

Be Cool, Follow the Rules

KEY TERMS

Buddy: A person who helps another person follow the rules and can get help in an emergency.

Horseplay or Roughhousing: Rough play that can result in someone getting hurt.

Inflatable: Equipment or toy that must be filled with air in order to float on the water.

Lifeguard: A person trained in lifeguarding, first aid and CPR skills who ensures the safety of people at an aquatic facility by helping to prevent and responding to emergencies.

Rules: Guidelines for conduct or action that help keep us safe at pools and swimming areas.

Safe swimming area: A swimming area that is supervised and is free of water hazards.

Supervised area: An area with a person present who is in charge and is responsible for the safety of others.

Waterfront: Open water areas, such as lakes, rivers, ponds and oceans.

Waterpark: A theme park with many types of water attractions and rides, such as wave pools, water slides and winding rivers.

OBJECTIVES

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify rules for safe participation in water activities at pools, waterparks, oceans, lakes and rivers.
- Explain how following safety rules can prevent accidents.
- Describe the features of a safe swimming area.
- Demonstrate an understanding of safety rules by creating posters designed to teach the rules to others.

MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

- Poster: Safety Rules
- *Longfellow's WHALE Tales* video
- DVD player and monitor or computer with Internet access, projector and screen
- Poster board (one for every two or three students)
- Crayons, markers and pencils
- Fact Sheet 3: Longfellow's Rules for Safe Swimming
- Fact Sheet 4: Longfellow's Aquatic Life Facts
- Student Handouts (one for each student):
 - Activity Sheet 2-1: Safe or Not Safe?
 - Activity Sheet 2-2: Pool Rules
 - Activity Sheet 2-3: Pool Patrol
 - Activity Sheet 2-4: Show You Know
 - Activity Sheet 2-5: Dangerous Beach
 - Activity Sheet 2-6: Safety First
 - Activity Sheet 2-7: Create a Poster

Leader's Note

Display the poster, *Safety Rules*, at the front of the classroom. Begin a discussion about the poster by asking students questions such as, "What are some rules that you know that help you be safe in and around the water? Why are these rules important?" Refer to the poster throughout the lesson. As an option, you may use a projector to display the electronic version of the poster. Show the Longfellow's WHALE Tales video segment, "Be Cool, Follow the Rules," to support this topic.

TOPIC: INTRODUCTION

Key Points

- Rules are designed to help keep us safe and to be considerate of other people.
- Lifeguards enforce the rules at swimming areas.
- Always listen to the lifeguard and follow the rules.

TOPIC: RULES, RULES, RULES

Discussion

- What is a rule?

Answer: A guideline for conduct or action that helps keep us safe at pools and swimming areas

- Where are some places we need to follow rules?

Answer: School, home, pool

- Why do we have rules?

Answer: Responses should include the following:

- To keep everyone safe
- To help prevent injuries
- To be considerate of others

- What are some rules we have to obey in school?

Answer: Responses will vary but may include the following:

- No talking when the teacher is talking
- No running
- No food or drinks or gum in class
- No calling out in class

TOPIC: SWIMMING RULES

Key Points and Discussion

- Here are some rules for safe swimming:
 - Always swim with a buddy; never swim alone.
 - Swim only in areas that are supervised by lifeguards or a responsible adult who knows how to swim.
 - Obey all rules and posted signs.
 - Do not swim during a thunderstorm.
 - Do not swim at night.
 - Never rely on inflatables or other plastic toys for support in deep water.
 - Do not eat or chew gum while swimming.

Leader's Note: Have students complete Activity Sheet 2-1: Safe or Not Safe?

- What other swimming rules can you think of that would help keep you safe?
Answer: Responses will vary. Prompt students to include the following:
 - Know your own limits.
 - Know how deep the water is before getting in.
 - Do not hang on the ropes or lifelines.
 - Do not push.
 - Do not go in deep water if you cannot swim.

Leader's Note: Have students complete Activity Sheet 2-2: Pool Rules.

Pool Rules

Key Points

- If you have ever gone swimming at a local pool, there were probably rules such as:
 - No running on the pool deck.
 - No glass bottles in the pool area.
 - One person at a time on the diving board.
 - No roughhousing or dunking.
 - No diving from the side of the pool or in shallow water.

Leader's Note: Have students complete Activity Sheet 2-3: Pool Patrol.

Home Pools

Key Points

- It is just as important to follow rules at a home pool:
 - Do not go near the water or the pool area without an adult there to supervise.
 - Never swim alone.
 - Do not bring bottles or glass around the pool.
 - Stay in shallow water if you cannot swim.
- Many home pools do not have water that is deep enough or wide enough for safe diving.
- Serious diving accidents may result in head or back injuries (being unable to move or walk).
- Most diving injuries happen in water that is 5 feet deep or less.
- You should learn how to enter the water headfirst from a qualified instructor or coach.
- The Red Cross recommends that you not dive headfirst into water that is less than 9 feet deep.
 - If the depth is not marked, do not dive!
 - If there are “No Diving” signs posted at a home pool, obey them. They are there because the water is too shallow or the area is not large enough for diving.

TOPIC: WHAT IS A SAFE SWIMMING AREA?

Key Points

- Some things you should look for in a safe swimming area include:
 - The water is clean and free of hazards.
 - The swimming area is well marked.
 - Safety equipment is available.
 - The water is deep enough for activities like jumping or diving.
- Being aware of potential safety hazards can help you avoid getting hurt.

