



Water Crisis in Flint, Michigan

Part 1

Teacher Reads In 2014, the city of Flint, Michigan, faced a water crisis. It was an emergency because their tap water was contaminated (poisoned) with lead, a toxic metal that can cause serious health problems.

Many people in Flint realized that something was wrong when
10 their water was colored brown and yellow, had a strange smell, or
22 tasted bad. The tap water in many homes was unsafe for drinking,
34 showering, making food, or cleaning. The water contained lead,
43 which can harm people, especially young children.

50 How did that happen? In the past, water for Flint came from
62 Lake Huron, one of the five Great Lakes. That water was treated,
74 or cleaned, so it was safe to use. In 2014, the city of Flint needed
89 to save money, and one major expense was water. It was decided
101 that they would build a pipeline from a new site to the city to
115 reduce costs, but that would take a number of years to put into
128 place. In the meantime, water was pumped from the Flint River
139 into residents' homes. This water was not clean and not treated
150 in the right way. As the water passed through Flint's water pipes,
162 contaminants in the river water corroded lead pipes, breaking
171 down and rusting the inside of the pipes. When this happened,
182 lead was released into the tap water that flowed to local faucets.

194 Leaders in Flint distributed bottled water and water filters to
204 help residents. A water filter can get rid of lead in water that runs
218 through the tap. But bottled water and water filters did not solve
230 the crisis. The unclean water was still flowing into people's homes.



Part 2

Teacher Reads Residents of Flint knew they had to speak up for themselves to help solve the water crisis. One resident was a young girl named Amariyanna Copeny, known as Mari. Keep reading to see what happened.

241 Many Flint residents spoke up about the water disaster.
250 One resident was Mari, who was 8 at the time. In 2016,
262 Mari sent a letter to President Obama describing the water
272 crisis in Flint. Partly because of Mari's letter, President
281 Obama went to Flint, where he met with Mari. After his
292 visit to Flint, President Obama worked with Congress to
301 grant money to help solve Flint's water problem.

Part 3

Teacher Reads Mari is an activist, speaking up and working for causes in which she believes.

309 While the money was helpful, Flint still had a water
319 crisis. Much of the tap water was still not drinkable.
329 Mari helped by working with people to get bottled water
339 to residents. But the bottles added plastic waste. So, Mari
349 worked to bring more water filters to Flint...and beyond.
359 There are other places in the United States that have
369 unsafe drinking water. Mari also works to help people
378 in those locations.
381 Mari has worked on other projects. She has raised
390 funds to help children in Flint. Through that work,
399 children got winter coats, bikes, and backpacks filled
407 with items needed for school. Mari is proof that kids can
418 choose to speak up and help make life better for all people.
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