottled water vs. tap. The poll could consist of a couple simple questions asked in a "hands up" survey format. See the [High School Climate Challenge Bottled Water Reduction Info Kit](#) for some sample questions. The results from your poll will provide your team with some direction on what your campaign should focus on. For example, If the poll reveals that staff and students prefer bottled water because they believe it is cleaner and tastes better, your school might benefit from taste tests and an education campaign based on scientific facts.



Poster from Western Tech

Create targeted communications

Student-made posters can be a powerful way to promote a campaign. Invite students to create posters that communicate the importance of investing in reusable water bottles. Watching [The Story of Bottled Water](#) might provide your team with some inspiration. Consider including content related to your campaign in your announcements on a daily/weekly basis. Want to send the message home? Include a write-up about your campaign in the school newsletter and/or on your school website.

Create a water bottle display

Creating a dedicated display promotes eco-awareness and can help to inform your school community about your campaign. Using eye-catching visuals, such as a collection of used plastic water bottles (inspect your school's recycling and garbage bins to collect samples) and/or including facts and figures can help to engage your targeted audience.

Did you know in 2014 the general municipal water rate in the City of Toronto is \$0.01344683/gal? That's a fraction of what you would pay at your local grocery store for a bottle of water! For additional facts to incorporate into your display check out [York University's Bottled Water Facts](#) and [Bottled Water Facts and Stats by The Polaris Institute](#).

Once you have built a culture of awareness, go one step further and make your school a plastic water bottle free zone. Encourage staff, students, and parents to make an eco-pledge committing to exclusively using reusable water bottles.



Bottled Water Facts by York University:
http://www.yorku.ca/susweb/resources/documents/Bottled_water_facts_002.pdf

Bottled Water Facts and Stats by The Polaris Institute:
http://www.insidethebottle.org/Schools_files/BottledWaterFactsheet.pdf



Host a water taste test

Some bottled water advocates argue that bottle water tastes better than the municipal water that comes out of our taps. However, studies have shown that when people are asked to blindly sample tap water and bottled water, many are unable to differentiate between the two. Test this out at your school by hosting a water taste test challenge.

Ahead of time, pour the tap water into jug #1 and the bottled water into jug #2 (or vice versa). Try to ensure both jugs of water are the same temperature (people will often prefer colder water which could skew your results).

Invite staff and students to sample water from both jugs and indicate which jug they believe contains tap water, and which contains bottled water

Record responses and then reveal the contents of each jug to the participants. Were there any surprises? Moving forward, do these results influence the source of drinking water you prefer?

Consider creating a display to communicate the results of your water taste test challenge to the whole school.

You will need:

- Two empty jugs, labeled "1" & "2"
- Tap Water
- Bottled Water
- Cups for sampling
- A recording device: pencil and paper, whiteboard and marker, iPad, etc.



Hold a reusable water bottle challenge

Encourage your whole school to get on-board by hosting a competition between classes. Track the number of students in each class that use a reusable water bottle and display the results in a prominent area of the school. At the end of the competition, reward the winning class with an eco-friendly prize.

Make reusable water bottles available to student and staff

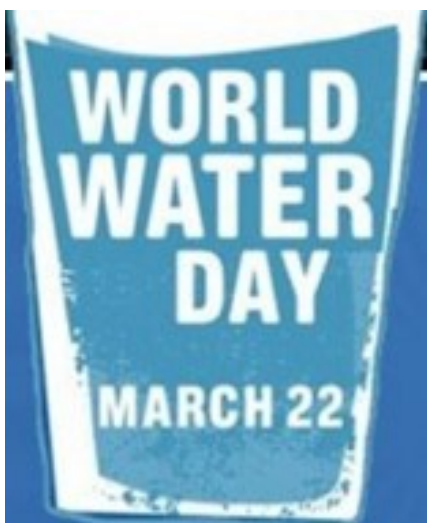
Water bottles can be procured by:

- approaching a local business for an in-kind donation
- including the cost of a reusable water bottle in your student fee
- hosting a reusable water bottle sale or applying for funding (e.g. [Metro Green Apple School Program](#))



Consider personalizing water bottles by having your school logo printed on them and including space for students to write their name. The following is a list of Board-approved water bottle vendors:

Vendor name	Vendor number	Contact	Notes
ADR Promotions	#13951	Dov Apter 905-761-9552	Select "Mugs and Drink-ware" under Categories
Partners Promotional Group	#21518	John Quinn 416-798-9893	Do a Keyword Search for "Water bottle"
Greco Promotional	#4152	William 905-850-9441	Under Product Categories, select "Travel Mug and Tumblers"



Connect to local and global water events or organizations

Connecting to an existing program is a great way to extend your scope and engage students. Some events and programs you may want to explore include:

Events:

[World Wetlands Day](#) – February 2nd

[World Water Day](#) – March 22nd

[World Oceans Day](#) – June 8th

[World Water Monitoring Day](#) – September 18th

[World Rivers Day](#) – last Sunday in September

Connect to local and global water events or organizations (cont'd)

Organizations:

TRCA Programs

[Watershed on Wheels](#)

[Yellow Fish Road](#)

[Aquatic Plants Program](#)

[EcoSpark Changing Currents program](#)

[Bring Back the Salmon](#) – Classroom Hatcheries Program

[Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-up](#)

Include a teaching and learning component

Drinking water and the environmental issues related to disposable water bottles are rich themes that can help students make deeper connections to the impact of installing a water bottle refill station. Integration into classroom teaching is a great way for students to construct their own understanding of these issues. Whether it's one class focusing on this issue and sharing their findings through a display board or an assembly presentation or the whole school exploring a common theme both offer great opportunities for connecting these ideas to the water bottle station and the broader school culture.

Topic ideas:

1. Tap vs. bottled

- Life cycle of disposable water bottles
- Life cycle of reusable water bottles
- Impacts (e.g., short/long term, local/global)
- Health impacts (e.g., hydration, toxicity, filtration, diseases)
- Environmental impacts (e.g., resource extraction – water and materials, production, transportation, plastics in the oceans, landfills, recycling)
- Social impacts (e.g., access, source depletion, government regulations, economics, commercialization, rights and responsibilities, ethics)



2. Where does your drinking water come from?

- Water systems (water cycle, sources of fresh water, watersheds, impacts of human development, transportation, filtration processes, underground water systems, stormwater, contaminants, desertification)
- Local vs. global sources



Books with water themes

Books are an excellent way to explore themes like drinking water and the environmental issues related to disposable water bottles. Consider drawing on some of the titles in our [Books with Water Themes document](#) to help guide classroom discussions. The titles with the yellow star represent some of our favourites for exploring these topics. Check back in mid-January for our list of French resources!

Helpful Resources

[Inside the Bottle](#) All the resources you need to build a successful campaign created by the Polaris Institute

[A Guide to Reduce Plastic Water Bottles](#) A step-by-step guide to reducing plastic water bottle use created by the Clean Air Champions

[Unbottle Water Campaign](#) Breaking the bottled water habit in your community created by The Centre for a New American Dream (note: registration is required to access this resource)

[The Water Brothers](#)

[Story of Bottled Water](#)

[Evergreen Watershed Champion – Teacher Tools](#)