TOPIC: TYPES OF SWIMMING AREAS

Discussion

- What types of swimming areas are available in your area?
Answer: Responses will vary but may include the following:
 - *Swimming pools, such as the public pool at the park or at the YMCA*
 - *Home pool*
 - *Waterparks*
 - *Oceans*
 - *Rivers*

- Lakes
- Ponds
- Rules will be different at these areas.

Waterparks

Key Points

- You should always follow the directions given by lifeguards. Ask questions if you are not sure about any directions that are given.
- Be aware that some attractions have moving water, such as wave pools, and require swimming skills to be safe.
- Before you start down a water slide, get in the correct position, which is face-up and feetfirst.

Leader's Note: Have students complete Activity Sheet 2-4: Show You Know.

Oceans

Key Points

- Stay within the designated swimming area and where a lifeguard can see you.
- Watch out for possible hazards, such as waves, rip currents, longshore currents and other water conditions.
- Check the surf conditions before you enter the water. Look to see if a warning flag is up or check with a lifeguard for water conditions, beach conditions or any potential hazards, especially rip currents.
- Stay away from piers, pilings and jetties when in the water.
- Never dive headfirst into breaking waves.
- Keep a lookout for aquatic life.

Leader's Note: See Fact Sheet 4, Longfellow's Aquatic Life Fact Sheet, which provides additional information on aquatic plants and animals that can present risks to swimmers. You can choose sections to share with students. Lesson 3 covers aquatic life in more detail.

Lakes and Rivers

Key Points

- Swim only in an area that has been designated for swimming, and one that is supervised by a lifeguard.
- Inexperienced swimmers and young children should wear life jackets.
- Children or inexperienced swimmers should avoid areas where moving water is present.
- Avoid all water activities above and below a dam.
- Be careful if the water is dark or cloudy water; that could prevent you from seeing underwater objects.

- Watch out for currents, waves, unexpected drop-offs and aquatic life.
- Use a feetfirst entry when entering the water.
- Never swim under a raft or pier. Always look before jumping off a pier or raft to be sure no one is in the way.
- Enter headfirst only when the area is marked clearly for diving.
- Make sure you always have enough energy to swim back to shore.

Leader’s Note: Have students complete Activity Sheet 2-5: Dangerous Beach.

- Watch out for the “dangerous too’s”
 - Too tired
 - Too cold
 - Too far from safety
 - Too much sun

Leader’s Note: See Fact Sheet 3, Longfellow’s Rules for Safe Swimming, which provides additional rules for swimming at the beach, lake, river or waterpark. You can choose information to share with students, depending on the level of the group.

TOPIC: WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN?

Discussion

- Prevention is an important part of water safety. Rules help prevent accidents from happening.

Leader’s Note: Read each scenario below to students. After each scenario, have students consider the consequences and respond by telling what they think might happen. Then, discuss how the accidents could have been prevented by following the rules.

Scenario 1

Jennifer and Tamika have just come out of the pool locker room and decide to race to the edge of the pool. What might happen?

Answer: Responses will vary but may include the following:

- They could fall and hurt themselves.
- They could fall and hurt others who are in the way.

Scenario 2

Ian and Justin are playing tag in the water. Ian climbs out and runs to the diving board. Justin follows quickly and jumps in to tag Ian. What might happen?

Answer: Responses will vary but may include the following:

- Justin could land on Ian and they could both be hurt.
- Others swimming in the general area could be hurt.
- Both boys could slip and fall while running to the diving board.

Scenario 3

Jason and some of his friends are taking turns jumping in the water from the side of the pool. Jason gets tired of waiting for his turn so he pushes a friend into the water. The friend is surprised and swallows some water. What might happen?

Answer: Responses will vary but may include the following:

- His friend could start coughing.
- His friend may go back under and swallow more water.

Scenario 4

Maria and her little brother, José, are getting ready to get into the water. José puts on his arm floats. Maria takes him into water over his head. What might happen?

Answer: Responses will vary but may include the following:

- If José cannot swim well, he could be in a situation that is beyond his ability.
- If José cannot swim well, the arm floats could slip off or could lose air and José could sink.

Scenario 5

Colin and Shelley are walking along a river, when Shelley decides that she wants to go for a swim. She jumps into the river. What might happen?

Answer: Responses will vary but may include the following:

- She could get caught in the current and carried away.
- The current could carry her toward hazards.

Leader's Note: Have students complete Activity Sheet 2-6: Safety First.

Activity

- Divide the class into groups of two or three students.
- Have each group choose a safety rule that they would like to teach others about.
- Have each group design a poster for their rule.
- Display the posters in the classroom or donate them to a local pool or swimming facility.

Leader's Note: Alternatively, have students each create their own posters. Hand out Activity Sheet 2-7: Create a Poster.

TOPIC: WRAP-UP

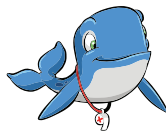
Leader's Note: Refer back to the poster, Safety Rules, as you review the lesson.

Discussion

- What rules should you remember when you go for a swim?

