

# ENGLISH LEARNING FOR CURIOUS MINDS





**Episode #566**  
**MrBeast & The Global Water Crisis**  
**5th Sep, 2025**

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## **Transcript**

[00:00:05] Hello, hello, hello, and welcome to English Learning for Curious Minds, by Leonardo English, the show where you can listen to fascinating stories and learn weird and wonderful things about the world at the same time as improving your English.

[00:00:21] I'm Alastair Budge, and today we are going to be talking about water.

[00:00:26] And more specifically, we'll be talking about the most popular YouTuber in the world, MrBeast, and what has been called "the global water crisis".

[00:00:37] It's a story of celebrity, politics, geography, poverty, [mismanagement](#)<sup>1</sup>, technology, and the liquid that every human needs to survive.

[00:00:49] OK then, let's get right into it, and talk about MrBeast and the global water crisis.

[00:00:57] In November of 2023, the world's most popular YouTuber, Jimmy Donaldson, a man you are more likely to know by the name "MrBeast", released a video titled "I Built 100 [Wells](#)<sup>2</sup> in Africa."

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<sup>1</sup> bad or careless control

<sup>2</sup> deep holes in the ground used to get water

[00:01:15] It went instantly viral, and as of the time of recording, it has racked up<sup>3</sup> over a quarter of a billion views.

[00:01:26] In the video, you see MrBeast and his team standing in villages across Kenya, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Cameroon, and Somalia, unveiling<sup>4</sup> freshly built wells surrounded by cheering crowds.

[00:01:41] There are smiling children, colourful<sup>5</sup> celebrations, and people clapping<sup>6</sup> as clean water gushes out<sup>7</sup> from a tap<sup>8</sup> for the very first time.

[00:01:52] The tone of the video is upbeat<sup>9</sup> and dramatic–this is a channel known for spectacle<sup>10</sup>, after all–but the message is clear: access to water is life-changing, life-saving, even.

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<sup>3</sup> collected or gained (a large number)

<sup>4</sup> showing for the first time

<sup>5</sup> full of bright colours

<sup>6</sup> hitting their hands together to show happiness

<sup>7</sup> comes out quickly and in large amounts

<sup>8</sup> a device that controls the flow of water

<sup>9</sup> cheerful and positive

<sup>10</sup> a visually impressive performance or display

[00:02:08] Before, as you see in the video, these communities had to **trudge**<sup>11</sup> for hours every day to get water, often across mountains, rivers, and dangerous terrain.

[00:02:20] And even after all this, it was often **contaminated**<sup>12</sup>, dirty water that would make them sick, even kill them.

[00:02:30] Clearly, a pretty terrible situation, and a small insight into the reality of the estimated 1,000 children under the age of five who die every single day through diseases related to **a lack of**<sup>13</sup> clean water.

[00:02:47] But after the arrival of this American YouTuber and his crew, beautiful fresh drinking water could be **pumped**<sup>14</sup> from the ground, for free.

[00:02:59] MrBeast claimed that these **wells** would provide water for half a million people and, with the proper maintenance, could last for 30 years.

[00:03:11] The video was made in the classic MrBeast style: **over-the-top**<sup>15</sup> animations, short and **punchy**<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> walk slowly and with effort

<sup>12</sup> dirty or unsafe

<sup>13</sup> not having enough of it

<sup>14</sup> pushed or moved with a device

<sup>15</sup> too much or too extreme

<sup>16</sup> strong and easy to notice

[00:03:18] But it was one of his more serious subjects, and the comment section was [flooded<sup>17</sup>](#) with people congratulating him, saying what a good thing he had done, and how this was a much more [worthwhile<sup>18</sup>](#) use of his time than giving people money for staying in a circle or pressing buttons.

[00:03:38] After all, what happened was [uplifting<sup>19</sup>](#), inspiring, hopeful.

