

Good morning!

Today I would like to talk about some important aspects of water.

But listen!

What sound do you hear?

Yes, it sounds like rain, doesn't it?

This interesting stick came from Africa where they have very little rain.

People pray to have rain by making this raining sound.

Now people use this as a music instrument.

Do you have much rain in your country?

Please raise your hand if you have much rain in your country, sometimes more than you like.

Thank you.

Then please raise your hand if you have very little rain in your country, posing water shortage problems from time to time.

Thank you.

And please raise your hand if you have just as much rain as you like in your country.

Oh, you are so lucky!

The annual rainfall in the world is about 1,000 millimeters.

But the annual rainfall in Japan is about 1,800 millimeters.

Japan is one of the countries that is blessed with rainfall.

Why is rain or water important?

First of all, we cannot survive without water.

We can survive days, even a week or two without food, but we will die very soon if we cannot drink water.

This is because our body contains much water.

What percentage of our body do you think is water?

10%? 20%? 40%? or 60%

Please raise your hand if you think 10%.

20%?

40%?

60%?

Thank you.

Yes, in fact, 60% of our body is water.

And, interestingly, 80% of a baby's body is water!

Water is important to us not only because our body contains much water.

But also we need water to produce the food we eat.

I am sure you drink water.

But do you "eat" water?

You might say, "No, I drink water, but I don't eat water"

However, water is needed to produce food.

So it can be said that you also eat water.

You eat rice.

And when you eat bread, you are eating wheat.

I like Udon noodle very much and it takes wheat to make Udon, too.

In order to produce rice or wheat, you need water 1,000 times as much as the grain.

So imagine you need 30 liters of water, or 30 bottles of 1 liter of water, when you eat a bowl of rice.

And what happens when you eat meat?

You have to feed cattle to produce meat and their feed is grain.

It is said that in order to produce 1 kilogram of beef, you need 7 kilograms of grain as feed.

It means that you need 7,000 times as much water as the beef you actually eat.

It means that when you eat a bowl of Gyudon, it is favorite dish for many Japanese people, including me, say 100 gram of beef with 300 grams, rice, you are actually eating a total of 730 liter of water.

Imagine 730 bottles of water! It is a very long line of bottles!

This is called "virtual water".

We usually drink 3 to 4 liters of water every day in the form of tea, coffee or juice,

but we eat about 2,000 liters of water each day, 500 times we drink

Japan imports a huge amount of the food we eat.

This means that we are importing huge amount of water.

When we do this, we are taking water away from other countries in the form of food imports.

We are blessed with rain and water in Japan.

So we have to produce as much of the food we eat as possible in Japan, reducing water imports from other regions where water may be scarce.

Have you seen a photograph of the earth?

It is a blue planet.

The earth is called “the water planet”, blessed with water.

However, most of the water on the earth is seawater.

We cannot drink or use seawater.

And freshwater that we can drink and use is only about 2.5 percent of all the water on the earth.

But be aware that we cannot use the freshwater that is frozen into ice in the South Pole, glaciers, and the eternal snows on the top of high mountains.

Actually, the amount of water we can use is only 0.8 percent of all the water on the earth.⁰¹¹

Imagine a bucket of water. This is all the water on the earth.

Take a cup of water from the bucket. This is freshwater we have on the earth.

And please take a spoonful of this water. This is the water we can use.

Don't you think that the water we can use is very, very precious?

Don't you think we shouldn't waste water in our daily life?

There is an old Japanese saying, “Seoimizu”, water you carry on your back.

This means that each of us is born with water we can use for our life.

So if you waste your water, you will have trouble down the road.

I like this phrase very much.

This shows how to live in a sustainable way without causing troubles to other people, future generations or other species on the earth.

Why do we have to value and use wisely water?

Yes, the amount of water we can use is limited and the amount is rather small.

But there is another reason.

When it rains, it seems to us that new water is coming to the earth.

But in reality, this is not the case.

Rain comes from the sky, water evaporates and goes up to the sky, forms condenses into clouds and the water comes down as rain again and again.

The water on the earth has always been the same, no change, no new water.

The same water has been circulating between the sky and the earth again and again since the earth was created.

The day before yesterday, we had rain.

The water might be the rain coming down to the backs of dinosaurs tens of millions of years ago!

And people and other forms of lives in tens of millions years in the future will use the same water we use today.

Because it is all they will have and it is all we have.

No new water is coming from space to the earth.

So please think much of water and do not waste water.

And be careful not to pollute nor contaminate water.

When you throw your trash away in rivers or sea, dirty water will circulate.

You don't want to do such a nasty thing to your friends tomorrow or to future generations, do you?

I talked a lot about water.

I am sure you now think you should respect water and keep water clean.

Then let's do one game to wrap up my speech.

I want you to clap your hands at the same time, all the people in the hall.

I will tell you how to do it.

First I will count to three, slowly.

1, 2, 3.

Then I say "Clap".

The exact moment I say "clap", clap your hand.

OK?

I will say,1,2,3, clap.

And the exact moment I say clap, you clap.

So here you go.

1.2.3 clap!

Oh... what happened?

You knew what to do.

And you wanted to do that you were told to do.

But....?

It tells us actions are louder than words.

When my words and actions were not the same, you followed my actions, not my words.

It means that taking action to preserve water is more important than just saying water is important.

Please think what you can do to preserve water.

And take actions.

Thank you.