



# Water Smart Level 4 – Years 5 and 6

## Unit Summary

This unit is designed for children in Years 5 and 6 (typically aged 10-12 years).

The unit is separated into two strands: 'Where We Live' and 'Aquatic Environments'.

The strands can be taught individually (to suit the needs of your students) or together to form a larger unit. Each strand includes activities, activity sheets and posters. The 'Aquatic Environments' strand also requires students to listen to a Community Service Announcement.

All extra resources required (posters, key safety tips sheets, community service announcements etc.) are available in 'Supplementary Resources' in the registered schools zone of the website [www.swimandsurvive.com.au](http://www.swimandsurvive.com.au)

For more information about water safety, download the teacher notes from the Water Smart Educational Toolkit in the registered schools zone of the website.

## Where We Live

This strand teaches students about water safety and identifying potential hazards around the home. It includes three activities, each of which could take one or more lessons to complete.

## Aquatic Environments

This strand is separated into three topics: 'Swimming Pools/Aquatic Centres', 'Beach' and 'Rivers, Lakes and Dams'. Each topic includes two activities, both of which could take one or more lessons to complete.

## Unit Objectives

This unit aims to help students to:

- further enhance the student's knowledge and understanding of improving safety with water in and around the home and the broader living environment
- further develop an understanding of safe behaviours and key water safety rules for all aquatic environments and activities including: Throw to rescue, obey all signs, when in a boat wear a PFD and always check the water before entering.

By the end of the unit, students will be able to:

- identify water hazards in and around the home, swimming pools/aquatic centres, the beach and/or rivers, lakes and dams, and suggest solutions to them
- identify unsafe practice and to recognise when alternative ways and behaviours are required.



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## Links to the Australian Curriculum

### Health and Physical Education

#### Personal, Social and Community Health

- Being healthy, safe and active  
Plan and practise strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing (ACPPSo54)
- Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing  
Examine the influence of emotional responses on behaviour and relationships (ACPPSo56)
- Contributing to healthy and active communities  
Investigate the role of preventative health in promoting and maintaining health, safety and wellbeing for individuals and their communities (ACPPSo58)  
Explore how participation in outdoor activities supports personal and community health and wellbeing and creates connections to the natural and built environment (ACPPSo59)

## Key Safety Tips

Throughout this unit you will find key safety tips relating to each environment (home, swimming pools/aquatic centres, beach, and rivers, lakes and dams). The following general safety tips should also be emphasised where appropriate.

### General Water Safety Tips

Wherever there is water these rules apply:

- Know the Aquacode – Go Together, Stay Afloat and Wave, Reach to Rescue.
- Always swim with a friend or adult.
- To reach and rescue, lie down and stretch out. Use sticks, poles, clothing or branches to extend your reach. If you can't reach, throw something that floats.
- If in trouble in the water:
  - stay calm
  - float on your back
  - wave one arm for help
  - while waiting for help, float, tread water or swim slowly.
- Listen to and obey lifeguards.
- Obey all signs giving advice to swimmers.
- Always check the depth and conditions of the water before entering.
- Learn about water conditions, such as rips, currents and undertows.



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## Further Resources

**[www.swimandsurvive.com.au](http://www.swimandsurvive.com.au)** – ‘Kids Zone’ for more information, games and activities.

**[www.watersafetyquiz.com.au](http://www.watersafetyquiz.com.au)** – a quiz for children aged 5-18 years to test their knowledge of water safety.

Community Service Announcements – these are available to download from the Water Smart Educational Toolkit in the registered schools zone of the website.

‘Be Water Smart’ video clips. These may be more suitable for younger students, but could be of use during the unit. They are available to download, along with a teacher’s guide from the Water Smart Educational Toolkit in the registered schools zone of the website.

*Swimming and Lifesaving Manual (6th edition)* – a manual covering theoretical and practical aspects of water safety, personal survival, lifesaving and emergency care. This manual can be purchased by contacting the Royal Life Saving Society in your state or territory.



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## Where We Live

### Introduction

As children become older they gain more independence but still require adult supervision in, on and around water. It is vital they gain an understanding of the consequences of unsafe behaviour and what actions can be incorporated to minimise the risk.

In this section we explore water safety awareness where we live. Where we live includes inside the home (bathrooms, laundries etc.) and outside the home (backyard pools, spas ponds etc.). Students are encouraged to become more aware of water in and around their homes and how to live safely with it.