[00:03:44] And, if this meant that 500,000 people who previously didn't have clean water now had it, surely this was a good thing?

[00:03:55] But, as you might imagine, it [rubbed some people up the wrong way<sup>20</sup>](#).

[00:04:00] And it raised some important questions.

[00:04:04] Why did it take a YouTuber to solve this problem?

[00:04:08] Why does a man who made his name giving away Lamborghinis and filming last-man-standing challenges now find himself doing something that you might think governments, NGOs, or international institutions should have done a long time ago?

[00:04:26] And, as we'll come to discuss later on, is he actually solving anything at all?

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<sup>17</sup> filled with too many of them

<sup>18</sup> worth doing, useful or important

<sup>19</sup> making you feel happy and hopeful

<sup>20</sup> annoyed some people

[00:04:33] So, to the first set of questions, why did it take a celebrity YouTuber to solve this problem and why did these villages not have [pumps](#)<sup>21</sup> like this many years ago?

[00:04:46] We're not talking about high-speed internet or access to university education or [cutting-edge](#)<sup>22</sup> cancer treatments.

[00:04:54] We're talking about water, the most basic of basic needs, something that no human being can live more than a few days without.

[00:05:03] And what's more, something that covers most of the Earth's surface, literally falls from the sky, and when it doesn't come from the sky, can be just a few metres below ground.

[00:05:15] After all, the [wells](#) MrBeast built weren't high-tech. They don't involve AI, space rockets or [sophisticated](#)<sup>23</sup> computing.

[00:05:25] They're just... [wells](#).

[00:05:27] They [tap into](#)<sup>24</sup> groundwater — the water stored beneath the earth's surface — and bring it up to the surface where it can be used for drinking, washing, farming, and whatever else it might be needed for.

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<sup>21</sup> machines that move liquid

<sup>22</sup> very modern and advanced

<sup>23</sup> complicated or very advanced

<sup>24</sup> use or gain access to

[00:05:42] Groundwater already existed in most of the places he visited, and it isn't particularly complicated or expensive to bring it up to the surface.

[00:05:54] What was missing wasn't the water; it was the [infrastructure](#)<sup>25</sup>, the funding, and the political [will](#)<sup>26</sup> to access it.

[00:06:03] This video, and the entire [well](#)<sup>27</sup>-digging project, highlighted just a few examples of what some journalists and NGOs call the "global water crisis", the reality that today an estimated two billion people still [lack](#)<sup>28</sup> access to safely managed drinking water.

[00:06:26] Of course, there are many reasons for this, and the water crisis looks different depending on where you are.

[00:06:34] But most of the problems can be grouped into four very broad buckets: geography, money, [mismanagement](#), and [neglect](#)<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> the basic systems the country needed

<sup>26</sup> strong desire or decision

<sup>27</sup> a deep hole in the ground used to get water

<sup>28</sup> don't have

<sup>29</sup> not giving enough care or attention



[00:06:47] Again, this is a simplification, and there isn't always a [neat and tidy](#)<sup>30</sup> division between these buckets, but it's a useful way of thinking about the problem.

[00:06:58] So, first, geography.

[00:07:01] In some parts of the world, clearly, water is naturally [scarce](#)<sup>31</sup>: for every person looking out of their kitchen window in northern Scotland wishing it would stop raining, there is another somewhere else in the world who would be [over the moon](#)<sup>32</sup> to look out of their window and see the same thing.

[00:07:20] The [oft-used](#)<sup>33</sup> example is Yemen, which gets an average of 17 cm of rain a year: about what some parts of the UK might get in a single month.

[00:07:32] But unlike the UK, Yemen doesn't have the [infrastructure](#) to store and distribute water effectively.

[00:07:40] Its capital, Sana'a, is running out of water entirely, and some [wells](#) are now over a kilometre deep.

