

# Never Swim Alone



Lifesaving  
education programs

Lesson: Be Aware and Be Prepared | Difficulty: Easy | Time: 5 minutes

## Introduction

Whenever we are near a waterway, we must always have someone watching us. How observant are you? Play this game to find out!

## Key messages

- Never swim or recreate alone
- Always swim with a friend
- Never take your eyes off children around the water
- Follow the pool rules and lifeguard instructions.

## Equipment

- None

## Instructions

- 1) Start the game in teams of 4, with one standing, one sitting, one kneeling and one lying down. Team members must continuously change what they are doing (standing, sitting, kneeling, lying) BUT there must never be two people in the same position, for more than 3 seconds or the team is OUT!
- 2) No one in the team is allowed to talk or physically move someone into another position.
- 3) Each member of the team must watch what every other member of the team is doing, and respond accordingly.
- 4) Discuss the importance of how adults must always keep watch of children, with no distractions

## Key questions:

### Q: When is it safe to go in the water?

A: When you are accompanied by an adult, have read the safety signs and water conditions have been checked

### Q: What should children do if they accidentally fall into a body of water?

A: If you fall into water, remain calm and try to float or swim to the nearest edge or shallow area.

### Q: What are some signs that a person may be struggling in the water and need help?

A: Someone may be struggling in the water if they are splashing around, gasping for air, and struggling to keep their head above water.

### Q: How can we prevent drowning accidents around waterways?

A: Children should ensure they are always wearing a life jacket when required, swimming in designated areas with lifeguards, and staying within arm's reach of an adult when in or near water.

### Q: Why is it important to be aware of the weather and water conditions before swimming or playing near a body of water?

A: It is important to be aware of the weather and water conditions before swimming or playing near a body of water because changing weather patterns and water conditions can make the water more dangerous.



#### Children under 5 years:

- Must be within arms reach of a responsible adult during all times.



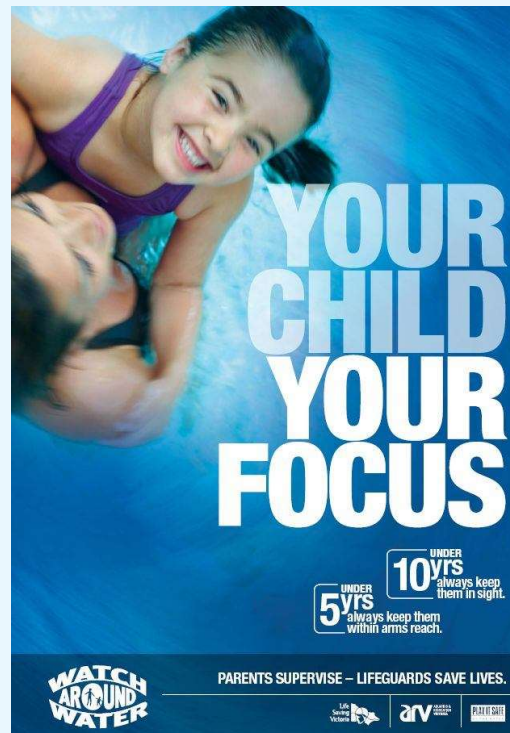
#### Children under 10 years:

- Must be constantly and actively supervised by a responsible adult at all times.



#### Children 10 years and older

- Parents must use their knowledge of an individual child's swimming ability and general development to determine the level of accompaniment required



# Meet a Lifeguard



Lifesaving  
education programs

**Lesson: Be Aware and Be Prepared | Difficulty: Easy | Time: 15 minutes**

## Introduction

Lifesavers can see you if you are between the flags - if they can see you, they can help you.

## Key messages

- Swim between the flags
- Follow lifeguard instructions
- Call for help
- Never swim alone
- Know what to do in an emergency

## Equipment

- Red and yellow flags
- Meet a lifeguard tub
- Picture of a patrolled beach

## Instructions

- 1) What does a patrolled beach look like? Show participants a picture of a patrolled beach. It is set up with flags; rescue equipment; and lifesavers on patrol.
- 2) Using the picture, ask the following questions:
  - What are they doing?
  - Why do lifesavers put two red and yellow flags on the beach?
  - When we go to the beach, where do you think the safest place to be in the water is?
  - Who is watching out for you?
- 3) Dress up a volunteer in the lifesavers uniform, pointing out different features and colours

## Key questions:

**Q: Where is the safest place to swim at the beach?**

A: Between the red and yellow flags.