### Home – Key Safety Tips

The following safety tips should be emphasised during the activities:

- Supervision by an adult at all times when in and around water (pools, spas, baths, dams, water tanks, troughs and irrigation channels).
- Pools must be fenced with a self-latching gate.
- Remove toys from swimming pools and baths after use because young children are attracted by them.
- Keep fish ponds and water features covered.
- A rigid cover should be installed over spas.
- Empty paddling pools immediately after use.
- Keep liquid-filled buckets out of reach of children.
- Never leave children alone in the bath.
- Keep the bath plug out of reach of small children.
- Keep top-loading washing machines closed.



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## Where We Live

### Activity 1: Water Safety Scenarios

What you will need:

- Copies of the ‘General Water Safety Tips’ sheet
- Copies of the ‘Home – Key Safety Tips’ sheet
- Scenario cards from ‘Activity Sheet 1 – Water Safety Scenarios’
- Pencils
- Writing books

As a class, read and discuss the safety tips on the ‘General Water Safety Tips’ and ‘Home – Key Safety Tips’ sheets. Give students time to ask questions and clarify their understanding of the tips.

In small groups (3-4 per group) students discuss one of the scenarios from ‘Activity Sheet 1 – Water Safety Scenarios’.

Explain to students that while these scenarios are fictional, they are based on incidents that have occurred in homes.

**Teacher Note:** The scenarios could be upsetting or confronting for some students.

Students to reflect on what behaviours or actions in the scenarios led to the drowning outcomes.

Students then discuss how the characters in the scenarios should have behaved to avoid the drowning incident. Each group is to devise a short play to demonstrate the safe behaviours and actions that should have been displayed in their scenario.

Groups perform their scenarios to the class. As a class, discuss any further suggestions about safe behaviour in each scenario.

At the end, give students some reflection time to write about what they learnt from the activity. How could this knowledge be transferred into real-life situations?



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## Where We Live

### Activity 2: Home Water Safety Tips

What you will need:

- Written reflections from activity 1
- Enlarged (A3) copy of the ‘Water Safety Tips for Around the House’ poster
- A3 paper
- Pencils/pens/textas
- Copies of ‘Activity Sheet 2 – Home Water Safety Word Search’ (optional)

As a class, reflect on activity 1. Students may wish to refer to their written reflections before the discussion. What did they discover from reading the scenarios and role-playing safer alternatives?

Ask students to start thinking about water safety in and around their own homes. What safety measures are already used, or should be used? Discuss these with a partner and see whether there are any similarities.

With the same partner, students to decide on four safety tips that they would like to implement or focus on inside and outside their home.

Display the ‘Water Safety Tips for Around the House’ poster and discuss. Each pair needs to create two posters of their own (one for safety tips inside the home and one for outside the home). Each poster needs to include a list of the tips and what hazards they will help to avoid, including illustrations.

Each pair is to share their posters with the class.

Ask students to provide positive feedback about the posters and say whether they learnt any new safety tips.

Display the posters around the classroom.

### Optional activity

Students can complete ‘Activity Sheet 2 – Home Water Safety Word Search’.



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## Where We Live

### Activity 3: Home Survey

What you will need:

- Enlarged (A3) copy of the ‘Water Safety Tips for Around the House’ poster
- A4 paper
- Pencils/pens
- Computers (optional – for students who want to create their surveys using a word processing program)
- Butcher’s paper
- Copies of ‘Activity Sheet 3 – Home Water Safety Crossword’ (optional)
- Graph paper

As a class, reflect on the safety tips on the ‘Water Safety Tips for Around the House’ poster discussed in activity 2.

Explain to students that they are to create a ‘Home Survey’ identifying the main areas in and around their home where safe practices and behaviour are required around water. The survey could contain headings such as:

- Name of room/area
- Water source
- Potential hazard
- Suggested solution

Students take the survey home to complete. Collate the results as a class and graph and display them around the classroom. Discuss.

Ask for suggestions for ways of solving any safety problems around the home.

### Optional activity

Students can complete ‘Activity Sheet 3 – Home Water Safety Crossword’.



# Water Smart Level 4 – Years 5 and 6

## Aquatic Environments – Swimming Pools/Aquatic Centres

### Introduction

Swimming pools and aquatic centres, although a more controlled environment than open water, can still pose a risk to children, particularly if their swimming and water skills are limited and they do not understand the consequences of unsafe behaviour.