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<sup>30</sup> clean and well organised

<sup>31</sup> hard to find, not enough

<sup>32</sup> very happy

<sup>33</sup> often used

[00:07:48] There's also another problem with water in Yemen, which has nothing to do with geography and everything to do with [mismanagement](#), but we'll come to that in a minute.

[00:07:59] In other places, water might exist, either underground or in seasonal rivers, but not in the right place at the right time, and without the proper facilities to store it, it simply gets [washed away](#)<sup>34</sup>.

[00:08:15] The second bucket is money – having the funds to pay for the infrastructure required, whether that's basic [wells](#), water storage facilities, or more technologically advanced equipment like [desalination](#)<sup>35</sup> facilities, where seawater is processed and turned into clean, drinkable water.

[00:08:36] The irony is that often the cost to access clean water is very low.

[00:08:43] In places where there is [plentiful](#)<sup>36</sup> groundwater—like in the areas in MrBeast's video—the water is often just a few dozen metres below the surface.

[00:08:54] It's there, and all you need is to [drill down](#)<sup>37</sup> and get it.

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<sup>34</sup> carried off

<sup>35</sup> the process of removing salt from sea water

<sup>36</sup> in large amounts, easy to find

<sup>37</sup> make a deep hole

[00:08:59] But **drilling**<sup>38</sup> costs money. Equipment costs money. Pipes, **pumps**, **filters**<sup>39</sup>; all of this requires investment.

[00:09:08] Not a huge amount of money, but governments in many low-income countries either don't have the funds or don't **prioritise**<sup>40</sup> water projects, especially in remote areas.

[00:09:21] And while international aid does help, it often comes with bureaucracy, short-term timelines, or political **strings attached**<sup>41</sup>.

[00:09:31] So the result is this: water exists, but it remains trapped under ground, **tantalisingly**<sup>42</sup> close, but **utterly**<sup>43</sup> out of reach.

[00:09:43] The third bucket we can call **mismanagement**.

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<sup>38</sup> the act of making a hole in the ground

<sup>39</sup> things that clean water by removing dirt

<sup>40</sup> decide that it is more important than other things

<sup>41</sup> conditions or rules that come with the offer

<sup>42</sup> in a way that makes you want something but can't have it

<sup>43</sup> completely

[00:09:47] Even in places where water is available, in the form of [plentiful](#) rivers or lakes, it often becomes [polluted](#)<sup>44</sup> and therefore unsafe: the Ganges being a classic example.

[00:10:01] And if it isn't [polluted](#), it's often used inefficiently, for things that simply aren't a good use of limited water.

[00:10:11] Globally, around 70% of all freshwater is used for agriculture.

[00:10:18] Sure, agriculture is a perfectly good use of water in some cases, but in many countries with limited water resources, that water is [diverted](#)<sup>45</sup> to grow [cash crops](#)<sup>46</sup> like cotton, sugar, or avocados — crops that are water-intensive and destined for export.

[00:10:40] I told you we'd return to the other reason that there's a water crisis in Yemen, and that's because it is especially guilty of [mismanaging](#)<sup>47</sup> its already limited groundwater.

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<sup>44</sup> made dirty or unsafe by harmful things

<sup>45</sup> sent in a different direction

<sup>46</sup> crops grown to sell, not to eat locally

<sup>47</sup> controlling it badly or carelessly

[00:10:52] Around 40% of the country's water supply goes to growing something called qat, which is a [narcotic<sup>48</sup>](#) plant that gives you a [buzz<sup>49</sup>](#) when you [chew<sup>50</sup>](#) it.

[00:11:04] It has zero nutritional value, and if production were banned, or if someone waved a magic wand and all qat production stopped, Yemen's water crisis might not quite disappear, but some serious pressure would be relieved.

[00:11:22] Now, this is an extreme example of a very poor country that has been in a state of violent civil war for over 10 years, so it would be completely unreasonable to imagine a Yemeni qat farmer should spend any time thinking about the impact his crop has on the water level, when all he is trying to do is survive.

