



Water Smart Levels 5 & 6 – Years 7 to 10

Introduction

People are drawn to water because it is a source of curiosity, fun and enjoyment. The many water environments in Australia offer the opportunity for a variety of aquatic activities, including swimming, sailing, water skiing, fishing, boating, wind surfing, surfing and body surfing. The water environments available to us include open water and surf beaches, rivers, lakes, dams and creeks, backyard pools and aquatic fun parks. Unfortunately, all these can be dangerous and hazardous, even if safe practices are observed.

Further dangers result from an increase in risk-taking behaviours in the teenage and early adult years, during which drowning rates increase dramatically. Consumption of alcohol, drug taking and peer pressure increase the level of risk to young people in and around aquatic environments.

Unit Summary

This unit is designed for children in Years 7 to 10 (typically aged 12-16 years).

It is separated into two strands: 'Assessing Aquatic Environments' and 'Aquatic Emergencies'.

The strands can be taught individually (to suit the needs of your students) or together to form a larger unit.

Teachers please note: You will need to make decisions on the suitability of the content for your students. The topics covered include peer pressure, alcohol consumption and drug taking. While the activities suggested are general and open-ended, some case studies or questions may not be suitable for some students.

Each strand includes activities and activity sheets. Further resources can be found in the 'Supplementary Resources' section in the registered schools zone of the website 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.

Assessing Aquatic Environments

This strand introduces students to the concept of risk assessment, with an emphasis on aquatic environments such as the beach, aquatic centres, rivers, lakes or dams. Students will perform a risk assessment on one aquatic environment and then create a community awareness education campaign to promote safety in that environment. It includes four activities, each of which will take one or more lessons to complete.

Aquatic Emergencies

This strand focuses on recognising and assessing aquatic emergencies and emphasises the importance of self preservation. It includes five activities, each of which will take one or more lessons to complete.



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Unit Objectives

This unit aims to help students to:

- further enhance their knowledge and understanding of the risks involved with being in or around water
- understand that they are responsible for their actions and safety and also have an obligation to act in a way that does not put others at risk
- evaluate behaviours that may influence their own water safety, as well as that of others, including recognising an emergency, accepting responsibility and self preservation.

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

- assess the level of risk associated with an aquatic environment and in an emergency situation
- discuss the role of personal responsibility and decision making in contributing to water safety
- explain the role and importance of self preservation in a rescue situation.

Links to the Australian Curriculum

Years 7 and 8

Health and Physical Education

Personal, Social and Community Health

- Being healthy, safe and active
Practise and apply strategies to seek help for themselves or others (ACPPSo72)
Investigate and select strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing (ACPPSo73)
- Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing
Investigate the benefits of relationships and examine their impact on their own and others' health and wellbeing (ACPPSo74)
Develop skills to evaluate health information and express health concerns (ACPPSo76)
- Contributing to healthy and active communities
Plan and use health practices, behaviours and resources to enhance the health, safety and wellbeing of their communities (ACPPSo77)
Plan and implement strategies for connecting to natural and built environments to promote the health and wellbeing of their communities (ACPPSo78)



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Years 9 and 10

Health and Physical Education

Personal, Social and Community Health

- Being healthy, safe and active
Examine the impact of changes and transitions on relationships (ACPPSo90)
Plan, rehearse and evaluate options (including CPR and first aid) for managing situations where their own or others' health, safety and wellbeing may be at risk (ACPPSo91)
Propose, practise and evaluate responses in situations where external influences may impact on their ability to make healthy and safe choices (ACPPSo92)
- Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing
Investigate how empathy and ethical decision making contribute to respectful relationships (ACPPSo93)
Evaluate and apply health information from a range of sources to health decisions and situations (ACPPSo95)
- Contributing to healthy and active communities
Plan, implement and critique strategies to enhance the health, safety and wellbeing of their communities (ACPPSo96)
Plan and evaluate new and creative interventions that promote their own and others' connection to community and natural and built environments (ACPPSo97)
Critique behaviours and contextual factors that influence the health and wellbeing of their communities (ACPPSo98)

Key Safety Tips

These sheets provide comprehensive safety tips for various aquatic environments. They can be found in the 'Supplementary Resources' section in the registered schools zone of the website www.swimandsurvive.com.au



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Further Resources

www.swimandsurvive.com.au – ‘Kids Zone’ for more information, games and activities.

