

BOOK REVIEW

RECENZJE

How to Teach on Sustainable Development Issues?

Jak uczyć o rozwoju zrównoważonym?

G Venkatesh, *Water For All and Other Poems*, Cyberwit.Net, 2014.

Water For All – yes, we all know this slogan, however rather from the world of media or scientific journals, than from the world of poetry.

And how to teach on sustainable development?

Well, there are a lot of educational programmes.

There are also many books and scientific journals (like *Problemy Ekorozwoju/Problems of Sustainable Development*).

Finally, don't forget about agreements, legislation, and many different initiatives on global, regional, and local level, introduced by UN or EU.

Is it enough?

The aim of sustainable development is make people AWARE, that something good may be done, and that WE may change for now, and for future generation's sake.

If we want to take any action, we must be however aware of existing problems. As we can read in the Preface to the book: *People kill each other over diamonds; countries go to war over oil. But the world's most expensive commodities are worth nothing in the absence of water. Fresh water is essential for life, with no substitute.*

It is true. And why poetry? Maybe because it can touch us from totally different perspective, than any article or movie. The author uses poetry to combine feeling and technology – and it works! What's more, between his poems you may find information and quotations presented here as *Points to ponder*, like: *In the developing world, 24 000 children under the age of five die every day from preventable causes like diarrhea contracted from unclean water.* This is one of the comments to the poem called:

The Christmas Gift

*I had fallen ill last Christmas,
and on the one before that too.
I remember mamma telling me
that this had with water to do.*

*My prayers this year,
have been heard by God,
who sent through Mamma
a small reward.*

*Come Chistmastime,
and I shall be fine,
with the water I drink
through this gift of mine.*

*I have seen little girls
with many a Barbie doll.
But what I have got from Mamma,
Is better than them all.*

My favorite poem is printed on the page 31 and is called:

Drop in the Ocean

*A drop in the ocean
what difference will it make?
You meter carefully what you use,
While neighbours drain up the lake.
Everything is evened out
You save for others to spill.
You concern is pointless,
when the majority lacks the will.
They wait for you to step back,
so they could have some more.
And when You see that happen,
You'd wish you'd known before.
Changes take some time, my friend,
And that is just a fond hope.
My desire is to change myself,
the rest is beyond the scope.
The small 'drop in the ocean',
is all that I can give,
as gratitude to the Almighty,
for as long as I have to live.*

Let's hope, that such reading may be the reason for some good behavioural change among readers. It may make them aware, and wanting to change. So, education with poetry? Why not?

P.S. The book is published for a charitable cause in India, the beneficiary of the royalties will be the Indian branch of Water For People Organisation. You may buy the book here:
<http://www.cyberwit.net/publications/738>

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