[00:11:44] But still, qat is a major contributor to Yemen's water supply issues.

[00:11:50] And there are plenty of other examples of countries where water is [diverted](#) towards [cash crops](#) for export rather than domestic consumption.

[00:12:01] The central Asian nation of Uzbekistan is [landlocked<sup>51</sup>](#) and has limited water resources, yet it is one of the world's largest producers of cotton, which is a particularly water-intensive crop.

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<sup>48</sup> relating to or denoting illegal drugs

<sup>49</sup> a strong, short feeling of excitement

<sup>50</sup> bite it in your mouth

<sup>51</sup> with no sea or ocean around it



[00:12:17] If you are a long time listener to this show, you might remember the role of cotton farming in the disappearance of the Aral Sea, from episode number 12.

Uzbekistan [diverted](#) so much water to this [thirsty](#)<sup>52</sup> crop that a large sea simply dried up and disappeared.

[00:12:37] So that's [mismanagement](#).

[00:12:40] The fourth and final bucket is perhaps the most frustrating of all: [neglect](#).

[00:12:47] Because sometimes the problem isn't [a lack of](#) water, or [a lack of](#) funds, or even active [mismanagement](#).

[00:12:54] It's just that nobody [bothers](#)<sup>53</sup> to fix it.

[00:12:58] Water doesn't win elections.

[00:13:00] It doesn't attract [headlines](#)<sup>54</sup>.

[00:13:02] And unlike a new road, a [shiny](#)<sup>55</sup> stadium, or a government building with someone's name on the side, it doesn't make for good photo opportunities.

[00:13:12] So politicians and planners focus their attention elsewhere.

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<sup>52</sup> needing a lot of water

<sup>53</sup> takes the trouble to do it

<sup>54</sup> titles of news stories

<sup>55</sup> bright and impressive

[00:13:18] There are also cases where water infrastructure was built — perhaps by a foreign NGO or as part of an aid project — but was then left to fall into [disrepair](#)<sup>56</sup>.

[00:13:32] [Pumps](#) break. [Filters clog](#)<sup>57</sup>. Pipes [corrode](#)<sup>58</sup>.

[00:13:36] And because there's no system in place to maintain them, no local expertise or cost-efficient way of replacing broken parts, the community is left with nothing.

[00:13:49] According to some estimates, between 25 and 40% of water points in sub-Saharan Africa are no longer functioning, often just a few years after installation.

[00:14:04] This is the quiet tragedy of the water crisis: it's not always about what's missing, it's about what's been forgotten.

[00:14:14] So, to recap, we have:

[00:14:16] Water that exists, but is in the wrong place.

[00:14:19] Communities that need it, but can't afford to access it.

[00:14:23] Governments that are unable — or unwilling — to [prioritise](#) it.

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<sup>56</sup> a bad condition because of not being cared for

<sup>57</sup> get blocked

<sup>58</sup> are slowly destroyed, usually by rust or chemicals

[00:14:28] And domestic and international systems that are, at best, [patchy](#)<sup>59</sup> and short-term in their efforts.

[00:14:37] Into this mix steps a man with a camera, a team of editors, and a couple of hundred million YouTube subscribers.

[00:14:46] He builds 100 [wells](#), attracts [heaps of](#)<sup>60</sup> praise and [goodwill](#)<sup>61</sup>, and no doubt adds a few million people to his YouTube channel.

[00:14:55] Not so bad for a day's work.

[00:14:58] Now, while the video received hundreds of thousands of positive comments, and millions more likes and shares, it also attracted [a bunch of](#)<sup>62</sup> criticism.

[00:15:09] Some of it was predictable internet noise: he's only doing it for the views, or why did he build 100 and not 1,000, or he should have built hospitals rather than [wells](#).

[00:15:23] But some raised important ethical questions.