In this section students should be developing a sufficient understanding of the key water safety messages for swimming pools and aquatic centres. These activities are designed to allow for continued group work and discussion, combined with students being able to work more independently. With a general understanding of the key safety tips students are provided with more complex tasks requiring them to use the tips in particular scenarios or situations.

### Swimming Pools/Aquatic Centres – Key Safety Tips

The following safety tips should be emphasised during the activities:

- Always swim with an adult.
- Read and obey pool signs and listen to lifeguards' advice.
- Stay away from the deep end, unless you can swim well.
- Make sure the water is clear of swimmers before entering.
- Do not run around the pool edge.
- Check the depth markings on the poolside to see where it is safest to swim or dive.
- Play safely around water – do not push people into the pool.





# **Water Smart** Level 4 – Years 5 and 6

## **Aquatic Environments – Swimming Pools/Aquatic Centres**

### **Activity 1: Design a Safe Pool**

What you will need:

- Whiteboard or butcher's paper
- Copies of the 'Water Safety Tips for your Local Pool' poster
- Pool brochures (optional)
- A4 paper
- Pencils/textas
- Copies of 'Activity Sheet 4 – Pool Safety Word Scramble' (optional)

As a class, discuss the different pools we use. For example, outdoor pools, aquatic centres, fitness centres, wave pools. What kind of activities do we participate in at these pools? What are some of the students' favourite activities? Record ideas.

Students to read the 'Water Safety Tips for your Local Pool' poster and in pairs decide which five of the rules they think are the most important. Students to then list as many safety features of their local pool as they can think of (it may be useful for students to also view brochures from local swimming or aquatic centres). With this in mind, the pairs are to design, draw and label a safe swimming pool (this could be an above-ground pool). Students should consider the pool's depth, fencing, decking, materials used around the edge etc.

Students to present their designs to the class and give an oral report about the safety features included.

### **Optional activity**

Students can then complete 'Activity Sheet 4 – Pool Safety Word Scramble'.



# Water Smart Level 4 – Years 5 and 6

## Aquatic Environments – Swimming Pools/Aquatic Centres

### Activity 2: Pool Rules for all Ages

What you will need:

- Whiteboard or butcher's paper
- Copies of 'Activity Sheet 5 – Risks and Tips for the Pool'
- Copies of the 'Water Safety Tips for your Local Pool' poster

Reflect on the pool rules that were discussed and created in activity 1.

Ask students:

- Why do we need to have rules at swimming pools and aquatic centres?
- Do the rules apply to everyone who uses the swimming pool or aquatic centre? Why or why not?
- What could happen if people do not obey the rules displayed around swimming pools?

Explain that while people of all ages use pool facilities, the same rules apply to everybody and if people ignore the rules dangerous situations can occur.

As a class, ask students to brainstorm the different age groups of people using the local pool (e.g. young children, us, teenagers and adults) and the activities each age group might undertake. Record responses.

Students to complete 'Activity Sheet 5 – Risks and Tips for the Pool' independently, or with a partner. Students need to identify the risks that could be associated with each age group at swimming pools/aquatic centres. For each risk, rules need to be identified to make the behaviour or environment safe for these groups. The rules should be appropriate for the target age group.

Students may wish to refer to the 'Water Safety Tips for your Local Pool' poster for more information.

Once this is completed, discuss ideas as a class. Were some risks the same for all the age groups?



# Water Smart Level 4 – Years 5 and 6

## Aquatic Environments – Beach

### Introduction

A more thorough understanding of the beach environment and its characteristics will assist students in understanding the natural dangers that exist and increase their awareness of making an assessment of the beach prior to participation in aquatic activities.

In this section students should be developing a sufficient understanding of the key water safety messages for open water environments. These activities are designed to allow for continued group work and discussion, combined with students being able to work more independently. With a general understanding of the key safety tips students are provided with more complex tasks requiring them to use the tips in particular scenarios or situations.

### Beach – Key Safety Tips

The following safety tips should be emphasised during the activities:

- Always swim with an adult – never swim alone.
- Swim between the red and yellow flags. This is the safest area and is patrolled by lifesavers.
- Read the surf conditions board before entering the water.
- Do not enter the water if you have any doubts about your ability to cope with the conditions.
- Keep watch on a reference point on the shore, to avoid drifting.
- Swim parallel to, not away from, the shore when you swim long distances.
- Obey lifesavers – leave the water immediately, or move as directed.
- Swimming at the beach after dark means that you cannot be seen if you are in difficulty.



