

Water Wiser

A Short Play for National Drinking Water Week
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Florida Public Service Commission
Tallahassee, Florida

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Water Wiser

[8 Characters--in Order of Appearance]

Big Drop: A Really Big Drop of Water

Dew Drop: Big Drop's sidekick, who is a much smaller drop of water, and talks with a high-pitched, squeaky voice.

Rock: A normal teen-age boy

The Man: A typical man who enjoys watering his lawn

Kid #1: A young kid (can be male or female)

Kid #2: Another young kid (can be male or female)

The Lady: A "soccer mom" who doesn't enjoy dishwashing

The Teen Girl: The lady's daughter, a typical cheerleader type

Water Wiser

SCENE: A park with a small pond.

AT RISE: Two characters, *Big Drop*, and his little sidekick, *Dew Drop*, climb out of a **large wooden box that's been painted blue to look like water**. They are each holding an edge of some fishing line and appear to be waiting for someone. They look around nervously.

Dew Drop: (*Squeaky voice*) I hope we can get this kid.

Big Drop: We have to. He's our last hope.

Dew Drop: We've tried so many others.

Big Drop: But they weren't the one.

Dew Drop: Is he?

Big Drop: If he isn't, we're down the drain.

Dew Drop: He sure doesn't seem like the one.

Big Drop: Maybe not, but—

Dew Drop: We've looked at so many rocks....

Big Drop: He's the last rock, I'm sure.

Dew Drop: Shhh...someone's coming.

*[Big Drop and Dew Drop hunch down and wait. **Rock, a teenage boy**, suddenly skateboards across the stage. He throws down a half-filled bottle of water and runs into the fishing line, which he can't see. He falls. The two characters, Big Drop and Little Drop, stand up and throw some blue netting around him. The kid knocks down Big Drop, but Dew Drop hops on his back and hangs on. Rock struggles in the netting.]*

Rock: Get me out of here.

Big Drop: No can do!

Rock: *(Threatening)* I'll call the police.

Big Drop: *(Mock fright)* Oh, no. I'm so scared....

Rock: I don't have any money.

Dew Drop: *(Knowingly)* We know.

Rock: So what do you want with me?

Big Drop: You're our last chance.

Rock: For what?

Dew Drop: *(Over Rock's line)* The absolute last.

[Big Drop and Dew Drop lift the net off Rock.]

Rock: You must have me confused with somebody else.

Big Drop: Are you *The Rock*?

Rock: Well, not The Rock, but my name's Rock.

Big Drop: Who were you named after?

Rock: You know, like Rocky and Bullwinkle?

Dew Drop: *(Confused)* Who?

Big Drop: *(Knowingly to Dew Drop)* I can tell...he's the one.

Dew Drop: I don't know...he's not The Rock.

Big Drop: He's our Rock.

Rock: I have to rock on home. Later dudes.

[Rock picks up his skateboard and tries to leave.]

Big Drop: *(Grabs him)* Not so fast.

Dew Drop: Yeah, fast so not.

Rock: Who are you people?

Big Drop/Dew Drop: *(In Unison)* We could be your last drops of water.

Rock: What?

Big Drop: We're drops of water, representing the water that's been here for millions of years. I'm Big Drop and he's—

Dew Drop: *(Interrupting)* Dew Drop. Dew Drop's my name.

Rock: Reality check...I'm now talking to water drops?!

[Big Drop picks up the half filled bottle of water Rock earlier discarded.]

Big Drop: Yes, and you just wasted some of our brothers and sisters. When you threw away that bottle of water.

Rock: I'd had enough.

Big Drop: You think you've had enough but, there'll come a time, when you wish there were more. But there won't be any, not one big—

Dew Drop: *(Interrupting)* Or Little--

Big Drop: *(Continues)* Drop of water to keep you alive.

Rock: Water is everywhere. Oceans cover two-thirds of the Earth's surface. Rivers flow endlessly. Heavy rainfalls bring flooding. So why do we need to worry about water? The last time I checked, the oceans were still filled with water.

Big Drop: *(Sounding like a Professor)* Only 3 percent of the earth's water can be used as drinking water.

Dew Drop: Yes, and you can live about a month without food, but only about a week without water.

Rock: Hey, I heard that one on Jeopardy.

[Big Drop pours Rock a glass of water from the discarded bottle.]

Big Drop: Take a good long look at the water. Can you guess how old it is?

Rock: I'd say it was just born.

Big Drop: The water in this glass may have fallen from the sky as rain just a few weeks ago, but the water itself has been around pretty much as long as this earth has.

Rock: Wow!

Big Drop: *(Very animated)* When the Brontosaurus walked through lakes feeding on plants, your glass of water was part of those lakes. When kings and queens and knights and squires took a drink from their wells, your glass of water was part of those wells. The water you're drinking right now may have been a drink for a dinosaur or maybe a part of Cleopatra's bath!