Answer: Responses will vary but should include the following:

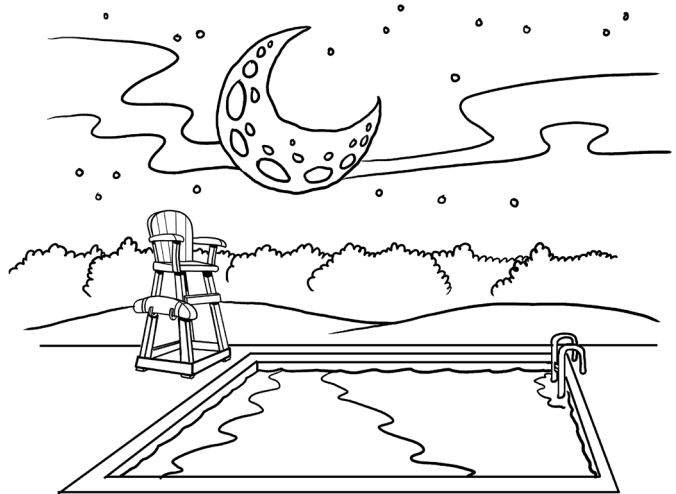
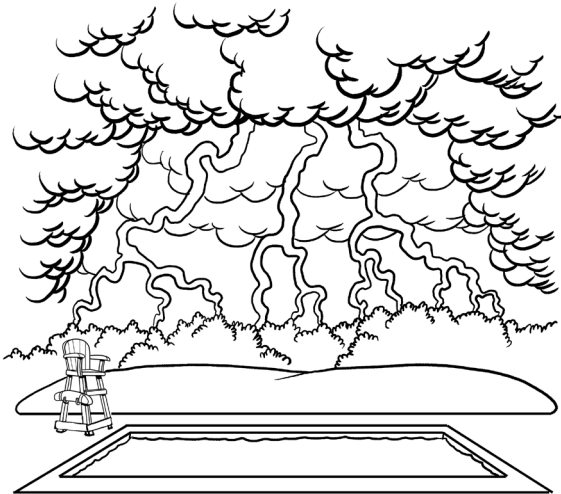
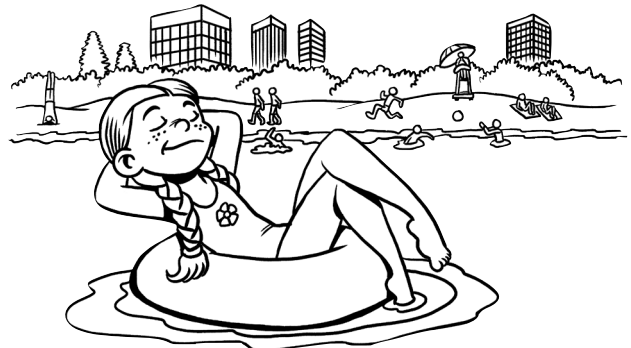
- *Always swim with a buddy; never swim alone.*
 - *Swim only in areas that are supervised by lifeguards.*
 - *Obey all rules and posted signs.*
 - *Do not swim during a thunderstorm.*
 - *Do not swim at night.*
 - *Do not rely on inflatables, such as swim rings or water wings, or other plastic toys for support in deep water.*
 - *No eating or chewing gum while swimming.*
- Remember that all the rules are important!

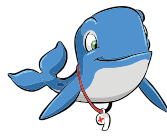


Safe or Not Safe?

Name: _____

Circle the pictures that show safe swimming situations. Put an X on the pictures that show unsafe swimming situations.

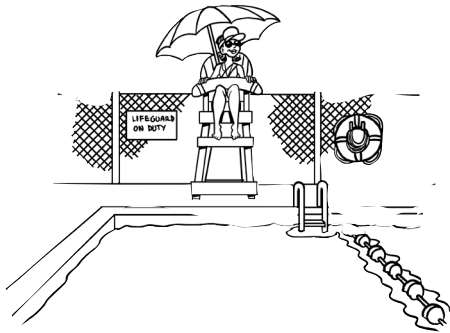




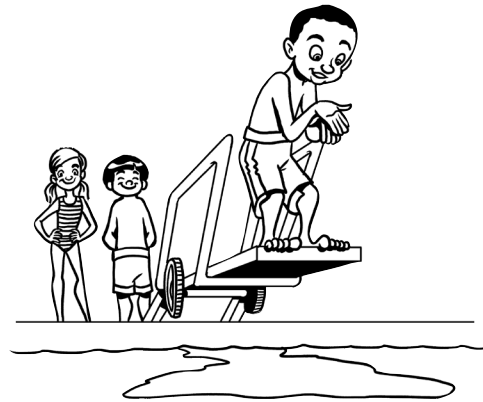
Pool Rules

Name: _____

Look at each drawing and fill in the missing word in the sentence to complete a pool safety rule.



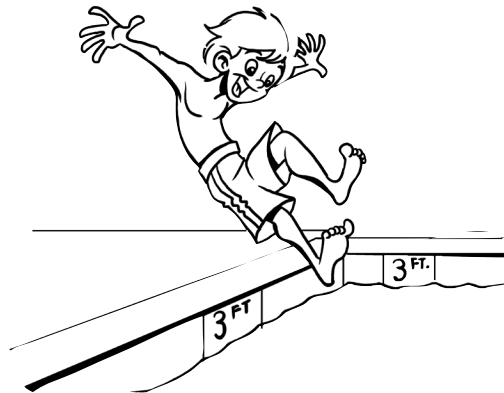
1. Only swim when there is a _____ on duty.



4. One person at a time on a _____ board.



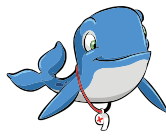
2. Always swim as a pair with a _____.



