

ENGLISH CORNER MENU

Learning English Through Discussion Riverfire Festival

This weekend is the start of the Riverfire festival being held in Brisbane. Australia is a very dry country making water a very important resource. The festival celebrates the importance of water in our lives - In our work, our home, our play and our spirit.

Hot topics

1. Are there many major river/water festivals in your country? What happens at them?

2. What role does water play in your life? What do you use water for? *In threes discuss*

Everyday use e.g. drinking...

For work: e.g. manufacturing....

For recreation: e.g. swimming...

For spiritual/religious ceremonies: baptism....

3. In India, Hindus believe the Ganges River is a very spiritual river. People wash themselves in the river to cleanse themselves of sin (the bad things they have done); they float their dead down the river for a smooth journey to the next life. In your country do you have a special river, spring, well, that people drink, wash in, to clean themselves of sin (bad things they have done) or to receive a blessing? *Discuss in pairs.*

Today's story is found in the Bible, (*John 5:1-18*). They story is about a famous water pool in Jerusalem, 2000 years ago and what happened there. Break your group into threes. Assign each person a role to read out: Narrator, Jesus and Man.

Narrator: Jesus went to Jerusalem for a religious festival. In the city, was a water pool. Many sick, blind, paralysed people were lying close to the pool. Beside the pool was a man who had been sick for 38 years. When Jesus saw the man, he said:

Jesus: Do you want to be healed?

Man: Sir, I don't have anyone to put me in the pool when the water is stirred up. I try to get in, but someone else always gets there first.

Jesus: Pick up your mat and walk!

Narrator: Straight away, the man was healed. He picked up his mat and started walking around.

Discussion:

1. In small groups, try to retell the story to each other.
2. What happened to the man? How was he healed?
3. What do you want to be healed of? *In pairs discuss.*
 - a. something physical – a cold, flu, sore back.
 - b. emotional – scared of heights, sadness, homesickness
 - c. spiritual – (my sins – the bad things I have done in my life)
 - d. other

Vocabulary

Spring: Water from underground, comes bubbling up to the top.

Well: A hole in the ground where people get water from.

Baptism: A Christian ceremony symbolizing the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. When a person becomes a Christian, they ask God to forgive all their sins - so when they go under the water, it is like their sins have been washed clean - the old life is gone. When they come up out of the water it represents their new life, following God.

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