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<sup>59</sup> limited or lacking

<sup>60</sup> a lot of

<sup>61</sup> kind feelings or support

<sup>62</sup> a lot of

[00:15:28] The first line of criticism was about performative charity, the idea that MrBeast was only helping these communities on camera, for content, and ultimately for profit.

[00:15:42] After all, his YouTube videos make money.

[00:15:45] A lot of money, and even if he specified that he was giving all of the advertising revenue away to the project, and he was raising money for his water-based charity, he would still benefit indirectly from it.

[00:16:00] So, the question becomes: is this charity, or is it a business model disguised as generosity?

[00:16:08] Would these [wells](#) have been built if there were no cameras, no thumbnails, no ad revenue, no brand sponsors?

[00:16:17] A second criticism was about power and agency.

[00:16:22] Why is it that the world's richest countries, multinational development agencies, and national governments failed to act, and a private individual, with no public accountability, [stepped in](#)<sup>63</sup> instead?

[00:16:37] Is this a celebration of generosity?

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<sup>63</sup> got involved to help

[00:16:40] Or a [symptom](#)<sup>64</sup> of a system that has [outsourced](#)<sup>65</sup> basic public services to influencers?

[00:16:48] And there was another layer of discomfort — one that's harder to [pin down](#)<sup>66</sup>, but no less real.

[00:16:56] Some commentators felt that the video, while well-intentioned, fell into a familiar pattern:

[00:17:03] The white saviour narrative.

[00:17:06] A wealthy American flies into African villages and solves their problem with the wave of a wand, or in this case, the [twist](#)<sup>67</sup> of a [valve](#)<sup>68</sup>.

[00:17:17] Of course, MrBeast didn't invent that narrative.

[00:17:21] And [much to his credit](#)<sup>69</sup>, he didn't centre himself in the video as much as someone else might have done.

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<sup>64</sup> a sign that something bad is happening

<sup>65</sup> gave work to another group or person outside

<sup>66</sup> explain or identify exactly

<sup>67</sup> turn

<sup>68</sup> a device that controls the flow of liquid

<sup>69</sup> something good that he should be praised or recognised for



[00:17:28] But for many, the format still felt uncomfortably close to a feel-good Western intervention story, where local people are recipients of generosity rather than participants in the solutions.

[00:17:44] Another common criticism, one often heard in discussions about international aid more broadly, is that giving [handouts](#)<sup>70</sup> [discourages](#)<sup>71</sup> self-sufficiency.

[00:17:56] That it risks creating dependency.

[00:17:59] That if people grow used to others arriving and “solving problems” for them, they may lose the [incentive](#)<sup>72</sup> — or the confidence — to build these solutions themselves.

[00:18:12] How could a local well-installation company ever compete on price with “free”?

[00:18:18] And what [incentive](#) is there to solve these problems if you know that there will be [handouts](#) at some stage, even if you might need to wait a while for them.

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<sup>70</sup> free things given to people in need

<sup>71</sup> prevents or stops

<sup>72</sup> motive or reason

[00:18:28] This argument is especially common among critics of foreign aid: the idea that decades of charity have created a kind of learned [helplessness](#)<sup>73</sup>, where African governments and communities wait for help rather than take action.

[00:18:45] Now, although there might be some truth here, there is also a danger of oversimplification.

[00:18:52] Building infrastructure like wells does require local expertise, materials, and maintenance.

[00:18:58] And many communities do already try to build and repair water systems, with or without help. Often, they're just missing the capital or political support to do so effectively.

[00:19:13] In MrBeast's case, it's worth noting that the [wells](#) were reportedly built in partnership with local contractors and NGOs, not just dropped in from above, and the ongoing maintenance and repair work of the [wells](#) will require local expertise and labour.

[00:19:31] Of course, the video doesn't [dwell on](#)<sup>74</sup> that side of things; it's a 10-minute video intended to entertain and make you feel good, it was never going to go into the specifics of how everything was delivered and will be maintained.