5. No diving in shallow water. Enter the water _____.



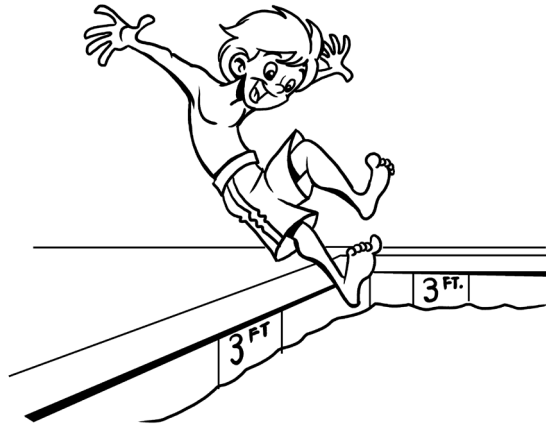
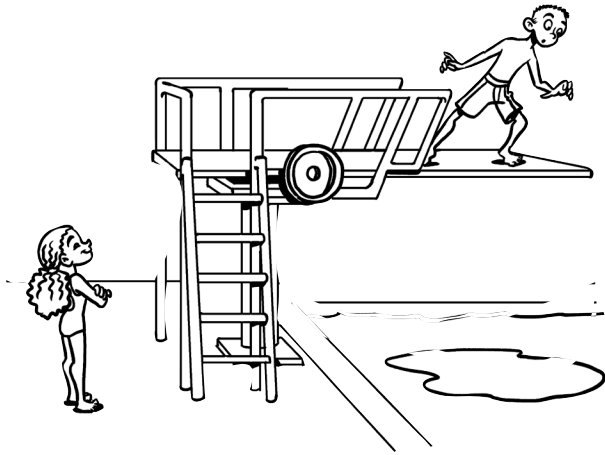
3. _____, don't run on the pool deck.

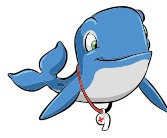


Pool Patrol

Name: _____

Color the pictures that show children obeying pool rules. Place an X on each picture that does NOT show a safety rule.

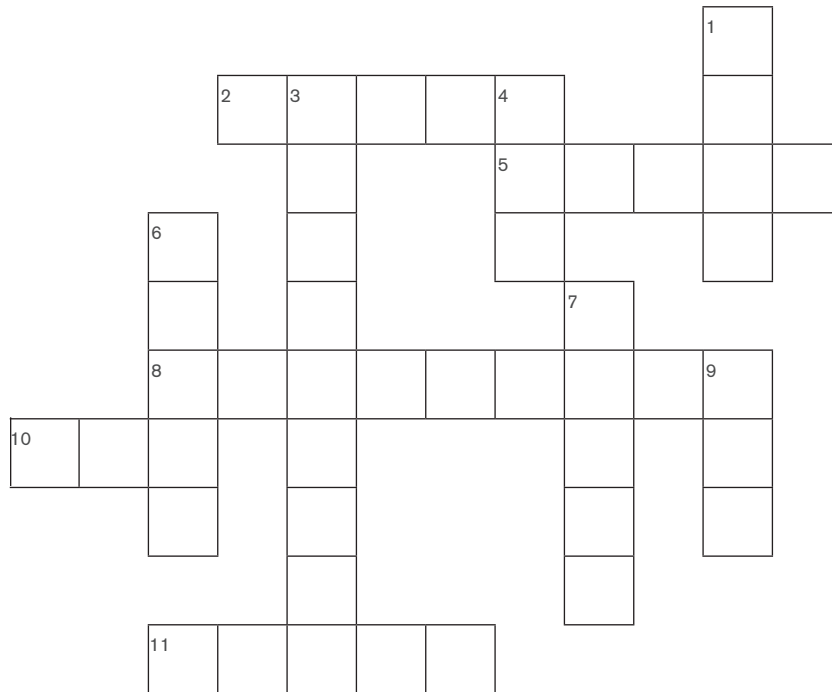




Show You Know

Name: _____

Fill in the missing word in each swimming rule below. Then enter the word in the correct spaces on the crossword puzzle.

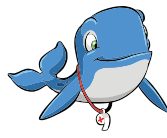


Across

- Swim in _____ water, not dark or cloudy water.
- Never swim _____ the diving board.
- Do not swim when there is _____ and thunder.
- Only _____ person on the diving board at a time.
- Always swim with a _____.

Down

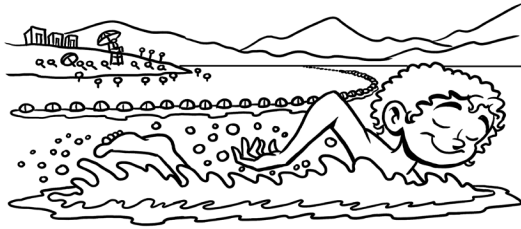
- When using a slide, go down _____ first.
- The supervisor at the pool is the _____.
- Do not _____ on the pool deck.
- Be cool! Follow all the _____.
- Never swim at _____ or in unlighted areas.
- Do not chew _____ while swimming.



Dangerous Beach

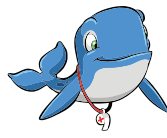
Name: _____

Each picture shows one or more dangerous situations. Write at least one safety rule for each picture. Then color the picture.









Safety First

Name: _____

Read each clue. Then choose the correct word from the list of words and write it in the space below the clue.

Word List

night buddy help stormy sunscreen deep rest lifeguard

1. This is a person you should swim with.

2. This is the right type of water to dive into.

3. If you are in real trouble, yell this word.

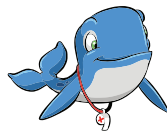
4. This is the kind of weather you don't want to swim in.