**Q: What is a lifeguard?**

A: A lifeguard is a trained professional who ensures the safety of swimmers in and around water

**Q: Why is it important for lifeguards to stay focused on their job?**

A: Lifeguards are responsible for the safety of many people in and around the water, so it is important that they stay alert and focused on their job to prevent accidents and respond quickly in case of an emergency.

**Q: What should you do if a lifeguard gives you instructions?**

A: If a lifeguard gives you instructions, it is important to follow them promptly and without hesitation. Their instructions are designed to keep you and others safe.

**Q: Why should you never ignore a lifeguard's instructions?**

A: Ignoring a lifeguard's instructions can put yourself and others in danger. Lifeguards are trained to assess potential risks and respond to emergencies, so it is important to trust their judgment.

**Q: What qualifications do lifeguards need to have?**

A: Lifeguards must complete specialized training in water safety, first aid, and CPR. They must also pass assessments to become qualified lifeguards.

## What does a lifeguard do?



Administer first aid



Constantly watch the water



Rescue people in trouble



# Spotting Dangers



Lifesaving  
education programs

Lesson: Be Aware and Be Prepared | Difficulty: Easy | Time: 5 minutes

## Introduction

Local waterways have unique dangers that can change day to day – make sure to always be prepared before visiting by following these steps!

## Key messages

- Be aware and be prepared
- Follow lifeguard instructions

## Equipment

- iPad or interactive whiteboard
- Rip current/water quality a-frame

## Instructions

- 1) Discuss with participants how to be aware and be prepared – by checking BeachSafe App, EPA water quality report, weather and UV rating. Always remember to go with an adult, and bring a phone, water, hat and sunscreen
- 2) Using the rip current poster, have participants point out the rip and identify the safest way to stay out of and avoid one.
- 3) Using the water quality a-frame poster, discuss what causes poor water quality, and why it can be dangerous. What other dangers could there be at the beach that we need to check for?

## Key questions:

**Q: How can you check the conditions and dangers at an aquatic environment and identify dangers?**

A: Read the signs, check the venue websites (Beach Safe, EPA, BoM, Sunsmart etc...), ask a lifeguard and ask an adult to check.

**Q: Why do signs use symbols as well as words?**

A: For international visitors, people of non-English speaking backgrounds and those who may not be able to read.

**Q: What is a rip current?**

A: A rip current is a strong and narrow current of water that moves directly away from the shore, and it can be hazardous to swimmers and surfers.

**Q: How can you spot a rip current?**

A: Rip currents can be identified by looking for a channel of churning or choppy water, an area with a noticeable difference in water colour, or a line of seaweed or debris moving out to sea.

**Q: What should you do if you get caught in a rip current?**

A: If you get caught in a rip current, don't panic. Try to stay calm and swim parallel to the shore until you are out of the current, and then swim back to shore.

**Q: What are some other dangers to be aware of at the beach?**

A: Other dangers to be aware of at the beach include waves, sudden drop-offs, hidden rocks or reefs, and marine animals such as jellyfish or the blue ringed octopus.

**Q: What precautions should you take before swimming at the beach?**

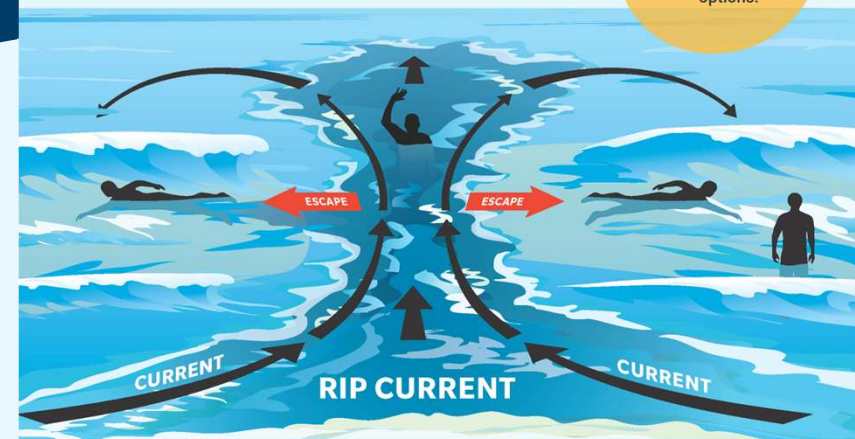
A: Before swimming at the beach, always check the weather and surf conditions, and make sure you are aware of any other warnings like incoming storms and the UV rating. It is also always important to stay hydrated, wear sunscreen, and avoid swimming after consuming alcohol.

