If not you, then who?
It all began with the book, *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park and our building’s motto, “If not you, then who?” When we read this book, we knew this was the perfect way to inspire our sixth graders to connect literature to social action. We immediately started making plans to read the book aloud to all our sixth graders and begin a project to raise money for Water for South Sudan, Inc. The book is partly told by Salva, a real life person who was a “Lost Boy” when he was displaced from his family and village during the civil wars in the 1980s in Sudan. Another narrator, a fictional character named Nya, tells the other half of the story. She is based on all the girls in many parts of the world who have to spend hours a day walking to get water for their families. In the end, their two stories connect in a heartwarming way.
The Plan

- We read *A Long Walk to Water* aloud to our 6th graders.
- We plan a walk in the fall and raise money for Water for South Sudan.
- Students carry a gallon of water with them to represent those who have to walk miles every day for clean water for their families. The water is donated to Matthew 25 Ministries.
- We incorporate the book and walk into our curriculum and plan units around Social Injustice and Social Responsibility.
"One Day I Had to Run"

Salva Dut Video

Water For South Sudan, Inc. Website

Water is Everything Video

60 Minutes – Lost Boys

The Good Lie

God Grew Tired of Us
Social Injustice/ Responsibility Unit

- Read aloud *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park
  - Reading Response Notebook - work on skills
  - Discussion Groups
  - List of Lingering/Essential Questions
  - Concept map
  - Read Short Texts with Social Injustice/ Responsibility Theme - skill based activities
  - Short texts come from Scholastic Scope and Jr. Scholastic Magazine
  - Focus shifts from injustice to responsibility
  - Claim Essay
Research
○ Student choice based on lingering questions
○ Present using self selected format
○ Public Service Announcement on a social injustice
  - WeVideo.com, PowToon.com, Animoto.com

Discussion Groups
○ How can we take responsibility to help water crisis
○ Create plan of action

Brochure for WFSS
○ Use when asking for donations
○ Sample Student Brochure
SOCIAL INJUSTICE UNIT
Small Group Book Ideas
SKYPE session with the executive staff of Water for South Sudan, Inc.

We gathered all 300+ sixth graders and sixth grade teachers in the Columbia Intermediate café and Skyped with a few leaders of Water for South Sudan, Inc. They talked about Salva Dut, the need for clean water in the villages of South Sudan, and the success of building borehole wells in the region. Many of our sixth graders asked excellent questions.
Fundraising Ideas

- Water bottles
- #ReadWalkWater wristbands
- Write grants
- Pledge sheets
- H2O Project
- Newspaper articles generate interest
- Local businesses
Miami University Visitor

Jordan Griebner, a Miami University education student and founder of the university’s Living Water International chapter, came and talked to 6th grade teams about the world water crisis. She is now on staff with Living Water International at their headquarters in Texas.
WALK FOR WATER

Columbia Intermediate School sixth graders, staff, administrators, and many parents walked a mile around the school carrying gallon jugs of water to honor those women and children who walk miles every day for clean water.
H2O Project: More money was raised by drinking nothing but water for 10 days. Money saved from not buying other beverages was donated to the cause.

We had concerns last year that the water students carried went to waste. This year, Chris Griffin contacted Matthew 25 Ministries. They came the Monday after the walk and picked up the water students bought for the walk. We were thrilled that we could donate the water to a good cause!
In the 2013-2014 school year, Columbia Intermediate’s goal was to raise $5,000, the amount needed to become official sponsors of a well in South Sudan. We raised just over that amount and received a letter describing the exact location of the well and a picture of villagers holding up a Columbia Intermediate banner. In 2014-2015, our sixth graders again raised over $5,000, and because of a very generous $10,000 grant from Ethicon, a division of Johnson & Johnson, applied for by Tracy Kleis, we raised the full amount ($15,000) to build a well in South Sudan. In 2015-2016, we again raised over $15,000 with Ethicon’s help, and will be able to fund another well in a village in South Sudan and contribute to a new drill, transforming lives there.
Iron Giraffe Super Challenge Winners!!

Columbia Intermediate School entered the Iron Giraffe Super Challenge in 2015, and because we raised over $25,000 in two school years, we were the first school in the world to win it! As a result, Salva Dut visited our school on March 29th. He presented to our junior high kids, our 5th and 6th graders, and the Blue Ash Rotary Club. The day culminated with a community event at Columbia Intermediate School cafe at 6:30 PM. Salva drew a standing room only crowd. It was an inspiring (and surreal) day! We raised another $1000 that night!
SALVA DUT’S VISIT
His message to the kids is that they have the power to make the world a better place! They are the future!
A Salva Selfie!
Tracy Kleis: tkleis@kingslocal.net
Holly Mueller: hmueller@kingslocal.net
Holly’s blog: www.hollymueller.blogspot.com