5. This is a very dangerous time to swim.

6. Remember to do this before swimming, especially if you are tired from hard work or play.

7. This is something you apply before you go outdoors.

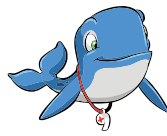
8. This is someone who supervises you while you swim and who is trained to help in an emergency.



Create a Poster

Name: _____

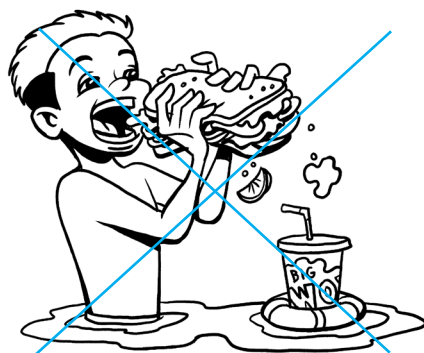
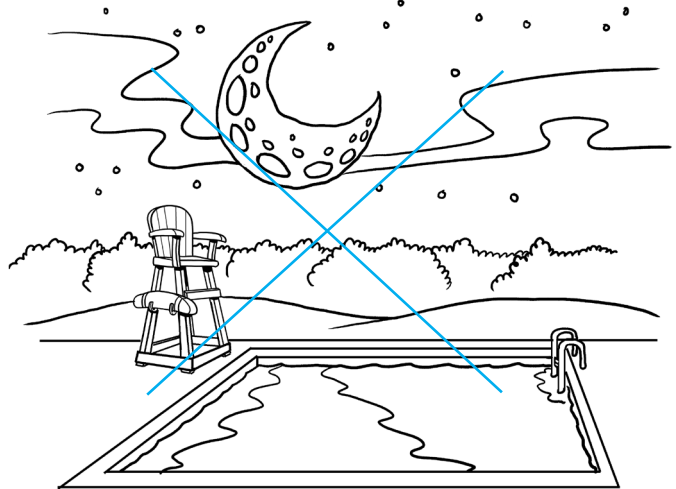
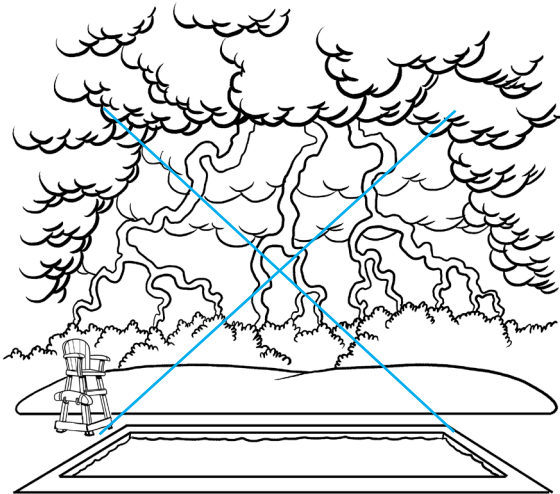
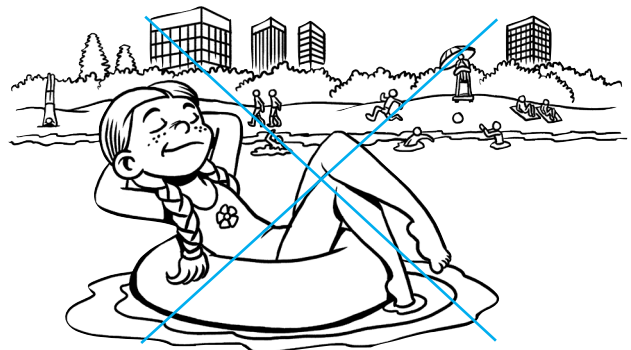
Think of a safety rule that you would like to teach other students. Create a poster to teach this swimming rule. Use pictures and/or words to get your message across.

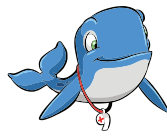


Safe or Not Safe?

Name: _____

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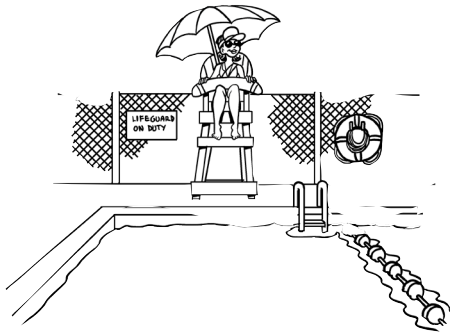




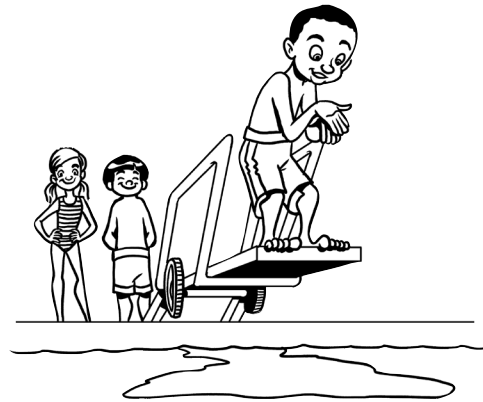
Pool Rules

Name: _____

Look at each drawing and fill in the missing word in the sentence to complete a pool safety rule.



