

Ryan's Well



Ryan Hreljac sat in his Grade 1 classroom in Kemptville, Ontario, and listened to his teacher, Ms. Prest, talk about water. She said that people could get sick if they didn't have clean water to drink. She told the class that people in some countries do not have indoor sinks and have to walk for hours to get clean water. There were only nine or 10 steps between Ryan's classroom and the drinking fountain.

1

Ryan wanted to find a way to pay the cost of digging wells near people who needed them. Wells are holes dug deep into the ground to provide clean water. The water comes from rain and snow that seeps into the ground and is trapped there.

2

So Ryan worked for four months doing chores around the house and earned \$70. Then he learned that wells cost a lot more, but he was determined. "I'll just do more chores," he said. Ryan's first well was built in 1999 in Africa, when he was seven years old.

3

Ryan's family is very proud of him. "I'm just your regular, average kid," Ryan says humbly. He plays basketball and ice hockey. He also loves playing video games.

4

Now a young adult, Ryan visits schools to teach students that, though everyone needs clean water, not everyone has it. He wants to encourage young people to make a difference in the world. He has visited over two dozen different countries to tell people about the need for clean water. Ryan has also told his story on television. He works with the Global Kidz program, which teaches Canadian Grade 4 students about building healthy communities worldwide.

5

1 What did Ryan learn from Ms. Prest’s lesson?

- He learned how wells work.
- He learned how to raise money.
- He learned how to teach other students.
- He learned how clean water is hard to find.

2 What does the phrase “I’ll just do more chores” in paragraph 3 suggest about Ryan?

- He is worried.
- He is convinced.
- He is determined.
- He is disappointed.

3 What does “average” mean as used in paragraph 4?

- fair
- proper
- familiar
- ordinary

4 What parts of Ryan’s life are covered in the text?

- from Grade 1 to adulthood
- from his birth to high school
- from Grade 1 to raising money for the first well
- from high school to his journey to other countries

5 Explain how a well is helpful to communities. Use details from the text to support your answer.

6 Explain how Ryan is making a difference in the world. Use examples from the text and your own ideas to support your answer.