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 are designed for primary students, but could be of use during the unit. They are available to download, along with a comprehensive teachers guide, from ‘Supplementary Resources’ in the Water Smart Educational Toolkit registered schools zone of the website
www.swimandsurvive.com.au

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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Assessing Aquatic Environments

Activity 1: Drowning – the Statistics

What you will need:

- Copies of ‘Activity Sheet 1 – Drowning Statistics’
- ‘Activity Sheet 1 – Drowning Statistics Solutions’
- Computers with internet access
- Access to the Royal Life Saving Australia website www.royallifesaving.com.au

Please note: This activity requires the students to discuss and research drowning statistics. This may be upsetting or confronting for some students.

Begin with a general discussion about drowning:

- What is it?
- How does it happen?
- Where can it happen?
- What factors contribute to incidents of drowning?

Find out how much students know about drowning by asking them to answer the questions on ‘Activity Sheet 1 – Drowning Statistics’. When complete, discuss students’ answers. Solutions, taken from the *Royal Life Saving National Drowning Report 2012*, can be found on the solutions sheet.

Discuss:

- Why do you think males are much more likely to drown than females?
- Why do you think the 25-34 years age group has the highest number of drownings?
- Why do you think rivers, creeks or streams are particularly dangerous?
- Do any of these statistics surprise you? Why or why not?

In pairs students to make a list of tips or ideas that they think can assist in preventing drowning incidents.

Students to use statistics from the *Royal Life Saving National Drowning Reports* available on the Royal Life Saving Australia website www.royallifesaving.com.au to investigate the recent drowning trends in Australia. Students then present their findings in a written report, including their opinion/s about why the trends are occurring.



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Assessing Aquatic Environments

Activity 2 – Aquatic Environment Risk Assessment

What you will need:

- Copies of 'Activity Sheet 2 – Aquatic Environment Assessment'
- Copies of 'Activity Sheet 3 – Risk Assessment Matrix'

Students will select one aquatic environment and conduct a risk assessment of it.

Ideally the environment should be one that students can visit (either as a class excursion or in their own time), but if this is not possible, it should be an environment that they are very familiar with.

Begin by discussing what a risk assessment is and why they are important.

Students then complete 'Activity Sheet 2 – Aquatic Environment Assessment' for their chosen aquatic environment. This can be done individually, in pairs or in small groups.

Students discuss the collected information and identify three incidents that could happen in the aquatic environment. Record these incidents on 'Activity Sheet 3 – Risk Assessment Matrix'. It may be helpful to complete an example incident (one is provided on the activity sheet) as a class to ensure students understand how to use the matrix.

Students present the information to the class for discussion.



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Assessing Aquatic Environments

Activity 3 – Personal Responsibility

What you will need:

- Completed copies of 'Activity Sheet 3 – Risk Assessment Matrix' from activity 2
- A whiteboard, or butcher's paper
- Copies of 'Activity Sheet 4 – Case Studies'

Explain to students that the risks associated with aquatic environments extend beyond the visible or obvious ones they might have identified while completing their risk assessment matrix in activity 2. Each of us must accept personal responsibility for our own actions and ensure that we do not behave in a way that puts us or others at risk.

Using the particular aquatic environment that students have researched, brainstorm what personal behaviours could contribute to an increase in the risks associated with that environment. Record or share ideas.