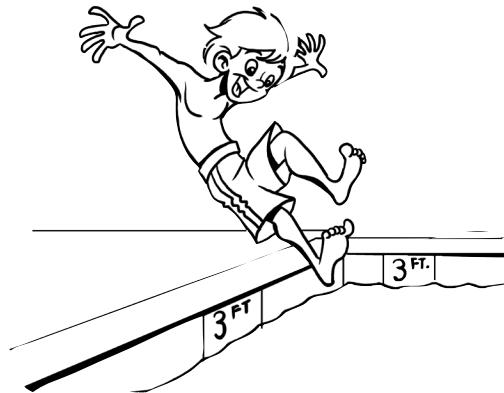
1. Only swim when there is a lifeguard on duty.



4. One person at a time on a diving board.



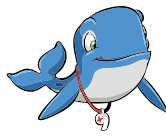
2. Always swim as a pair with a buddy.



5. No diving in shallow water. Enter the water feetfirst.



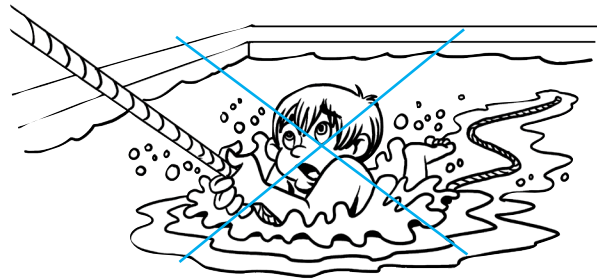
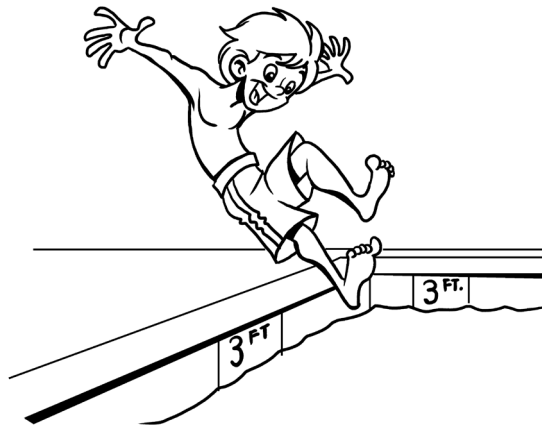
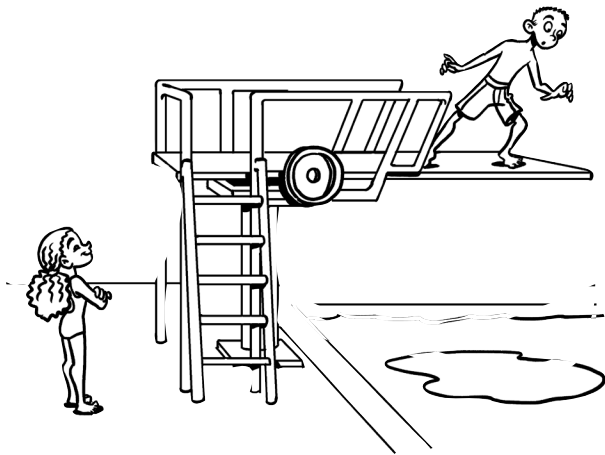
3. Walk, don't run on the pool deck.

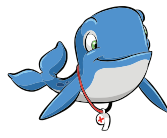


Pool Patrol

Name: _____

Color the pictures that show children obeying pool rules. Place an X on each picture that does NOT show a safety rule.

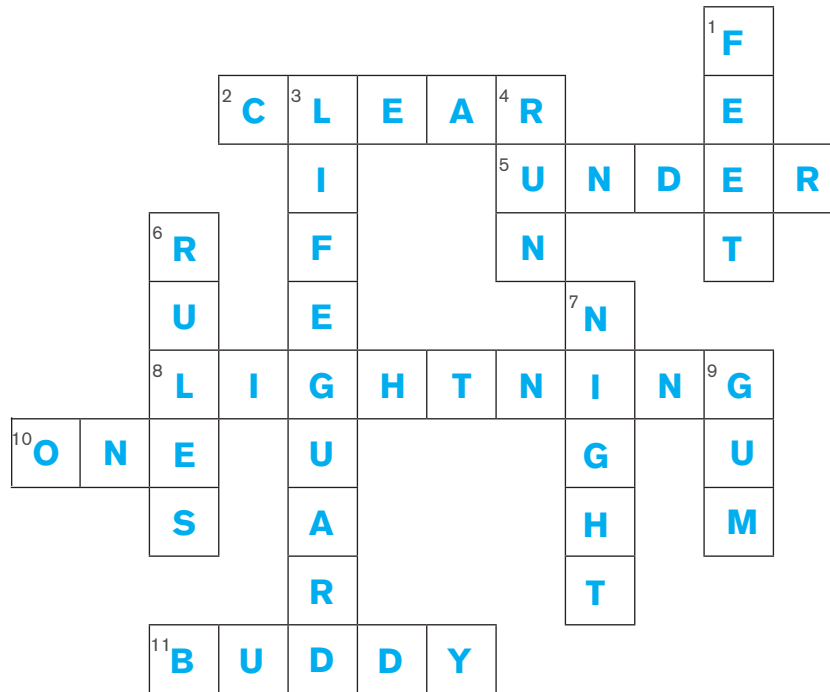




Show You Know

Name: _____

Fill in the missing word in each swimming rule below. Then enter the word in the correct spaces on the crossword puzzle.



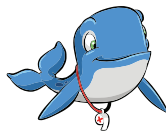
Across

- Swim in _____ water, not dark or cloudy water.
- Never swim _____ the diving board.
- Do not swim when there is _____ and thunder.
- Only _____ person on the diving board at a time.
- Always swim with a _____.

