Innovation brief

Ofwat Environmental Innovation Project

Education methods

Using a game-based learning platform to help children learn about water efficiency.

Challenge

Children today use many sources to learn about the environment. All too often, water efficiency either doesn't appear in their search results or is overshadowed by topics like recycling and climate change.

Minecraft is a child-friendly, trusted digital platform. We were keen to explore how we could use it, to blend gaming and water-efficiency learning in a dynamic, fun and exciting way for children aged between 7 and 11.

skewb

Solution

We built a platform to deliver a Minecraft Water World for child-led or teacher-led learning.

This is a first for the water industry. It supports and enhances child-led learning at home and teacher-based lessons in school. It helps children develop their water knowledge online, so they can apply their learnings in real life.

With educational material delivered by certified teachers, curriculum-ready online lessons can blend seamlessly into the classroom.

Our young testers explored the Water World virtually, learning by simulating everyday water-use decisions.

Child-led lesson

The Water Cycle lesson explores where water comes from: the child takes a virtual journey through the real-life water treatment process, all the way to the taps in their home. With challenges, puzzles and games, players learn about the importance of water to themselves, the local community and environment.

Teacher-led lesson

The Water Budgeting lesson enables young gamers to learn and practise water budgeting, connecting virtual lessons to daily water use in real life. It demonstrates clearly how careful water use benefits the health of the local community and broader environment. All water-use decisions have a consequence and can be explored in this virtual world.

Outcomes

The platform provides a uniquely interesting way for children to engage with water-saving and boost their awareness and knowledge of water efficiency for life.

It's an easy-access tool that supports the curriculum and encourages multidisciplinary learning (especially in STEM subjects).

Local children who tested the new platform provided feedback to further develop, refine and improve it.

We plan to roll it out to our customers, our SOS: Save Our Streams community and our local schools in summer 2022.

Supporting themes: **Chalk streams** | **Supply-side demand** | **Customer** | **Environment**

Affinity Water
Taking care of your water