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<sup>73</sup> the feeling of not being able to do anything

<sup>74</sup> talk too much about it

[00:19:47] But this hasn't stopped MrBeast's critics from arguing that this video, and the entire project, creates an unbalanced picture: one where progress comes from outside, and where local people are passive [recipients](#)<sup>75</sup> of foreign generosity.

[00:20:06] Now, to wrap things up, this is just one video, and these 100 wells are just a tiny step forward on the journey of securing clean, drinkable water for everyone who needs it.

[00:20:20] It did do a lot to raise awareness and money for global water projects, and showed people that getting clean water isn't as complicated or expensive as they might have thought.

[00:20:33] According to one recent study, securing clean water for every person on the planet by 2030 could cost just 1% of global GDP - about 29 cents per person per day.

[00:20:50] It seems like a small price to pay, especially because the benefits greatly outweigh the cost, with this study suggesting that every dollar invested in water access and sanitation brings an average of \$6.80 in return.

[00:21:09] If you ask me, it's a good thing that someone with MrBeast's reach is highlighting the problem of water access, but it certainly shouldn't be theirs to fix, nor should they be criticised for "not doing enough".

[00:21:23] Clearly, no single actor can solve the global water crisis alone.

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<sup>75</sup> people who receive it

[00:21:28] Governments carry the ultimate responsibility to provide safe water.

[00:21:34] NGOs and international organisations can supply resources and expertise.

[00:21:40] Local communities bring the knowledge and capacity to keep systems running.

[00:21:46] And yes, sometimes even YouTubers with vast audiences can play a part by raising awareness and mobilising funds.

[00:21:55] Charity is never a [substitute](#)<sup>76</sup> for strong institutions, but when it works alongside them, it can accelerate progress.

[00:22:04] And at the end of the day, the real test isn't whether 100 [wells](#) can be built for a YouTube video, it's whether we can build a world where videos like this aren't needed at all.

[00:22:19] OK, then, that is it for today's episode on MrBeast and the Global Water Crisis.

[00:22:24] If you'd like to watch the video of him digging the [wells](#), just go to YouTube and search for "MrBeast wells" - he is the biggest YouTuber in the world and you will have no trouble finding it.

[00:22:35] As always, I would love to know what you thought of this episode.

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<sup>76</sup> something that takes the place of them

**English Learning for Curious Minds | Episode #566**  
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[00:22:39] Did you know about MrBeast before? What do you think of these kinds of massive YouTubers doing philanthropic work in their videos?

[00:22:47] Praiseworthy and good, deceptive and dangerous, or somewhere in between?

[00:22:52] you can head right into our community forum, which is at [community.leonardoenglish.com](https://community.leonardoenglish.com) and get chatting away to other curious minds.

[00:23:01] You've been listening to English Learning for Curious Minds by Leonardo English.

[00:23:06] I'm Alastair Budge, you stay safe, and I'll catch you in the next episode.

[END OF EPISODE]

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## **Key vocabulary**

Word	Definition
Mismanagement	bad or careless control
Wells	deep holes in the ground used to get water
Racked up	collected or gained (a large number)
Unveiling	showing for the first time
Colourful	full of bright colours
Clapping	hitting their hands together to show happiness
Gushes out	comes out quickly and in large amounts
Tap	a device that controls the flow of water
Upbeat	cheerful and positive
Spectacle	a visually impressive performance or display
Trudge	walk slowly and with effort
Contaminated	dirty or unsafe
A lack of	not having enough of it

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<b>Pumped</b>	pushed or moved with a device
<b>Over-the-top</b>	too much or too extreme
<b>Punchy</b>	strong and easy to notice
<b>Flooded</b>	filled with too many of them
<b>Worthwhile</b>	worth doing, useful or important
<b>Uplifting</b>	making you feel happy and hopeful
<b>Rubbed some people up the wrong way</b>	annoyed some people
<b>Pumps</b>	machines that move liquid
<b>Cutting-edge</b>	very modern and advanced
<b>Sophisticated</b>	complicated or very advanced
<b>Tap into</b>	use or gain access to
<b>Infrastructure</b>	the basic systems the country needed
<b>Will</b>	strong desire or decision
<b>Well</b>	a deep hole in the ground used to get water