Ask students to think about:

- Peer pressure
- Feelings of invincibility
- Understanding personal skill level
- Consumption of alcohol or drugs (including this topic will depend upon the age and maturity level of the students)
- Lack of swimming and water-safety skills
- Ability to make sound judgements.

Students to read each of the case studies on 'Activity Sheet 4 – Case Studies' and, in pairs or small groups, discuss the following:

- In each scenario, what personal decisions were made that contributed to the eventual outcome/s?
- Put yourself in the place of the person in each scenario. What would you do differently? Why?
- In which scenario do you think it would be most difficult to change the behaviour and the outcome? Why?

Students to select one case study and rewrite or perform a role play of it, with a more positive outcome.



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Assessing Aquatic Environments

Activity 4 – Staying Safe

What you will need:

- Copies of the applicable key safety tips sheet/s. These are available in ‘Supplementary Resources’ in the registered schools zone of the website www.swimandsurvive.com.au

Present students with copies of the key safety tips sheet applicable to the aquatic environment they selected for this unit. As a class, review the tips provided and decide if any others could be added.

Using information discussed and learned in the previous activities, students to work together in small groups to create a community education campaign about their chosen aquatic environment.

When devising their campaign students should consider:

- The main aim or purpose of the campaign. Is it to educate about the visible risks, the personal decision-making risks, or to promote the safety tips?
- The key message/s they wish to promote.
- The target audience for the campaign. Is it young adults, children, the elderly, tourists etc?
- How they will ensure that the campaign reaches the target audience.
- The format for the campaign.

Some ideas:

- YouTube video
- A CSA (community service announcement) on the radio
- A brochure
- A sign for the aquatic environment
- Organising a special awareness day
- A television or print campaign
- A performance to be delivered at schools, pre-schools, aged care facilities etc.



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Aquatic Emergencies

Activity 1: Drowning – the Statistics

The following activity also appears as Activity 1 in the ‘Assessing Aquatic Environments’ strand. If you have completed that strand you can omit this activity and begin with activity 2.

What you will need:

- Copies of ‘Activity Sheet 1 – Drowning Statistics’
- ‘Activity Sheet 1 – Drowning Statistics Solutions’
- Computers with internet access
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Please note: This activity requires the students to discuss and research drowning statistics. This may be upsetting or confronting for some students.

Begin with a general discussion about drowning:

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- How does it happen?
- Where can it happen?
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Find out how much students know about drowning by asking them to answer the questions on ‘Activity Sheet 1 – Drowning Statistics’. When complete, discuss students’ answers. Solutions, taken from the *Royal Life Saving National Drowning Report 2012*, can be found on the solutions sheet.

Discuss:

- Why do you think males are much more likely to drown than females?
- Why do you think the 25-34 years age group has the highest number of drownings?
- Why do you think rivers, creeks or streams are particularly dangerous?
- Do any of these statistics surprise you? Why or why not?

In pairs students to make a list of tips or ideas that they think can assist in preventing drowning incidents.

Students to use statistics from the *Royal Life Saving National Drowning Reports* available on the Royal Life Saving Australia website www.royallifesaving.com.au to investigate the recent drowning trends in Australia. Students then present their findings in a written report, including their opinion/s about why the trends are occurring.



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Aquatic Emergencies

Activity 2 – Recognising an Aquatic Emergency

What you will need:

- Copies of 'Activity Sheet 5 – Assessing Someone in Trouble'
- Enlarged copies (A3) of the four pictures on 'Activity Sheet 5 – Assessing Someone in Trouble'
- A whiteboard, or butcher's paper

In an aquatic emergency, it is vital that a rescuer is able to assess the person/people in difficulty in order to be able to help them successfully.

As a class, brainstorm the types of aquatic emergencies that can occur.

Explain to students that a person in difficulty can usually, but not always be placed in one of four categories:

- Non-swimmer
- Weak swimmer
- Injured person
- Unconscious person

Each person in each category may display particular characteristics in an aquatic emergency. It is important to understand these characteristics, as they may have implications for both the person in trouble and the rescuer.

