

We're walking on water... really!

kids

Living Here



We all know that we, just like other animals and plants, can't live without water. We need it to drink, wash and cook, and businesses and industries need it too. In fact, did you know that about $\frac{3}{4}$ of our bodies are made up of water?

The amazing thing is that here in Canterbury, under our very feet, is some of the purest water in the world.



It flows under the Canterbury Plains and under the city streets of Christchurch – and we get our water from these underground resources.

Activity

Investigate how water is used in your home during one day of your life.

IDEA: Ask a friend or family member to do the same investigation and compare your findings.

Make a list of how many times you use water during the day and night. When you have completed your investigation look at ways you could conserve water. Look out for helpful tips for saving household water.

So how does the water get there?

Rainfall is our main source of groundwater. It falls onto the land, seeps through the ground and becomes groundwater. The rain and snow that falls on the Southern Alps forms rivers which journey from the alps to the sea. As they flow, some of their water seeps into the earth and continues to travel underground. Some of this water collects in aquifers. Aquifers are big areas of sand and gravel where large amounts of water are stored. They hold water like a big sponge! The gravel cleans the water by acting like a large water filter.

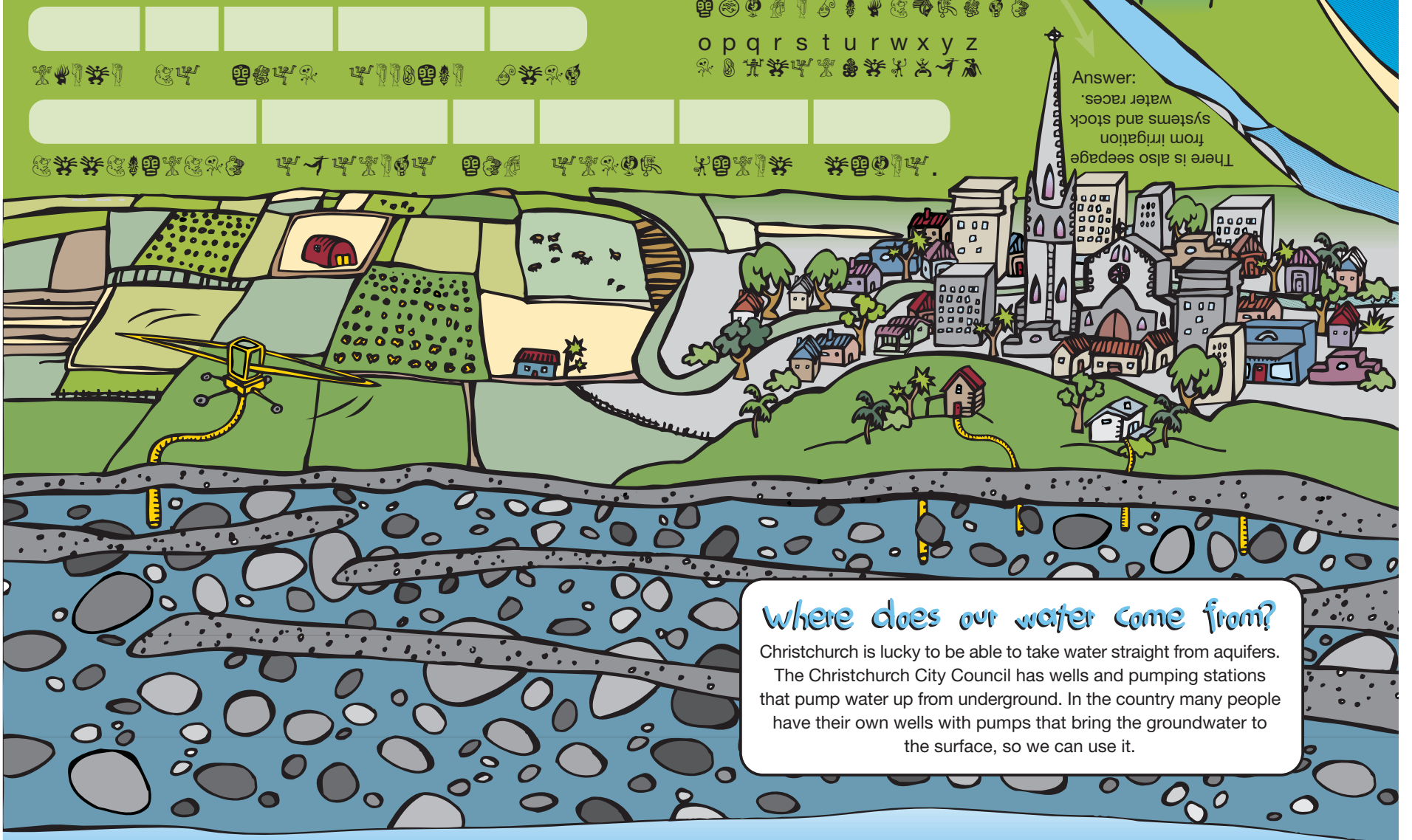
Next time you drink a glass of water, think about where it may have come from. It may have begun as a raindrop or snowflake, at a time when moa roamed the Canterbury Plains. Some of the water below ground has been there for hundreds of years ... but it still tastes great! The water we drink is probably a mixture of old and new water.

Activity

See if you can crack the code to find out other sources of groundwater in Canterbury.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n
 o p q r s t u r w x y z

Answer:
 There is also seepage from irrigation systems and stock water races.



Where does our water come from?

Christchurch is lucky to be able to take water straight from aquifers. The Christchurch City Council has wells and pumping stations that pump water up from underground. In the country many people have their own wells with pumps that bring the groundwater to the surface, so we can use it.

Activity

The illustration on this page shows parts of the water cycle in Canterbury. The water moves in a cycle from land to sea to air and back again. See if you can cut out the labels below and stick them to the correct place on the picture.

- Southern Alps
- River
- Aquifer
- Canterbury Plains
- Clouds
- Rain
- Ocean
- Irrigator