



Water Smart Level 3 – Years 3 and 4

Unit Summary

This unit is designed for children in Years 3 and 4 (typically aged 8-10 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 watch an eight-minute video clip.

All extra resources required (posters, key safety tips sheets, community service announcements, video clips etc.) are available in 'Supplementary Resources' 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.

Where We Live

This strand teaches students about water safety around the home, specifically the dangers of mixing water and electricity. It includes three activities, each of which can 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:

- become more aware of water in and around their home and how to live safely with it
- demonstrate an understanding of safe behaviours and key water safety rules for open water environments and aquatic activities including: Reach to rescue and if in trouble in the water, stay calm, float on back and wave for help.

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

- list areas in the home where electricity and water might present hazards
- 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
- explain how to behave safely around water.



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Links to the Australian Curriculum

Health and Physical Education

Personal, Social and Community Health

- Being healthy, safe and active
Describe and apply strategies that can be used in situations that make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe (ACPPSO35)
Identify and practise strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing (ACPPSO36)
- Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing
Discuss and interpret health information and messages in the media and on the Internet (ACPPSO39)

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 – ‘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.

‘Be Water Smart’ video clips – the clips and a comprehensive teacher’s guide are available in ‘Supplementary Resources’ in the registered schools zone of the website **www.swimandsurvive.com.au**

Community Service Announcements – these are available to download 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.). Particular emphasis is made to electricity and how it can be dangerous when combined with water. Students are encouraged to become more aware of water in and around their homes and how to live safely with it.

Home – Water 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, buckets, 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: Electricity and Water around the Home

What you will need:

- A3 paper
- Copies of ‘Activity Sheet 1 – Water and Electricity do not Mix’
- Lead pencils
- Highlighters

On a piece of A3 paper, students draw a very simple diagram (floor plan) of the layout of their home. It does not need to be drawn to scale and does not need to include furniture, benchtops etc. Students to label each room (i.e. laundry, kitchen etc.), then highlight the rooms with access to water. Share the drawings and list the rooms highlighted.

Select one room that was common to all the drawings (possibly kitchen or bathroom) and ask students to brainstorm, with a partner, what electrical appliances might be found in that room. Share ideas as a class.

Ask students if they know what happens when water comes into contact with electricity. Explain that when water and electricity mix, the impurities in the water (dust, minerals etc.) conduct electricity. This means that if a student is holding an electrical appliance (that is plugged in) and it comes into contact with water, they could be electrocuted.

In class, students to complete column 1 of ‘Activity Sheet 1 – Water and Electricity do not Mix’. Students to take the sheet home and record the electrical appliances they find in each of the rooms listed.

While completing the activity sheets ask students to record any water/electricity hazards they find in each room. What sort of accidents could these hazards cause?



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Where We Live

Activity 2: Design a Safe Room

What you will need:

- Completed copies of 'Activity Sheet 1 – Water and Electricity do not Mix' from activity 1
- Paper for drawing
- Lead pencils

Students to share their completed activity sheet (from activity 1). Discuss some of the accidents that students thought could occur in the various rooms.

Students to select the room from their activity sheet that they think poses the most danger, and then discuss with a partner how they think it could be made safer. Share ideas as a class.

Students to design a new 'water safe' layout for one room in their house. This design must be more detailed than the floor plan drawn in activity 1. It should include all furniture, benchtops etc. and students must label all the safety features they have included.

Some ideas for students to include could be:

- cupboards to store appliances away from water
- power points away from water sources
- specially designed covers for power cords or power points
- warning labels to go on walls or cupboards.



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Where We Live

Activity 3: Home Water Safety Tips

What you will need:

- Paper or card to make a book
- Coloured pencils or textas
- Whiteboard or butcher's paper

As a class discuss what students have learnt about water and electricity. Create a list of rules that should be followed to ensure safety around water/electricity in the home.

In pairs or groups of three, students work together to create a page to be included in a class water and electricity safety book or you may choose to allow each group to create a whole book.

The page/book could include:

- information about what happens when water mixes with electricity
- a list of areas where water and electricity are both present
- a rule about safe behaviour around water.

Each page should include writing and pictures.

When the book is finished, students can use it to teach younger students about the dangers of mixing electricity and water.



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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.



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Aquatic Environments – Swimming Pools/Aquatic Centres

Activity 1: Obeying the Rules

What you will need:

- Cards from 'Activity Sheet 2 – Do the Right Thing'
- Laminator (optional)
- A copy (or copies) of the 'Water Safety at Swimming Pools/Aquatic Centres' poster

As a class discuss students' experiences of swimming pools and/or aquatic centres.

Discuss:

- how often students visit, or have visited, swimming pools or aquatic centres
- what types of activities students like to engage in at swimming pools or aquatic centres
- any rules or safety tips that students already know apply at swimming pools or aquatic centres.