**Q: How can you tell if the water is safe for swimming?**

A: You can check if the water is safe for swimming by looking for signs of pollution, and by checking the water quality reports issued by EPA.

## Surviving a Rip Current

If you're caught in a rip current, stay calm, conserve your energy and consider these options:



### AVOID RIP CURRENTS SWIM BETWEEN THE RED AND YELLOW FLAGS

Reassess the situation if what you're doing isn't working, try one of the other options until you return to shore or you're rescued.



Seek help. Raise your arm and call out. You may be rescued.



Float with the current. It may return you to a shallow sandbank.



Swim parallel to the beach or towards the breaking waves. You may escape the rip current.



# Compare and Contrast



Lifesaving  
education programs

Lesson: Be Aware and Be Prepared | Difficulty: Medium | Time: 10 minutes

## Introduction

Dams, Lakes and Rivers! Students will respond to a series of images of inland waterways by identifying them as a lake, a dam, or a river.

## Key messages

- Be aware and be prepared
- Always wear a lifejacket
- Never swim alone

## Equipment

- Magnet board
- Magnets

## Instructions

- 1) Looking at the lake magnet board, participants will be asked where they might find a lake and what we can do there.
- 2) Looking at the river magnet board, participants will be asked about the sorts of activities that can be done on or near a river.
- 3) Looking at the farm dam magnet board, participants will be asked what they can see before they are asked what they cannot see.
- 4) For each activity identified, place the corresponding magnet on the board. Talk about where the safest place might be to do this activity – for example, do we snorkel close to shore or in the deep ocean?
- 5) Can they see what is under the water? Can they see rocks? Can they see logs? Does that mean that there are no rocks and logs?
- 6) Did you know? More drownings happen at inland waterways than anywhere else in Victoria. Why do you think this might be?

## Key questions:

**Q: How can you spot potential dangers before entering the water?**

A: Look for warning signs, check the depth and current of the water, and ask locals for advice.

**Q: What should you do if you get caught in a strong current?**

A: Stay calm, float on your back, and try to swim diagonally across the current to reach the shore.

**Q: Can you swim in all parts of a lake or dam?**

A: No, it's important to swim only in designated areas and follow any posted warnings or restrictions.

**Q: What is the difference between a river and a lake?**

A: A river is a flowing body of water that usually has a current, while a lake is a still body of water that is often much larger.

**Q: Why can it be dangerous to swim in a dam?**

A: Dams are often deep and can have unpredictable currents, as well as submerged objects and sudden changes in water levels.

**Q: What should you do if someone is in trouble in the water?**

A: Call for help immediately and throw something that floats to the person in the water.

**Q: Can you swim alone in a remote location?**

A: You should always swim with at least one other person and let someone on land know where you're going and when you plan to return.

**Q: What should you do if you see a warning sign?**

A: Follow the instructions on the sign and stay away from the water if it's not safe to swim.



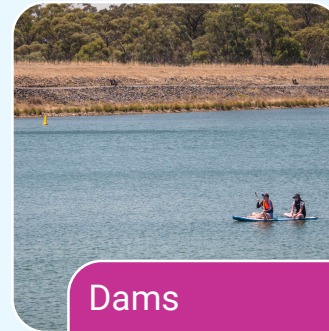
### Rivers

- Strong currents
- Submerged objects
- Slippery banks
- Changing seasonal patterns and floodwater
- Cold water



### Lakes

- Changing currents
- Submerged objects
- Varying depths
- Crumbling and uneven banks
- Underwater reeds and snags



### Dams

- Dirty water from farm run off
- Sink holes and drop offs
- Submerged objects
- Slippery banks



# Staying Sun Safe



Lifesaving  
education programs

**Lesson: Be Aware and Be Prepared | Difficulty: Easy | Time: 10 minutes**

## Introduction

Learn what to do to stay SunSmart while you are out enjoying the water!