'Activity Sheet 5 – Assessing Someone in Trouble' has pictures of a person in each of the four categories and a list of characteristics they may demonstrate when involved in an aquatic emergency. The characteristics can be grouped under one of three headings:

- Position in water
- Physical cooperation
- Implications for rescuer

Enlarge a copy of each picture on pages 2 and 3 of 'Activity Sheet 5 – Assessing Someone in Trouble'. Show each picture to the students and ask them to brainstorm possible characteristics under each of the above headings. Record ideas.

Read through the characteristics listed on page 1 of 'Activity Sheet 5 – Assessing Someone in Trouble'. Working in pairs or small groups, students then complete a copy of the sheet.



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Aquatic Emergencies

Activity 3 – Self Preservation during Rescue

What you will need:

- Copies of ‘Activity Sheet 6 – Self Preservation Case Studies’

Discuss the term ‘self preservation’:

- What does the term mean to students?
- How does the term apply to an emergency situation?
- Why is self preservation important in an emergency situation?
- What could happen if a rescuer does not adhere to the principles of self preservation?

The main principle of self preservation is to always ensure that rescuers are not placing themselves in danger by performing a rescue.

In small groups, students read the case studies on ‘Activity Sheet 6 – Self Preservation Case Studies’ and discuss the questions provided with each case study.



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Aquatic Emergencies

Activity 4 – Assessing an Aquatic Emergency

What you will need:

- The cards from ‘Activity Sheet 7 – Emergency Scenarios’
- Box or bag to place cards in to
- Laminator (optional)
- Scissors
- A whiteboard, or butcher’s paper

One of the most important things to do in any emergency is to assess the situation before attempting to help or rescue the person or people in trouble.

Some important things to consider when assessing a situation are:

- the conditions of the water/aquatic environment
- how close the person/people is/are to safety
- assistance or aids available (e.g. lifeguards, rope, buoyancy aids etc.)
- the category of the person/people in trouble (e.g. non-swimmer, weak swimmer, injured person or unconscious person)
- the rescuer’s size and strength and the size of the person in trouble
- the skill level of the rescuer (e.g. strong swimmer, weak swimmer etc.).

Display these considerations (and any extra ones that students can think of) on a whiteboard or butcher’s paper to assist students in the following activity.

Laminate (optional) and cut out the cards on ‘Activity Sheet 7 – Emergency Scenarios’. Place the ‘people’ cards in one box/bag and the ‘situation’ cards in another box/bag. One at a time, students select one card from each box, assess the situation and person in trouble and decide if **they** would attempt a rescue. They must provide reasons for their choice and be encouraged to discuss what other information they might require to make an informed decision.

Students should use the information from activities 2 and 3 to help them with this activity.



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Aquatic Emergencies

Activity 5 – Aquatic Emergency Project

What you will need:

- Internet access and/or resource books

Students to work in pairs or small groups to research one of the following topics relating to aquatic emergencies and present it to the class.

Medical Emergencies:

- Fatal or non-fatal drowning
- Hypothermia
- Spinal injuries
- Marine bites and stings

As part of this project students could be encouraged to obtain a first aid certificate or learn the principles of resuscitation.

Water Safety Education Programs and Initiatives:

- Swim and Survive
- Bronze Medallion
- Keep Watch
- Home Pool Safety

Students should consider the target market, key messages, marketing methods, resources used, fees/costs, how the project is organised etc.

Water Safety Agencies:

- Royal Life Saving Society – Australia
- Surf Life Saving Australia
- Australian Water Safety Council
- Water Police
- The Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol
- State Emergency Services
- Government agencies such as the Marine Board or Environment Protection Agency

Students should consider the agencies' mission, responsibilities, membership, training required etc.

The content of the project and the presentation format to the rest of the class can be discussed and agreed upon by the student/s and teacher.