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## Aquatic Environments – Beach

### Activity 1: Surf Emergency

What you will need:

- Whiteboard or butcher's paper
- Copies of 'Activity Sheet 6 – Surf Emergency'
- Enlarged (A3) copy of 'Water Safety Tips for the Beach' poster
- Pens/pencils

As a class, students talk about some of their favourite days spent at the beach. What do they like to do at the beach? How often do they go to the beach?

Students to each think of one dangerous situation that could possibly occur at the beach (perhaps they have experienced one themselves). Students can refer to the 'Water Safety Tips for the Beach' poster to help guide them. What are some likely scenarios? Record ideas.

Read (or ask students to read) the three scenarios on 'Activity Sheet 6 – Surf Emergency' to the class.

Students, in pairs, are allocated one of the scenarios and use the following guiding questions to discuss it:

- How would I react in this situation?
- What unsafe actions or behaviours were displayed in the scenario?
- How could the situation have been avoided?

Each student then answers the questions about their scenario on 'Activity Sheet 6 – Surf Emergency'.

As a class, brainstorm the importance of having an emergency plan when they go to the beach.



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## Aquatic Environments – Beach

### Activity 2: Weather Report

What you will need:

- Newspapers/weather charts/reports
- Paper
- Pencils/pens
- Internet access/computers (optional)
- Recording equipment (optional)
- Community Service Announcements (optional)

Provide students with some old newspapers and ask them to locate and cut out a weather report. Identify all the aspects of the weather report and discuss with a partner.

Ask students why they think they had to read a weather report. Do they often wonder about the weather? If so, why? Now ask them to imagine they are going to the beach. Does this make the weather report more relevant? Why?

Explain to students that they are to write their own weather report for the radio. The report will specifically be for people visiting the beach. Ensure emphasis is given to safety at the beach.

You can extend this activity by asking students to make a voice recording of their reports, which could be played at an assembly or over the school radio system. Students can listen to Community Service Announcements available in the Water Smart Educational Toolkit in the registered schools zone of the website for ideas.

Alternatively, have students read out their weather reports to the class, pretending that they are real-life weather reporters.



# Water Smart Level 4 – Years 5 and 6

## Aquatic Environments – Rivers, Lakes and Dams

### Introduction

A more thorough understanding of the open water environments such as rivers, lakes and dams and their characteristics will assist students in understanding the natural dangers that exist and increase the awareness of making an assessment of the environment prior to participation in aquatic activities.

In this section students should be developing a sufficient understanding of the key water safety messages for open water environments. These activities are designed to allow for continued group work and discussion, combined with students being able to work more independently. With a general understanding of the key safety tips students are provided with more complex tasks requiring them to use the tips in particular scenarios or situations.

The following safety tips should be emphasised during the activities:

### Rivers and Lakes – Key Safety Tips

- Always swim with an adult – never swim alone.
- Read and obey notices and signs before entering the water.
- Be careful not to stand on overhanging banks.
- Beware of slippery banks – do not walk close to, or run along the edge of, them.
- Before entering the water – check its depth, the presence and strength of currents and look for any submerged objects.
- Enter cold water slowly.
- Diving is dangerous: conditions can change, hazards such as snags, rocks, sandbanks and weeds may exist and water depth may vary.
- Avoid swimming near boat ramps or in boating areas.
- Beware of boats and other water craft using the waterway.
- If caught in a fast-flowing river, rapids, or a stormwater drain, try to float feet first in a half sitting position.
- If trapped in quicksand or deep mud, spread the body's weight by lying flat on the surface, and move using slow arm and leg actions.



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## Aquatic Environments – Rivers, Lakes and Dams

### Farms – Key Safety Tips

- A safe play area next to the house keeps children away from hazardous bodies of water.
- Adults should always supervise children when in and around dams, creeks and other bodies of water on farms.
- When walking around dams or irrigation channels, beware of slippery, overhanging or steep banks.
- Swimming in dams can be dangerous as the water is cold and murky and the floor can be muddy and slippery.
- Never swim in water tanks. They are deep and the sides are steep, making it difficult to get out.
- Store water-collecting items such as buckets and barrels safely (out of reach of children) and ensure they are tightly sealed.
- Check for objects hidden beneath the surface of inland waters before entering.
- Do not swim or play in sheep dips and animal water troughs.
- If your legs become tangled in reeds or weeds, stay calm and use gentle arm strokes to swim to safety.