## Key messages

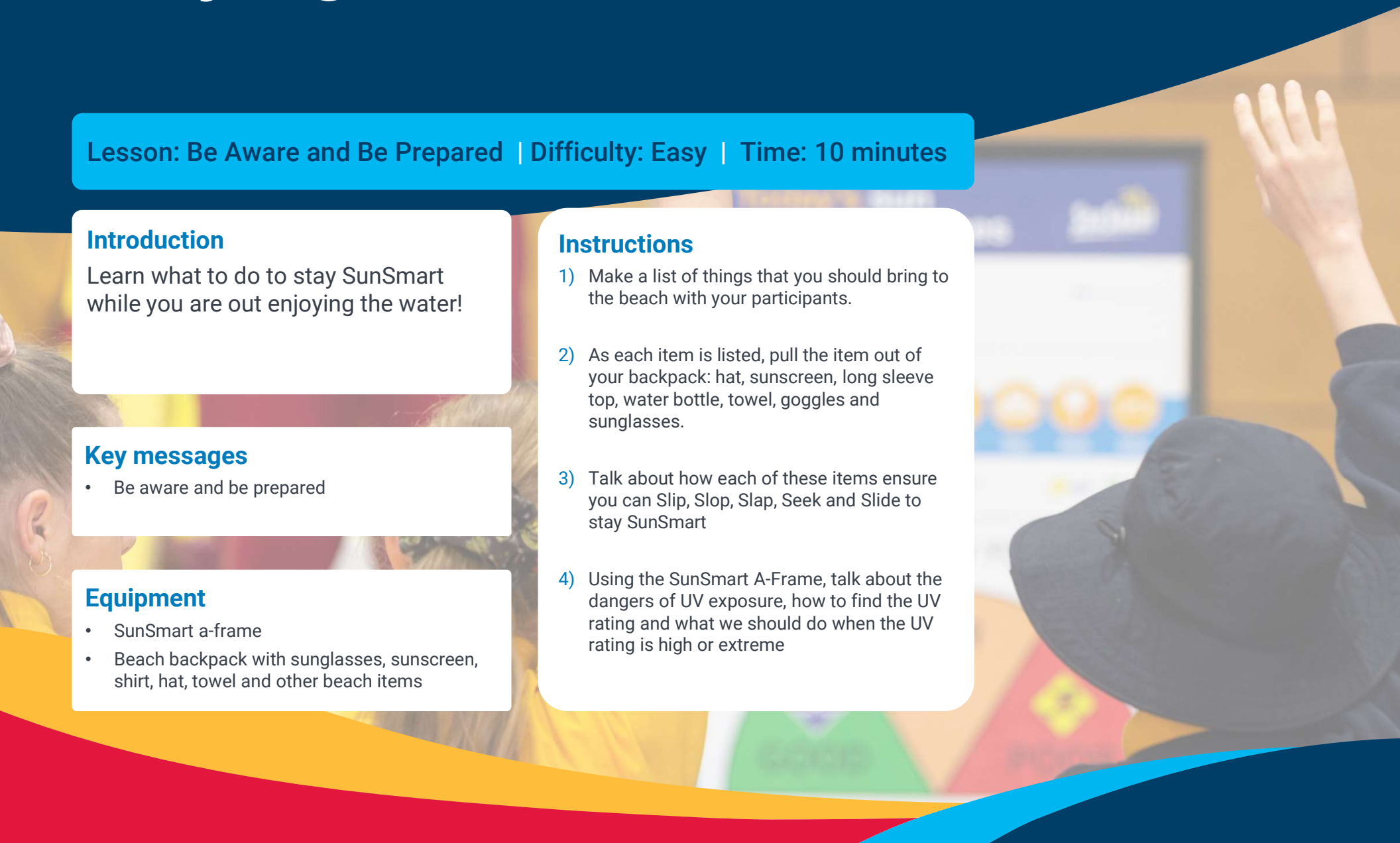
- Be aware and be prepared

## Equipment

- SunSmart a-frame
- Beach backpack with sunglasses, sunscreen, shirt, hat, towel and other beach items

## Instructions

- 1) Make a list of things that you should bring to the beach with your participants.
- 2) As each item is listed, pull the item out of your backpack: hat, sunscreen, long sleeve top, water bottle, towel, goggles and sunglasses.
- 3) Talk about how each of these items ensure you can Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek and Slide to stay SunSmart
- 4) Using the SunSmart A-Frame, talk about the dangers of UV exposure, how to find the UV rating and what we should do when the UV rating is high or extreme



## Key questions:

### Q: Why is it important to stay sun smart when swimming outdoors?

A: Staying sun smart helps protect your skin from the harmful effects of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays, such as sunburn and an increased risk of skin cancer.

