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Intermediate Student’s Book

Life

1.13

And now, did you know that today is World Water Day? I’ve got some interesting statistics here … for example, about 70 per cent of the Earth’s surface is covered in water. And yet only three per cent of the Earth’s water is fresh water. That’s a tiny percentage, isn’t it? Access to clean fresh water is a problem for millions of people, especially in the developing world. Around 46 per cent of the world’s population don’t have running water in their homes. They get their water from wells, rivers or water-holes, which means that every time they need water, they have to go and fetch it. Now, of the fresh water we use around the world, about two-thirds of it goes on agriculture – that’s for growing food. So what about the rest of it? The United Nations reported that an average person in the developing world probably uses about ten litres of water for cooking, washing and drinking each day. Yes, that’s right, ten litres a day. I think my kitchen sink probably holds about ten litres, so I must use a lot more than that. According to these statistics I have in front of me, here in Europe our daily average is 200 litres per person! And in North America the figure is something like 400 litres per person. Now, if you want to get involved with World Water Day, stay tuned, because we’ve got lots more information coming up.