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<b>Lack</b>	don't have
<b>Neglect</b>	not giving enough care or attention
<b>Neat and tidy</b>	clean and well organised
<b>Scarce</b>	hard to find, not enough
<b>Over the moon</b>	very happy
<b>Oft-used</b>	often used
<b>Washed away</b>	carried off
<b>Desalination</b>	the process of removing salt from sea water
<b>Plentiful</b>	in large amounts, easy to find
<b>Drill down</b>	make a deep hole
<b>Drilling</b>	the act of making a hole in the ground
<b>Filters</b>	things that clean water by removing dirt
<b>Prioritise</b>	decide that it is more important than other things
<b>Strings attached</b>	conditions or rules that come with the offer
<b>Tantalisingly</b>	in a way that makes you want something but can't have it

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<b>Utterly</b>	completely
<b>Polluted</b>	made dirty or unsafe by harmful things
<b>Diverted</b>	sent in a different direction
<b>Cash crops</b>	crops grown to sell, not to eat locally
<b>Mismanaging</b>	controlling it badly or carelessly
<b>Narcotic</b>	relating to or denoting illegal drugs
<b>Buzz</b>	a strong, short feeling of excitement
<b>Chew</b>	bite it in your mouth
<b>Landlocked</b>	with no sea or ocean around it
<b>Thirsty</b>	needing a lot of water
<b>Bothers</b>	takes the trouble to do it
<b>Headlines</b>	titles of news stories
<b>Shiny</b>	bright and impressive
<b>Disrepair</b>	a bad condition because of not being cared for
<b>Clog</b>	get blocked

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<b>Corrode</b>	are slowly destroyed, usually by rust or chemicals
<b>Patchy</b>	limited or lacking
<b>Heaps of</b>	a lot of
<b>Goodwill</b>	kind feelings or support
<b>A bunch of</b>	a lot of
<b>Stepped in</b>	got involved to help
<b>Symptom</b>	a sign that something bad is happening
<b>Outsourced</b>	gave work to another group or person outside
<b>Pin down</b>	explain or identify exactly
<b>Twist</b>	turn
<b>Valve</b>	a device that controls the flow of liquid
<b>Much to his credit</b>	something good that he should be praised or recognised for
<b>Handouts</b>	free things given to people in need
<b>Discourages</b>	prevents or stops
<b>Incentive</b>	motive or reason



**Helplessness** the feeling of not being able to do anything

**Dwell on** talk too much about it

**Recipients** people who receive it

**Substitute** something that takes the place of them

## **Language spotlight**

### **1. Rubbed some people up the wrong way**

- **Meaning:** To annoy or irritate someone without intending to.
- **Synonyms:** annoyed, upset, irritated.
- **Antonyms:** pleased, delighted, made someone happy.
- **Examples:**
  - His comment about the new project **rubbed some people up the wrong way**, even though he didn't mean to be rude.
  - The politician's speech **rubbed some people up the wrong way** because it sounded arrogant.

### **2. Over the moon**

- **Meaning:** Extremely happy.
- **Synonyms:** thrilled, delighted, very happy.
- **Antonyms:** disappointed, upset, miserable.
- **Examples:**

- She was **over the moon** when she got the job offer.
- The children were **over the moon** after their football team won the final.

### 3. Strings attached

- **Meaning:** Conditions or obligations that come with an offer.
- **Synonyms:** conditions, restrictions, requirements.
- **Antonyms:** no conditions, unconditional, free.
- **Examples:**
  - The donation came with **strings attached** — the company wanted their logo on all the charity's posters.
  - He offered to lend me money, but there were no **strings attached**.