### Q: What are some ways to stay sun smart at the swimming pool?

A: You can wear protective clothing (such as a rashies or a wide-brimmed hat), use sunscreen with a high SPF, and seek shade during peak sun hours.

### Q: What is SPF?

A: SPF stands for "sun protection factor." It measures how well a sunscreen can protect your skin from UV rays.

### Q: What SPF should I use when swimming outdoors?

A: You should use a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 when swimming outdoors. You should also reapply sunscreen every two hours (or more frequently if you are swimming or sweating).

### Q: Can I get sunburned on a cloudy day?

A: Yes, you can still get sunburned on a cloudy day. Up to 80% of the sun's UV rays can penetrate through clouds and cause damage to your skin.

### Q: What are some signs of heat exhaustion?

A: Nausea, dizziness, headache, fatigue, and heavy sweating.

### Q: How can I prevent heat exhaustion when swimming outdoors?

A: You should stay hydrated, take frequent breaks in the shade, and avoid swimming during the hottest parts of the day.

### Q: What are some long-term effects of sun damage on the skin?

A: Wrinkles, age spots, and an increased risk of skin cancer. It is important to protect your skin from the sun's harmful UV rays to minimize these risks.



## Today's sun protection times



FROM	TO	DATE
Protect yourself in five ways from skin cancer		
Slip	Slop	Slap
Seek	Slide	

Daily sun protection times (issued when the UV index is forecast to be 3 and above) can be found on the SunSmart app, online at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au) or in daily newspapers.



## BEACH REPORT



### Water quality forecast



## INLAND WATERWAY REPORT



	Warning		Recently removed
	Caution		No current warnings

# Play it Safe by the Water



Lifesaving  
education programs

Lesson: Be Aware and Be Prepared | Difficulty: Medium | Time: 10 minutes

## Introduction

Recreational watercraft activities include boating, sailing, personal watercraft (PWC), canoeing, kayaking and surfing.