Down

- When using a slide, go down _____ first.
- The supervisor at the pool is the _____.
- Do not _____ on the pool deck.
- Be cool! Follow all the _____.
- Never swim at _____ or in unlighted areas.
- Do not chew _____ while swimming.

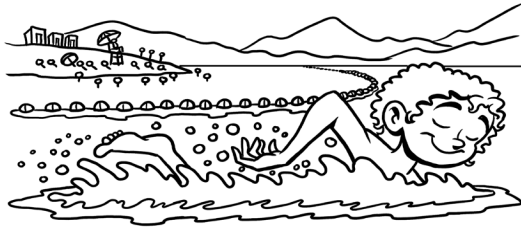




Dangerous Beach

Name: _____

Each picture shows one or more dangerous situations. Write at least one safety rule for each picture. Then color the picture.



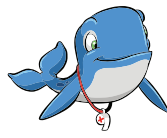
Swim only in areas that are supervised by lifeguards. Never swim alone.



Use a feetfirst entry when entering the water. Do not dive into water that is dark or cloudy.



Watch out for currents. Avoid areas where moving water is present.



Safety First

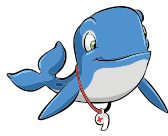
Name: _____

Read each clue. Then choose the correct word from the list of words and write it in the space below the clue.

Word List

night buddy help stormy sunscreen deep rest lifeguard

1. This is a person you should swim with.
_____ *buddy*
2. This is the right type of water to dive into.
_____ *deep*
3. If you are in real trouble, yell this word.
_____ *help*
4. This is the kind of weather you don't want to swim in.
_____ *stormy*
5. This is a very dangerous time to swim.
_____ *night*
6. Remember to do this before swimming, especially if you are tired from hard work or play.
_____ *rest*
7. This is something you apply before you go outdoors.
_____ *sunscreen*
8. This is someone who supervises you while you swim and who is trained to help in an emergency.
_____ *lifeguard*



Longfellow's Rules for Safe Swimming

Learn to Swim

The best thing you can do to stay safe in, on and around water is to know your limits and learn how to swim. Formal swim lessons play a key role in keeping children safe around water. Swim lessons can't teach everything in one session. Children must work through all the levels of a swim program to become good swimmers.

The American Red Cross Learn-to-Swim program has six levels that help swimmers of any age and ability develop their swimming and water safety skills. To enroll in a swimming course, go to redcross.org.

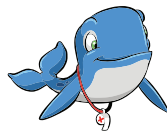
Swimming Rules

- Always swim with a buddy; never swim alone.
- Read and obey all rules and posted signs.
- Swim in areas that are supervised by a lifeguard.
- If you are an inexperienced swimmer, take extra care when around the water, such as wearing a U.S. Coast Guard–approved life jacket.
- Watch out for the “dangerous too’s”—too tired, too cold, too far from safety, too much sun, too much strenuous activity.
- Follow water safety rules set by parents; for example, inexperienced swimmers should stay in water less than chest deep.
- Ask permission from parents before you swim.
- Know the water environment you are in and its possible hazards.
- Know where the deep and shallow areas are, whether there are currents and where to enter and exit the water.
- Know how to prevent, recognize and respond to emergencies.
- Use a feetfirst entry when entering the water.
- Enter headfirst only when the area is clearly marked for diving and has no obstructions.
- Stay away from pool drains! If a pool drain is not secured properly, suction can pull hair, clothing, jewelry or a body part into the drain or trap a person.

Rules for Waterparks

- Be sure the area is well supervised by lifeguards before you or others in your group enter the water.
- Read all posted signs. Follow the rules and directions given by lifeguards. Ask questions if you are not sure about a correct procedure.
- When you go from one attraction to another, note that the water depth may be different and that the attraction may be used in a different way.

Continued on next page



Longfellow's Rules for Safe Swimming

- Be aware that some attractions have moving water, such as wave pools, and require swimming skills to be safe.
- Before you start down a water slide, get into the correct position. Follow the posted rules or the directions the lifeguard gives you.
- Some facilities provide life jackets at no charge. If you cannot swim, wear a U.S. Coast Guard–approved life jacket.

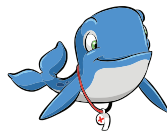
Rules for the Beach

- Stay within the designated swimming area and near a lifeguard.
- Check the surf conditions before you enter the water. Look to see if a warning flag is up or check with a lifeguard for water conditions, beach conditions or any potential hazards, especially rip currents.
- Stay away from piers, pilings and jetties when in the water.
- Keep a lookout for aquatic life. Water plants and animals may be dangerous. Before going into any ocean, find out what local marine life may be dangerous, how to avoid it and how to care for any injuries.
- Never dive headfirst into breaking waves. Many swimmers have suffered head, neck and back injuries while diving into waves, not realizing that the water depth was too shallow for a dive.
- Watch for longshore currents and rip currents. Longshore currents move parallel to the shore. If you are caught in a longshore current, try to swim toward shore while moving along with the current. Rip currents move straight out to sea beyond the breaking waves. If you are caught in a rip current, swim parallel to the shore until you are out of the current. Once you are free, turn and swim toward shore.