Rock: *(Spits out the water)* And I thought my parents were old.

Dew Drop: The earth has a limited amount of water. That water keeps going around and around and around and around and around—

Big Drop: *(Hits Dew Drop)* I'm sure he gets the idea. It's what we call the water cycle.

Rock: Is that some new ride?

Dew Drop: No, it's a continuous cycle where water evaporates, travels into the air and becomes part of a cloud, falls down to earth as precipitation, and then evaporates again. This repeats again and again in a never-ending cycle. Water keeps moving and changing from a solid to a liquid to a gas, over and over and over again.

Rock: *(Shakes his head)* Too much information.

Dew Drop: Well, you know the old saying, "water goes around comes around." And it's certainly true.

Rock: Sounds like the water cycle's under control.

Big Drop: But, it's not. The clean water that people here drink comes mostly from the Floridan aquifer. Ever hear of it?

Rock: I think so.

Big Drop: It's a vast underground layer of porous limestone capable of holding a quadrillion gallons of water.

Rock: So?

- Dew Drop: So, the problem is that people pump water out of the Floridan aquifer faster than rainfall can replace it.
- Big Drop: Draining aquifers to meet the needs of the water supply puts the environment at risk.
- Rock: What's it to me?
- Dew Drop: Water is one of the most important needs of living things, and that includes you, doesn't it?
- Rock: I have to be going.
- Big Drop/Dew Drop: (*In unison*) But we need you!
- Rock: What for?
- Big Drop: We might be the last drops on earth...we have to save ourselves, so we can save everyone else.
- Dew Drop: But we can't, not without your help.
- Rock: What can I do? I don't know that much. And, why am I talking to drops of water?
- Big Drop: You can help us teach people to conserve.
- Rock: Conserve? What do you mean?
- Big Drop: Help three people find simple ways to save water. If you start the flow, the rush will happen. If you can get three people to save water, and, in turn, encourage them to get three other people to conserve, and so on and so on...every last drop of water—
- Dew Drop: (*Interrupts*) Including us—
- Big Drop: (*Continues*) Will be saved.
- Rock: It's too hard.
- Big Drop/Dew Drop: (*In unison*) It's simple.
- Rock: What's in it for me?
- Dew Drop: You can be the new water wizard.

Rock: Will I get paid?

Big Drop: You're saving your fellow man.

Dew Drop: And us, too.

Big Drop: Isn't that a just reward?

Rock: I don't think so.

Dew Drop: Maybe you'll get the girl. It usually happens.

Rock: In the movies, maybe.

Big Drop: Help us? Save water?

Dew Drop: Please?

Rock: Oh, all right. But, remember, I didn't ask for this.

Big Drop: Think about it, does any Super Hero?

*[The three move to the corner of the stage, where A **Man**, who's just entered, appears to be watering his lawn.]*

Rock: *(Staring)* So, what am I supposed to do?

Big Drop: Just talk to him.

Rock: What'll I say? *(Pause)* Nice day for watering?

Dew Drop: Drink this, and you'll know what to say.

[Dew Drop gives him a swig of something out of his "special" canteen. He is suddenly transformed and begins to act like a Superhero! Big Drop and Dew Drop hide behind a trashcan.]

Rock: Where y'all going?

Big Drop: We're behind you.

Dew Drop: *(Laughing)* Way behind you.

Rock: I'll know what to say? Right?

[Rock jumps off the “water wiser” box and approaches the man watering his lawn.]

Rock: Hey.

Man: Hey yourself.

Rock: Watering again?

Man: Yeah, why?

Rock: Well, I saw you watering a few days ago—

Man: And you’ll see me again. I want my yard to look nice.

Rock: But aren’t you wasting water?

Man: Not if it’s making my grass green.

Rock: Wouldn’t you like to conserve?

Man: What is this...are you selling something?

Rock: No, I’m just trying to help out some...drops.

Man: Drop outs?

Rock: Water drops. Maybe the last drops on earth.

Man: If you don’t mind, I need to get back to my watering.

Rock: I do mind. Can’t you stop?

Man: Stop what?

Rock: Uh, stop?

Man: Kid, go on home.

Rock: Watering too much takes too much water...if you could only understand...

Man: Yeah, yeah, I’ll think about it.

[Rock suddenly picks up the garden hose and bends it, so water is no longer coming out of the spout.]

Rock: Could you maybe think about watering your lawn every third day? That'd be a start. And maybe you could water during the coolest part of the day, you know, to minimize evaporation.

Man: I've heard that, but does it really help?

Rock: Down to the last drop. You could also get rid of some of your yard and put in a rock garden, or something like that, because less grass means you wouldn't need to water as much.