## Key messages

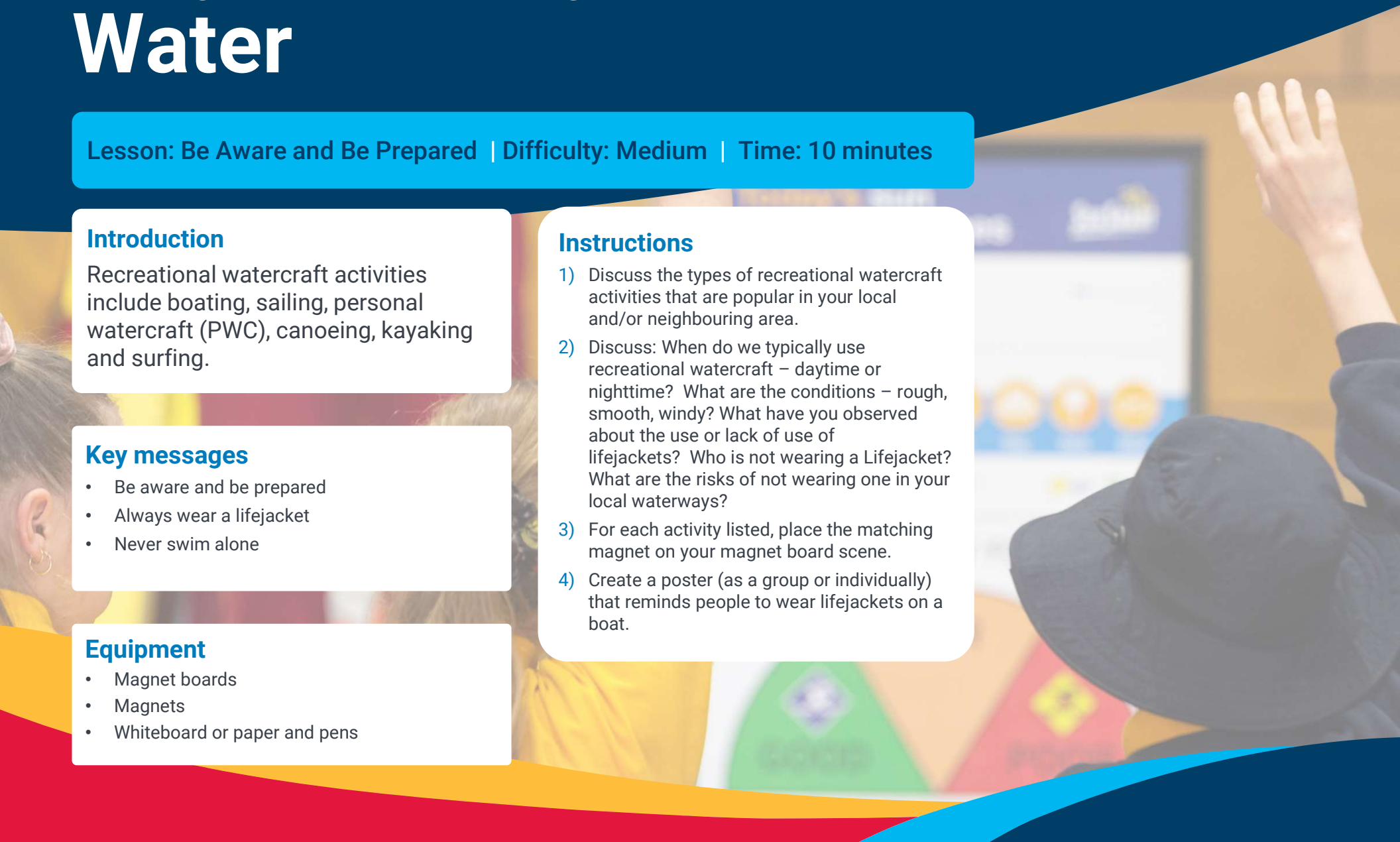
- Be aware and be prepared
- Always wear a lifejacket
- Never swim alone

## Equipment

- Magnet boards
- Magnets
- Whiteboard or paper and pens

## Instructions

- 1) Discuss the types of recreational watercraft activities that are popular in your local and/or neighbouring area.
- 2) Discuss: When do we typically use recreational watercraft – daytime or nighttime? What are the conditions – rough, smooth, windy? What have you observed about the use or lack of use of lifejackets? Who is not wearing a Lifejacket? What are the risks of not wearing one in your local waterways?
- 3) For each activity listed, place the matching magnet on your magnet board scene.
- 4) Create a poster (as a group or individually) that reminds people to wear lifejackets on a boat.



## Water safety tips for recreational activities



### Rock fishing

- Wear a life jacket, light clothes and shoes with non-slip soles
- Bring a phone
- Never fish alone
- Let someone know before you go
- Check the conditions
- Plan an escape route
- Never turn your back on the sea
- If you're swept in, don't panic - stay calm and swim away from the rocks



### Stand up paddleboarding

- Wear a lifejacket
- Paddle in flat water
- Always wear your foot strap
- Check the conditions
- Avoid fast flowing water and stay close to shore
- Sit down if conditions become too rough
- Never paddle alone, always with a friend
- Regularly check and maintain your equipment



### Kayaking

- Wear a lifejacket
- Stay attached to your paddle leash
- Carry a phone
- Check the conditions
- Wear bright coloured clothing
- Let someone know before you go
- Keep clear or to the right of ships/boats
- Keep a good lookout to what is around you
- Know your limits
- Know how to get back into shore



### Surfing

- Surf with a friend, never alone
- Surf at patrolled beaches
- Listen to Life Savers
- Know your limits
- Know what to do if you get caught in a rip
- Always wear your foot strap
- Learn how to surf and about surf etiquette at smaller, quieter beaches
- Take surfing lessons



### Boating

- Always wear a lifejacket
- Let someone know before you go
- Take a phone
- Keep a good lookout for what is around you
- Check conditions before heading out
- If you capsize, stay with the boat, and try to hold onto it until help arrives.
- If someone falls in, stop the boat, throw them something that floats, and try to pull them back using a rope.



