

## THE WATER TRACKER STORY

# THE WATER TRACKERS AND THE WAYSTERS.

**Presenter Script:** Now we're going to dip our toes into the world of the Wayster Family and The Water Trackers. As you listen to the story, each time you think someone is wasting water I want you to raise your hand, if you like try and keep count how many times you put your hands up. This is part of your Ripple Effect training and will give you an idea of the sorts of things Water Trackers do to help protect our water supply. Ready? We're going to hear from Will Wayster who is getting really fed up with his family. Let's find out more.

Hi! I'm Will Wayster. I'm not the only 'Wayster' in the house. There's my Mum, Wendy and Dad, Wilf; Grampy Winston and his dog Woofington Paws III. Plus, I have SIX brothers and sisters. There's Winnie, 18, selfie-aholic, Wes, who's 17. He thinks everything's lame that is not directly related to his new motorbike. Warren is 14. He's like a sloth mixed with a bad-tempered gorilla... Then there's me and Whitney. We're 11-year-old twins - although I was born 3 minutes earlier, AND I'm loads taller. Lastly come the littlest Waysters - Wade, 6 and Willow, 4.

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Just in case you can't imagine the hell of living in the Wayster madhouse, let me share a day in my life! I woke up needing a wee and banged on the bathroom door. I could hear running water.

'Go away!' said Winnie. 'I'm fake tanning.'

Winnie takes FOREVER in the bathroom. She lets the shower run while she's slathering herself with tanning lotion. Then she spends an age washing it off again.

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After what seemed like a lifetime Winnie came out. She was the exact same shade of orange as... well, an orange! I was so busy staring at her orangeness, I didn't notice someone sneak past me into the empty bathroom until I heard the door slam shut.

(next slide)

Whitney! My twinnny nemesis! Always trying to get one up on me. If I get 'Star of the Week' she gets a 'Headteacher Award'. I heard Whitney turn the tap on. She takes AGES brushing her teeth. I waited, trying to distract myself by thinking about the

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science presentation I needed to plan – I had no idea what to do. The tap was still gushing. ‘Let me in!’ I shouted. (next slide)

Next, I went into the kitchen. There was no cereal or juice left. I couldn’t even get to the sink to get myself a glass of water because Mum was washing vegetables. The tap was spouting a continuous jet of cold water over her colander. Did I mention Mum loves cooking? Bet you’re thinking cupcakes, right? Nope. Mum only cooks vegetables. She grows her own and is always saying stuff like ‘There’s nothing that can’t be improved with an aubergine.’ Which is A MASSIVE LIE.

‘What’s for tea?’ I asked.

‘New recipe’, she said, waving a cabbage as if it was a winning lottery ticket. (next slide)

I was about to head out of the house when I remembered. Dad had said he’d wash my PE kit. But all the dirty washing was in a pile on the floor. Warren had turfed everything else out and put the wash on, just for his own jeans! And then I couldn’t even get my bike because Wes was on the drive washing his motorbike, menacingly brandishing the spurting hose.

‘I HATE being a Wayster.’ I thought for the millionth time. (next slide)

Most kids look forward to the end of school. Not me. All too soon I was back home and along with all the other Waysters, facing the HORROR of Mum’s Cabbage and Turnip Pie for tea. At the end of the meal there was a series of sudden quacks as if someone had sat on a duck.

‘Turnips!’ Gramps said. ‘Play havoc with my insides! I’ll be needing to use the BIG flush.’

‘Too much information, Gramps,’ I winced. (next slide)

After tea I escaped to the bench in the garden hoping to finally be alone and ponder my science project – it was getting urgent. Wade and Willow were refusing to get into the ‘cold’ paddling pool. What was the point of even filling it?

Then, just to cap off another appalling day with my family, the sprinkler went off. Did I mention, Dad’s obsessed with his lawn! He has this thing about it having stripes and if Woofington Paws III ever dares to cock a leg... well! Grampy Winston says Woofington Paws I and II both died of old age. I’m not so sure. I think they

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might have incurred the WRATH OF DAD for daring to poo on his grass. Dad loves his lawn so much he puts the sprinkler on all the time, even when it's just rained. The bench is right in the sprinkler's path, so I got soaked. (next slide)

**Presenter script:** Well... I have seen lots of hands going up. Did anyone manage to keep track of how many times? There were lots of examples of water waste weren't there. Let's keep on going.

That was it. I'd had ENOUGH! I stormed off to the only peaceful place in the house; the broom cupboard in the hall where we keep the cleaning stuff. It smelled musty, but I didn't care. Suddenly, there was a knock on the door. Then another. I waited, but no-one came, and the knocks kept coming. In the end I had no choice but to answer the door.

Two kids stood on the doorstep. A boy and a girl. About my age.

'Water Tracker Patrol' said the boy. 'Are you a Wayster?'

I nodded. 'Sadly.'

'We have urgent business with this family,' said the girl. And with that, they barged inside. (next slide)

Rude, or what! I was about to shout: 'Stranger Danger!' when they pointed to their Water Tracker badges.

'We are Water Trackers. Guardians of the Water Cycle', said the boy.

I wondered if it was April Fool's, but they looked serious.

'This house,' frowned the girl, 'has some worrying issues.'

'You don't say!' I shrugged. 'It's full of nutters!'

'I wouldn't say that' said the girl, 'but it's definitely full of Waysters.'

I looked at her. Whoever this girl was, she would win gold in the 'Stating the Obvious' Olympics.

'Not Waysters, she tutted, 'Wasters! Water Wasters!' She got out a notebook. 'Did you know that someone in this property used the shower for 21.7 minutes this morning?'