### Boating – Key Safety Tips

- Everyone on board a boat must wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD).
- Never go boating alone.
- Always let someone know where you are going and what time you will return.
- Make sure your boat has emergency equipment (first aid kit, radio, flares etc.).
- Know the limitations of the boat and do not overload it.
- Follow the boat traffic rules.
- Check weather conditions, and continue to monitor weather reports.
- Wear and take appropriate clothes, to allow for possible changes in the weather.
- Keep the boat away from swimming areas, weirs, rocks and other craft.
- Stow all gear safely.
- Do not mix boating and drinking alcohol.
- When entering or leaving a small boat, keep your weight low and centred.
- Keep a lookout for the warning signs of bad weather, such as clouds building up, wind speed increasing, waves becoming bigger.
- Learn and practise capsize and person overboard drills.



# Water Smart Level 4 – Years 5 and 6

## Aquatic Environments – Rivers, Lakes and Dams

### Fishing – Key Safety Tips

- Always go fishing with an adult.
- Always wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD).
- When fishing from rocks; look for secure footholds, stay away from sloping, slippery edges, and wear suitable clothing and footwear.
- When wading, check for hidden rocks or sudden drop-offs.
- Watch for changes in the weather and tides to avoid being swept away by a sudden wave, or being cut off from the shore by a rising tide.
- Never turn away from the sea because a wave may knock you over.
- Never mix fishing and drinking alcohol.





# Water Smart Level 4 – Years 5 and 6

## Aquatic Environments – Rivers, Lakes and Dams

### Activity 1: Safety Tips for Rivers, Lakes and Dams

What you will need:

- Enlarged (A3) copies of the ‘Rivers and Lakes – Key Safety Tips’ sheet
- Enlarged (A3) copies of the ‘Farms – Key Safety Tips’ sheet
- Enlarged (A3) copies of the ‘Boating – Key Safety Tips’ sheet
- Enlarged (A3) copies of the ‘Fishing – Key Safety Tips’ sheet
- A3 paper
- Pencils/textas
- Copies of ‘Activity Sheet 7 – Aquatic Environments Crossword’ (optional)

As a class, discuss what water activities people undertake in rivers, lakes or dams. Ask students if they have spent time around rivers, lakes or dams, and if so, what activities did they enjoy?

Display and discuss enlarged copies of each ‘Key Safety Tips’ sheet. Read through each of them and give students time to ask questions and clarify their understanding.

Students, working in pairs, select a safety tip from one of the sheets and design a poster which explains and promotes that tip to a younger student. You will need to ensure that a wide variety of tips have been selected.

Explain that posters must be age-appropriate, have the safety tip written clearly, and include illustrations that support and enhance the message.

Present the posters to a younger class in the school. Display the posters in the class where the presentation is made.

### Optional activity

Students can complete ‘Activity Sheet 7 – Aquatic Environments Crossword’.



# Water Smart Level 4 – Years 5 and 6

## Aquatic Environments – Rivers, Lakes and Dams

### Activity 2: Research a Natural Australian Water Environment

What you will need:

- Enlarged (A3) copies of the ‘Rivers and Lakes – Key Safety Tips’ sheet
- Enlarged (A3) copies of the ‘Farms – Key Safety Tips’ sheet
- Enlarged (A3) copies of the ‘Boating – Key Safety Tips’ sheet
- Enlarged (A3) copies of the ‘Fishing – Key Safety Tips’ sheet
- Large map of Australia showing major water systems
- Sticky dots/notes
- Computers with internet access
- Whiteboard or butcher’s paper

Reflect on activity 1 by discussing the safety tips and water activities people enjoy on rivers, lakes and dams.

Ask students if they can name any major water systems within Australia. Record ideas.

After this initial brainstorm, display a map of Australia and ask students (one at a time) to mark any major water systems that they can see with a sticky dot/sticky note.

Explain to students that they are to complete an assignment on a major Australian water system of their choice. Their assignments can include the following:

- The name of the major water system
- Where it is located
- Type of water source
- Capacity (optional)
- Animal and plant life
- Interesting facts
- Activities in which people participate on this water system
- A list of possible risks associated with these activities
- Suggestions on how to minimise these risks

The style of presentation can be decided by the student or the teacher. Ideas could include:

- Written or oral information report
- PowerPoint presentation
- Brochure
- Filmed documentary
- Poster
- Diorama