### Snorkelling

- Never snorkel alone
- Always have a lookout watching, who is not in the water
- Stay within your limits
- Observe safety signs and laws
- Check conditions before snorkelling
- Do not touch animals, coral or plants
- Stay close to shore or your boat
- Know what to do if you get caught in a rip



# Flags This Way!



Lifesaving  
education programs

**Lesson: Be Aware and Be Prepared | Difficulty: Easy | Time: 5 minutes**

## Introduction

The safest place to swim at the beach is between the red and yellow flags! Learn why by playing this game.

## Key messages

- Be aware and be prepared
- Always wear a lifejacket
- Never swim alone

## Equipment

- Red and yellow flags
- Other types of flags including red, yellow, red and white & black and white

## Instructions

- 1) In an open space, set up one set of red and yellow flags
- 2) Instruct participants to stand between the red & yellow flags when safe water features are announced (calm water, spilling wave, sand...)
- 3) And move outside the flags when dangers are announced (rocks, rips, surging waves, surfers...)
- 4) Talk about the importance of swimming between the flags to stay safe, and avoid any dangers that might be outside the flags
- 5) Talk about other types of flags and what they mean, including red, yellow, red/white, black/white



## Key questions:

**Q: Why is it important to swim between red and yellow flags at the beach?**

A: Red and yellow flags mark the safest area to swim and are patrolled by trained lifeguards.

**Q: What can happen if you swim outside of the red and yellow flags?**

A: If you swim outside of the red and yellow flags, you may be in danger of strong currents, rips, and other hazards that can quickly sweep you out to sea.

**Q: Why should you always swim between the red and yellow flags even if you are a strong swimmer?**

A: Even if you are a strong swimmer, you should always swim between the red and yellow flags because they mark the area that is patrolled by trained lifeguards who can assist you in case of an emergency.

**Q: What should you do if you get caught in a rip current at the beach?**

A: Try to stay calm and swim parallel to the shore until you are out of the rip. If you are unable to swim out of the rip, raise your hand and call for help from a lifeguard.

**Q: What do the different beach flags in Australia mean?**



## Beach Flags



**RED & YELLOW FLAGS**  
Swim between the flags



**RED FLAG**  
No swimming



**Yellow Flag**  
Caution required. Potential hazards.



**Red & White Flag**  
Evacuate the water



**Black & White Flag**  
Surfcraft riding area boundary

# Where's the Sign?



Lifesaving  
education programs

Lesson: Be Aware and Be Prepared | Difficulty: Easy | Time: 10 minutes

## Introduction

Time to test how well you know your water safety signs! It is important to always look for these signs whenever you visit a waterway.

## Key messages

- Be aware and be prepared

## Equipment

- Dangers a-frame
- Charades cards



## Instructions

- 1) Using the charades cards, have participants work in pairs and take turns to act out their danger/safety sign without using words. Count how many different signs each group can successfully guess!
- 2) Once everyone has had a turn at acting out a safety sign, choose a local waterway that is popular with your participants
- 3) Using the Water Safety Sign A-Frame, run through each feature and talk about how it might vary for their local waterway.
- 4) Talk about the importance of always following the advice on water safety signs.

## Key questions:

**Q: Why is it important to check water safety signs at pools, beaches, lakes, and rivers before going swimming or recreating in the water?**

A: Checking water safety signs helps avoid potential hazards and stay safe while swimming or recreating in the water.

**Q: What kind of information do water safety signs provide?**

A: They provide information like water depth, water temperature, currents, and potential hazards, such as rocks, dangerous wildlife or rip currents.

**Q: Can water safety signs change from day to day?**

A: Yes, water safety signs can change from day to day, but it is also important to always assess the water and weather everyday.

**Q: Why is it important to pay attention to changes in water safety signs?**

A: Checking signs regularly ensures that you have the most up-to-date information on potential hazards and safety precautions.

**Q: Can water safety signs prevent accidents from happening?**

A: While water safety signs cannot prevent accidents from happening, they can help you make informed decisions and reduce the risk of injury or harm.

**Q: What should you do if you are unsure about the meaning of a water safety sign?**

A: If you are unsure about the meaning of a water safety sign, you should ask a lifeguard or another adult.