### 4. Stepped in

- **Meaning:** To become involved in a difficult situation to help or take control.
- **Synonyms:** intervened, got involved, took action.
- **Antonyms:** stayed out, avoided, ignored.
- **Examples:**

- When the argument got louder, the teacher **stepped in** to calm everyone down.
- The government **stepped in** to support the failing bank.

## 5. Dwell on

- **Meaning:** To think or talk too much about something, especially something negative.
- **Synonyms:** focus on, overthink, obsess about.
- **Antonyms:** move on, forget, ignore.
- **Examples:**
  - Try not to **dwell on** your mistakes; everyone makes them.
  - He kept **dwelling on** the past instead of planning for the future.

## **Quiz**

### **Listening Comprehension Multiple Choice Questions**

1. Why do many wells in sub-Saharan Africa stop working after a few years?

- a) They are too deep
- b) They are not properly maintained
- c) The water runs out
- d) They are built without strings attached

2. What word did the podcast use to describe MrBeast's video style?

- a) Sophisticated
- b) Slow and quiet
- c) Punchy and upbeat
- d) Traditional and formal

3. What did people do when clean water finally came out of the well?

- a) They clapped and celebrated

- b) They walked away silently
- c) They complained about the taste
- d) They asked for electricity instead

4. What is one of the main criticisms of MrBeast's video?

- a) It was too short
- b) It was a type of performative charity
- c) The wells did not work
- d) He filmed in the wrong countries

5. Why are cash crops a problem for water use?

- a) They grow too slowly
- b) They use up large amounts of water
- c) They do not need any water
- d) They are always exported to Europe

### True or False

6. MrBeast's video about wells has more than 250 million views. (True/False)
7. The wells required advanced technology like artificial intelligence. (True/False)
8. Yemen's capital, Sana'a, is running out of water. (True/False)
9. About 70% of the world's freshwater is used for agriculture. (True/False)
10. MrBeast's videos are often described as neat, tidy, and quiet. (True/False)

### Fill-in-the-Blank

11. There are smiling children, colourful celebrations, and people clapping as clean water gushes \_\_\_\_ from a tap for the very first time.
12. The video was made in the classic MrBeast style: \_\_\_\_-the-top animations, short and punchy.
13. We're not talking about high-speed internet or access to university education or \_\_\_\_\_-edge cancer treatments.
14. They \_\_\_\_ into groundwater, and bring it up to the surface where it can be used for drinking, washing, farming, and whatever else it might be needed for.

15. And there was another layer of discomfort — one that's harder to \_\_\_\_ down, but no less real.

### Vocabulary Practice

16. What does **uplifting** mean in the podcast?

- a) Making someone feel sad
- b) Making someone feel hopeful and happy
- c) Making someone feel angry
- d) Making someone feel tired

17. What does **neglect** mean in the podcast?

- a) To pay close attention to something
- b) To not care for or pay attention to something
- c) To spend money on something
- d) To use something too much



18. What does **scarce** mean?

- a) Easy to find
- b) Dangerous
- c) Hard to find, not enough
- d) Very colourful

19. What does **handouts** mean?

- a) Money or goods given for free
- b) Notes passed between students
- c) Plans for building roads
- d) Strong institutions

20. What does **spectacle** mean in the podcast?

- a) A small problem
- b) A type of glasses
- c) An impressive show or display

d) A simple activity

## **Answers**

1. b) They are not properly maintained
2. c) Punchy and upbeat
3. a) They clapped and celebrated
4. b) It was a type of performative charity
5. b) They use up large amounts of water
6. True
7. False
8. True
9. True
10. False
11. out
12. over
13. cutting
14. tap
15. pin
16. b) Making someone feel hopeful and happy
17. b) To not care for or pay attention to something
18. c) Hard to find, not enough
19. a) Money or goods given for free
20. c) An impressive show or display