Man: Good point. And maybe I wouldn't have to mow, as much, either.

Rock: So, will you take me up on my suggestion and water your yard like a winner?

Man: Every three days?

Rock: *(Holds out his hand in a Superhero fashion)*
Better yet...every five days.

Man: Don't push me, kid.

Rock: Okay.

Man: See 'ya.

Rock: One more thing. I've given you a simple way to save water. Can you tell your friends, at least three of them?

Man: *(Gruffly)* I don't have any friends.

Rock: Well, then three people. Tell them how you're saving our water.

Man: I'll think about it. Sure you're not selling cookies?

[Man takes his hose and goes offstage. Big Drop and Dew Drop come out of hiding and grab Rock.]

Big Drop: Good job, good job.

Dew Drop: You sounded like an expert.

Rock: *(Incredulous)* It wasn't me talking.

Big Drop: I heard your voice.

Dew Drop: One down, two more to go.

Rock: *(Motions)* That man's probably not going to talk to anybody.

Big Drop: He might, and that's our hope.

*[Rock and the two Drops journey on and find **Two Kids** standing at a bathroom sink, brushing their teeth. Big Drop and Dew Drop hide again, and the kids scream when they see Rock leap from the "water wiser" box..]*

Rock: It's okay, be cool. *(More screams)* I said be cool.

Kid 1: Who are you?

Rock: I'm Rock, and I'm here to save water.

Kid 1: Did Billy send you? He said he was going to send somebody over to beat me up.

Kid 2: *(Looking at Rock)* He's probably our new babysitter. Did our mom request you? We've scared off the others.

[Rock stands by the sink and watches water going down it. (Sound cue: water going down the drain. He turns off the faucet. Dripping noises ensue.)]

Rock: Look, you're letting the water just run into the sink.

Kid 1: So?

Kid 2: Yeah, so?

Rock: So you're taking water for granted.

Kid 1: Why not? There's plenty of it.

Rock: That's just it, there isn't.

Kid 1: Our mom buys us bottled water all the time.

Rock: Well, we may be down to our last drops. I'm here to tell you not to stand in front of the mirror and let the water just run.

Kid 1: So, what are we supposed to do?

Rock: Brush your teeth first while waiting to turn on the water.

[Rock studies the faucet and then looks up.]

Rock: And have your mom replace this washer. Your faucet's dripping. If your faucet drips at the rate of one drop per second, you can waste 20 gallons of water each day.

Kid 1: Is that a lot?

Rock: Do you have a big jug of milk in your refrigerator?

Kid 1: Uh, huh.

Kid 1: Well, that's 20 of those big milk jugs.

Kid 2: We don't care. Our mom pays the bills.

Rock: You want that new skateboard, don't you?

Kid 2: Yeah, I guess so.

Rock: Then your mom can't afford to waste her money on leaky faucets.

Kid 2: Right.

Kid 1: What's in it for us?

Rock: You, too, can be conservation deputies. Talk to three of your friends. Help them save their parents money, too, by using water wisely. Deal?

Kid 1: No one cares about saving water.

Rock: Make them!

[As Rock exits, the kids stare at him.]

Kid 1: He's weird.

Kid 2: I think he thinks he's like Spiderman! ...or somethin'!

Kid 1/Kid 2: *(Looking at each other, then laughing)* Not!

[The Rock is picked up by Big Drop and Dew Drop.]

Rock: Okay, I'm done.

Big Drop: One more.

Rock: No, that was number two and three.

Big Drop: Two half-pints equal one only.

Rock: I can't believe I'm doing this.

Big Drop: *(Doing an imitation)* Think about Spiderman.

Rock: He wasn't for real.

Big Drop: *(Another imitation)* How about Superman?

Dew Drop: Somebody has to help. It might as well be you.

Rock: Yeah, well, this is cuttin' into my skateboarding.

Big Drop: Here we are.

[The three stop at A Lady—an older Paris Hilton type! in front of her dishwasher.]

Big Drop: *(To Rock)* Go work your magic.

Dew Drop: Better take another swig. For luck.

[Dew Drop offers Rock another sip out of his canteen. Rock then proceeds to talk to the woman. Big Drop and Dew Drop hide.]

Rock: *(Whistles loudly)* Lady, stop--do not dry those dishes!

Lady: What the--?

Rock: Take that dish out. Right now.

Lady: Get out of here, or I'll call the police.

Rock: I'm Rock. Conservative Rock, that is.

Lady: I don't care who you are, or what you're selling. Out of my house! Get out of my house, now!

Rock: C'mon, be cool.

Lady: You need to—

Rock: I'm here to say that you need to conserve. I know that you turn your dishwasher on with only three or four dishes in it.

Lady: So? I hate dirty dishes.... Who told you?