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'Er yes, that was my sister Winnie.'

'While just after, someone else left a tap running for a total of six minutes!'

'Whitney was cleaning her teeth – she has braces.'

'H2Oh. My. Goodness!' said the girl. 'Are you aware that running a tap for six minutes uses six litres of water a minute, while the average 10-minute shower uses 150 litres of water!'

To be fair, that did sound like a lot.

'You understand there's only a certain amount of water on Earth, right? The girl said, urgently. 'It needs to be shared.'

'What about a sprinkler? I asked nervously. 'Do they waste water? My Dad uses his all the time.'

'Aqua-stounding!' shrieked the Water Trackers. 'A sprinkler left on all day uses 1,000 litres of water an hour.'

I gulped.

'And don't get me started on the toilet, said the girl. 'There is an extreme amount of flushing going on in this house. 30% of total water used in a home is just flushed down the loo!'

At this point, I felt a bit protective of my family, 'You try eating cabbage and turnip pie for tea!' I huffed.

'Look,' said the boy. 'We get that it's tough. But you need to take action!'

I looked at them both. Water Trackers. That sounded pretty interesting. What else could they tell me?

'Step into my office,' I said. And I opened the door to the broom cupboard.

'This is nice, said the boy Water Tracker, perching on an upturned bucket.

'No leaks,' nodded the girl, tapping one of the copper pipes that runs through the back of the cupboard. 'Leaks around the house and in the street are the biggest source of water wastage!'

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I brushed a spider out of my hair. With three of us in the cupboard, it was distinctly stuffy. 'Look,' I said, 'Do you really need to be here? It's not like we're in a hot country. It rains all the time in the UK. We're OK for water!'

'You might think so, but rainfall varies from region to region so, some parts of the UK are drier than Puerto Rico and Brazil!' said the boy.

'You're joking?'

'Nope! We're using 70% more water than 60 years ago. Our population is growing, but there's no new water source on Earth. You do the maths!'

The girl Water Tracker stared at me. 'Water is precious,' she said. 'We all have to do our bit to make sure there's enough... for everyone.'

My mind ran back through my day - water had gushed down the drain at every turn: from Winnie's everlasting shower, to taps left on by Whitney and Mum. Then there was Dad's sprinkler, Gramps' endless toilet-flushing, Wes with the hose, Warren wasting water with half empty appliances, even Willow and Wade - insisting on the full paddling pool and then not even going in it. What a waste! What a family of wasters.

'What do I have to do, to be like you?' I asked. I pointed to the badge. 'How do I get one of those?'

We spent an hour in the broom cupboard. The Water Trackers got me to fetch my laptop. They showed me how to explore Water Tracker Training Camp on this cool website. They taught me loads! Did you know that each time you use the toilet you flush away between six and nine litres of water? Or that when you shower, 15 litres of water a minute is flowing straight down the drain? Crazy or what.

'Now it's over to you,' they said. 'Your first task is to talk to your family and friends. Tell them what you've learnt, see if they can change.'

I nodded. I thought of Warren, staring at his jeans going round in the washing machine. This was NOT going to be easy.

And just like that, they were gone. (next slide)

Half an hour later the entire Wayster family was gathered in the kitchen.

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'Rhubarb and nettle slice?' Mum offered.

'No thanks,' I said, pinning on my new Water Tracker badge. 'I just need you to listen.'

So, I told them how they were terrible Water Wasters.

'Do you realise what you're doing?' I said: 'When you're leaving the tap on, or sprinkling the lawn, or filling up the paddling pool again and again...?'

'So, you're saying we're going through 1,500 litres a day as a family- about 20 bathtubs?' Whitney said. 'Wow! That's Bad!'

I'd never have pegged my twin as my water ally, but she was really listening.

'What do you expect us to do then, genius,' Wes sniped.

'We can't save the planet all by ourselves,' Mum agreed.

'Have you heard of The Ripple Effect?' I asked.

They hadn't. (next slide)

So, I explained how small ripples add up to big waves. 'If we all make small changes,' I said. 'They will add up to make a big difference. 'Mum, Whitney, you can start just by turning the tap off when you're washing vegetables or cleaning your teeth, Winnie! You need to cut down your showers. Put the timer on for four minutes.'

'That's me off the hook,' Gramps said. 'I don't take long showers.'

'No, but you need to flush less or at least use the small flush. And Dad, you've got to stop putting the sprinkler on.'

'But...' said Dad.

'Yes!' said Whitney. 'A water butt! We could use one to collect rainwater!'

'Then use it for watering your lawn,' Winnie added.

'Or for washing the cars,' Wes nodded.

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'And the little kids could use water blasters to water the vegetable beds,' Mum laughed. (next slide)

So that's how I became a Water Tracker and how I helped my family make small changes, which are hopefully helping change the bigger picture. It felt good. And it felt even better when I aced my science project. (next slide)

'Star of the Week, Will!' said Mrs Beecham when I finished talking about the Ripple Effect. 'Oh, and Whitney... here's a Head Teacher's Award for having a tidy desk.'

Some things never change. (next slide)

But then, I really think my family's behaviour has... Don't get me wrong, I still live in a crazy, noisy madhouse. Wes, Winnie, Warren, Whitney... they all still annoy me every day.

In the end we're all still Waysters by name... BUT we are definitely not Wasters by nature. (next slide)

**Presenter script:** Well! The Wayster family has definitely made some positive changes making some big waves in protecting our water supply. Now it's time to improve your water knowledge and skills even further... we're going to play a game. (Presenter will then refer to the game guide.)