Rules for Lakes and Rivers

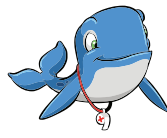
- Select a supervised area. A trained lifeguard who can help in an emergency is the best safety factor. Even good swimmers can have an unexpected medical emergency in the water.
- Inexperienced swimmers and young children should wear life jackets.
- Children or inexperienced swimmers should avoid areas where moving water is present.
- Select an area that is clean and well maintained. A clean bathhouse, clean restrooms and a litter-free environment show the management's concern for your health and safety. Water pollution can cause health problems for swimmers.
- Avoid all water activities above and below a dam.
- Avoid possible hazards such as murky water, hidden underwater objects, currents, waves, unexpected drop-offs and aquatic plant life.
- Use a feetfirst entry when entering the water.
- Enter headfirst only when the area is marked clearly for diving.
- Be sure rafts and piers are in good condition, with no loose boards or exposed nails.

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Longfellow's Rules for Safe Swimming

- Never swim under a raft or pier. Always look before jumping off a pier or raft to be sure no one is in the way.
- Make sure you always have enough energy to swim back to shore.
- Water that appears calm on the surface may have a current below the surface. Do not underestimate the power of an unseen current. If you are caught in a current and being swept away, roll over onto your back and go downstream feetfirst to avoid hitting your head. When you are out of the strongest part of the current, swim straight towards shore.
- A hydraulic is a strong force created by water flowing downward over an object, then reversing its flow. The reverse flow of the water can trap and hold a person under. If you are caught in a hydraulic, do not fight it but swim to the bottom and then swim out of the current to reach the surface.



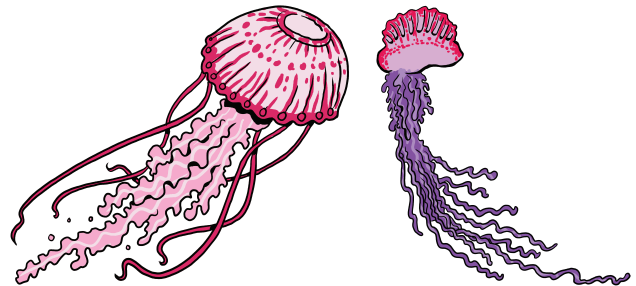
Longfellow's Aquatic Life Facts

Weeds

Weeds, grass and kelp are usually not a problem for swimmers. However, an inexperienced swimmer who swims into a patch of weeds could become entangled. If the swimmer then tries to get free by moving wildly, the weeds could wrap securely around the arms and legs. Gentle shaking and pulling arms and legs out slowly will clear the weeds.

Jellyfish and Portuguese Man-of-War

Jellyfish or Portuguese man-of-war stings can be painful, and they can make a person feel sick. The side effects of a sting can include allergic reactions that can cause breathing or heart problems. Swimmers should avoid these creatures in the water and on the beach.



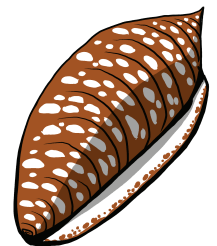
Coral

Coral can cause multiple cuts. These cuts require thorough cleaning and possibly medical attention. Avoid swimming in areas where coral may cause a problem.



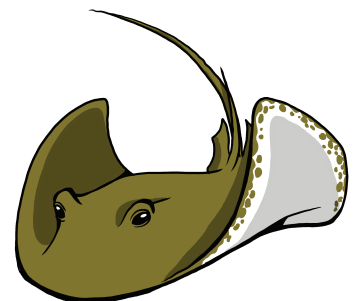
Cone Shells

The cone shell is related to the snail. It can puncture the skin and inject venom (poison) through the cut. Cone shell poisoning can cause numbness and tingling around the nose and mouth, paralysis and even death. Wounds from cone shells need immediate medical attention. Swimmers should avoid picking these shells up from the bottom of the ocean.

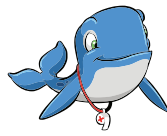


Stingray

Stingrays do not normally attack people but will sting if they are accidentally stepped on. Stingrays have a stinger at the base of the tail that has venom (poison). If a person steps on the stinger, they will get a cut or puncture wound that can be very painful. The venom can cause faintness, weakness, sweating, vomiting, diarrhea or muscle cramps. Wounds from stingrays need medical attention. When entering the ocean, swimmers should shuffle their feet. This will cause stingrays to swim out of the area.



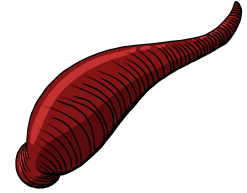
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Longfellow's Aquatic Life Facts

Leeches

Leeches are more of a nuisance than a danger. Leeches are found in freshwater areas, especially in murky (dark) or muddy water.



Sharks, Barracuda, Moray Eels

Being bitten by a shark, barracuda or moray eel can cause serious injury. The best protection is to swim in a supervised area where someone is on the lookout for dangerous aquatic animals.

Snakes

Snakes normally avoid people. Swimmers should not try to corner or chase a snake, and they should always check carefully for snakes under a boat before moving it or turning it over.

Sea Urchins

Sea urchins, found in the ocean, are covered with sharp brittle spines (points). If handled or stepped on, the spines can puncture a person's hand or foot and can be quite painful. Some sea urchins are poisonous. Swimmers should not pick up sea urchins and should be careful not to step on them.

What to Do If You Encounter an Aquatic Animal

If you come across an aquatic animal in or out of the water and you suspect it could be harmful, you should:

- Leave it alone. Do not touch it.
- Move away slowly.
- Note its exact location and tell the lifeguard or an adult.

How to Prevent Stings and Bites

Your best protection against stings and bites is to learn about aquatic animals and their habitats. If you can recognize the dangerous ones and you know where they live, you will know what to stay away from.

If you are bitten or stung by an aquatic animal, call for help immediately.