Rock: Conserving water's the right thing to do. So, can you try operating your dish washer only when it's fully loaded? And then set the water level for the size of the load you're using in your washing machine.

Lady: What's that going to do, except make me wash more dishes by hand.

Rock: If you wash dishes by hand, remember you have to fill your sink with soapy water. Then you can quickly rinse under a slow-moving stream from the faucet. Tell all your friends, too.

Lady: Young man, women do not wash dishes. That's why dishwashers were invented. So, we'd have less work.

Rock: Okay, then, wait for a full load—not just one or two dishes. Same thing for your washing machine. And tell your friends.

Lady: I'm telling them that a lunatic is running rampant in the neighborhood.

[The woman's daughter, a cheerleader type, bounces into the scene. She turns on the tap and lets it run.]

Rock: Don't you have some water in the refrigerator?

Teen Girl: Excuse me?

Rock: You know, in a pitcher? Uh, you shouldn't let the tap run while you're waiting for cool water to flow.

Teen Girl: *(Stares)* Who are you? *(Looks around)* Mom?

[She verbally says and then spells out M-O-M again, by using her arms and gymnastic cheerleader jumps!]

Lady: Some know-it-all nut. I'm going to get some paper plates. I refuse to wash dishes by hand.

[The lady exits in a huff.]

Rock: *(Calls out)* I didn't say you had to wash dishes by hand, I just said--

Teen Girl: Are you selling cookies?

Rock: No.

Teen Girl: Too bad. What are you doing here?

Rock: I'm saving the last drops on Earth.

Teen Girl: *(Sarcastic)* You mean the last drips, don't you?

Rock: No, really. *(Pauses, as he watches her drink)* Would you believe that a dinosaur could have once used the water you just swallowed?

Teen Girl: *(Pauses, then makes a face)* Ooohey.

Rock: The same water's here today as was here when Earth was formed.

Teen Girl: *(Pours out her water)* I think I'll have a diet coke.

Rock: We have to protect it.

[Dew Drop comes into the scene and lets Rock take another swig of water from his canteen.]

Dew Drop: *(To Rock)* Be brave! *(Dew Drop Hides Again)*

Rock: *(To the girl)* Want to go to the mall?

Teen Girl: With you?

Rock: Why not?

Teen Girl: So, are you, like, a football player?

Rock: No.

Teen Girl: I'm so sure you're not.

Rock: What?

Teen Girl: What if my friends see me?

Rock: You can tell them we're working on a science project.

Teen Girl: They might understand. *(Pause)* Okay, I'll get my purse.

[Rock goes downstage to talk to Big Drop and Dew Drop.]

Dew Drop: *(Brag)* I told you the hero always gets the girl.

Rock: I don't think she likes me.

Dew Drop: She will. *(Smiles)* Believe me, it's in the water.

Rock: Well, I've done my three, what now?

Big Drop: Try to do one thing each day that will result in saving water.

Dew Drop: Don't worry if the savings are small. Because every drop counts.

Big Drop: True, true.

Rock: It won't matter, if I'm the only one doing it?

Big Drop: Oh, it matters. You alone can make a difference. And so can she. *(Motions to teen girl, who's re-entered and is brushing her hair)* Better not keep her waiting.

Dew Drop: Remember, be cool.

Rock: Are you leaving me?

Big Drop: *(Climbs back into the box)* We have to get back in the Hydro-cycle.

Dew Drop: *(Joins Big Drop in the box)* Thanks for saving us.

Rock: What will I do without you?

Big Drop: Just remember, what goes 'round comes 'round. So, see 'ya around.

Dew Drop: Keep the canteen. You're gonna need it. Baffle her with brilliance.

[Dew Drop gives Rock the canteen, and then Big Drop and Dew Drop exit. Teen girl walks up to Rock.]

Teen Girl: I'm ready.

Dew Drop: *(Offstage, calls out)* Say something!

Rock: *(Brightly)* If you shorten your shower by a minute or two, you can save up to 1,800 gallons per person each year.

Teen Girl: *(Does a funny sign)* So, like, why are you so hung up on H2O?

Rock: A few drops hit me today, and, well, uh...I'm water wiser, now.

Teen Girl: Whatever....

Rock: Water's always on the move. It falls from the sky as rain, hammers the coastline as waves, trickles through the crevices 1,000 feet underground, vaporizes and sails slowly into the clouds.

Teen Girl: If I have to listen to this, you'll have to buy me a large pepperoni. And a Big coke, too.

[The two ride offstage together on his skateboard. Big Drop and Dew Drop peak out of their wooden box and proudly smile.]

Dew Drop: I told you he'd get the girl.

Big Drop: Now that he's water wiser!

[Big Drop and Dew Drop climb back into the box, their water cycle!]

[BLACKOUT]