Students to form small groups of three or four, each provided with a card from 'Activity Sheet 2 – Do the Right Thing'. You may wish to laminate the cards first.

Each group will read the scenario on the card and discuss why the behaviour is dangerous. If there are not enough scenarios, students can create their own. They then discuss how the behaviour in the scenario could be changed to make it safe. Ask students to think about the behaviour of all the people involved in the scenario.

Groups then devise a role play to demonstrate the scenario on the card and the safer alternative. Allow students time to practise before each group performs its play in front of the class. After the unsafe scenario has been presented stop and discuss safe alternatives before the group presents its second play.

Display, or provide students with, a copy of the 'Water Safety at Swimming Pools/Aquatic Centres' poster to reinforce safe behaviour.

Activity 2: Poster Stories

What you will need:

- Copies of the 'Water Safety Tips for your Local Pool' (no captions) poster
- Copies of the 'Water Safety Tips for your Local Pool' poster
- Copies of the 'Swimming Pools/Aquatic Centres – Key Safety Tips' sheet

Revise the swimming pools/aquatic centres rules and safe behaviours discussed in activity 1.

Provide each student (or they can work in pairs) with a copy of the 'Water Safety Tips for your Local Pool' (no captions) poster. Students use the rules on the 'Swimming Pools/Aquatic Centres – Key Safety Tips' sheet to fill in the spaces in each picture.

When completed, discuss the students' responses and compare them to the rules on the 'Water Safety Tips for your Local Pool' poster.



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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: Beach Safety Book

What you will need:

- Whiteboard or butcher's paper
- Enlarged (A3) copy of the 'Beach – Key Safety Tips' sheet
- Paper for writing and drawing
- Coloured pencils or textas

Brainstorm activities that students like to do at the beach. List the responses on a whiteboard or butcher's paper.

Discuss dangers at the beach. Ask students to think about the weather conditions, water conditions, marine life etc.

Display an enlarged copy of the 'Beach – Key Safety Tips' sheet. Discuss each safety tip.

Students write a short piece describing an incident or something dangerous that could happen at the beach and include one of the key safety tips at the end of the story to make the situation safer. Students can choose the genre for their writing – a narrative, newspaper article, cartoon, comic etc.

Compile all the pieces into a beach safety book.

Activity 2: Hazards at a Surf Beach

What you will need:

- Enlarged (A3) copy of the 'Water Safety Tips for the Beach' poster
- Copies of 'Activity Sheet 3 – Know your Surf Hazards'
- Computers with internet access or dictionaries and resource books

Using an enlarged copy of the 'Water Safety Tips for the Beach' poster, discuss and point out the hazardous conditions in the water, such as rips, waves, tides, currents, marine life etc.

To find out more about hazardous conditions at the beach, students can work in pairs to complete 'Activity Sheet 3 – Know your Surf Hazards'. Students will need to research and define several terms and explain why they can be hazardous. You may wish to allocate one or two terms to each pair, or they can complete the entire activity sheet.

When the research is complete, students can share their findings with the class.



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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.



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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.



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Aquatic Environments – Rivers, Lakes and Dams

Activity 1: Who uses these Environments?

What you will need:

- Computers with internet access
- Access to books about inland water environments
- Enlarged (A3) copies of 'Activity Sheet 4 – Inland Water Mind Map'

Discuss the different inland water environments (rivers, lakes, dams etc.). Determine what students already know about each environment.

Students will be working in pairs, or small groups, to investigate one inland water environment. Allocate groups rivers, lakes or dams as their topic.

Students should research:

- the physical characteristics of the environment (e.g. flowing water, still water)
- the types of activities people can do on or in the environment
- any hazards or dangers that could be associated with the environment
- how to stay safe in the environment.

Students can use an enlarged copy of 'Activity Sheet 4 – Inland Water Mind Map' to record their research.

When finished, groups to present their information to the class.



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Aquatic Environments – Rivers, Lakes and Dams

Activity 2: Short Stories

What you will need:

- Data projector or interactive whiteboard
- ‘Be Water Smart at Rivers and Lakes’ video clip. Available to download from ‘Supplementary Resources’ in the Water Smart Educational Toolkit in the registered schools zone of the website www.swimandsurvive.com.au (runs for approximately eight minutes)
- Copies of ‘Activity Sheet 5 – Short Stories’
- Paper or books for writing

As a class, watch the eight-minute ‘Be Water Smart at Rivers and Lakes’ video clip. Discuss the scenarios presented in the clip.

‘Activity Sheet 5 – Short Stories’ includes three short stories about unsafe behaviour around a river, lake or dam. As a class, read and discuss each story.

Students to select one story and either:

- rewrite the entire story, changing the unsafe behaviour to safe behaviour; or
- copy the story and write a conclusion that ensures the main character stays safe.

When all the stories are finished, students can share theirs with a friend or the class.

As a class, reflect on the stories and create a list of rules or safety tips which should be followed when around a river, lake or dam.