

Swimming activities and water safety – unit 1

Beginners (non-swimmers and developing swimmers)

ABOUT THE UNIT

In this unit children learn to enjoy being in water and become more confident. They learn how to keep afloat, move in the water, meet challenges and breathe when swimming. At first they use swimming aids and support – in time, some children will manage without these.

In all swimming activities, children have to keep afloat and propel themselves through water. Learning to swim enables them to take part in a range of water-based activities.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

In the next unit, for developing and competent swimmers, children will be introduced to specific swimming strokes on their front and on their back. They will learn and use different kicking and arm actions. They will also be introduced to some personal survival skills and will set and complete water-based challenges.

In other physical education units, children will learn how using their arms help to balance them in different activities. They will use a range of different ways of travelling which they will explore in the water during swimming lessons.

VOCABULARY

In this unit children will have an opportunity to use a range of words and phrases, such as:

- walk, hop, skip, run
- push and pull with the arms
- kick with the legs
- lie on front and back
- armbands, floats, support
- breathe
- under water
- in water
- on water

RESOURCES

- a range of swimming aids and supports
- floating markers
- pool rails
- laminated resource cards
- ropes to divide the pool and keep children in their depth
- a video on water safety

EXPECTATIONS

When carrying out the type of activities and tasks in this unit

most children will be able to:

swim between 10 and 20 metres unaided in shallow water, using their arms and legs to propel themselves; use one basic method to swim the distance, making sure that they breathe; using floats, swim over longer distances and periods of time with a more controlled leg kick; join in all swimming activities confidently; explore freely how to move in and under water; recognise how the water affects their temperature; recognise how their swimming affects their breathing; identify and describe the differences between different leg and arm actions

some children will not have made so much progress. They will be able to:

swim between 10 and 20 metres, with swimming aids and support, using their arms and legs to propel themselves; in some cases, swim up to 5 metres without aids or support; move confidently in water when their feet are touching the ground; join in water activities; explore different ways of moving in water; swim and play on the surface; put their heads in the water; recognise how the temperature of the water makes their body feel; identify the activities they are confident with in water

some children will have progressed further. They will be able to:

swim between 25 and 50 metres unaided, using their arms and legs with some coordination; use more than one method of swimming; move in and around water confidently and competently; explore ways of swimming on and below the surface of the water; know how to keep themselves warmer in water and how to breathe when they are swimming; describe different leg and arm actions and explain how the actions work together to help them move better in water

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

LEARNING OUTCOMES

POINTS TO NOTE

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN

CHILDREN

ACQUIRING AND DEVELOPING SKILLS

- to work with confidence
 - to explore and use skills, actions and ideas individually and in combination
 - to remember, repeat and link their actions
- Encourage the children to go into the water and move around confidently. Ask them to hold the rail at the side of the pool and move as they would on land. Ask them to hold hands with someone else and help each other to travel in different ways.
 - Teach the children to use their arms to pull and push the water, to use their legs in kicking actions, and to use their arms and legs together to stay upright and to move along. Show them how to move around in the water in a number of ways with their feet on the ground and the help of swimming aids.
 - Teach them to hold their breath and open their eyes under water. Ask them to put their heads under water and move short distances without touching the ground.
 - Teach them to stretch out on the water on their front and back, so that they lie flat.

- enter the water carefully, as taught
- move around and across the pool, *eg walking, running, hopping*, with swimming aids and support
- move on and below the surface, showing confidence and enjoyment in the water
- begin to swim short distances of between 5 and 20 metres, using aids and later without them

- **In every lesson, most of the children's learning should take place through physical activity relating to the core tasks.**
- Most lessons should start with short warm-up activities that help the children remember what they did in the last lesson and prepare them for what they will learn next. Most lessons should end with cool-down activities.
- Limit instructions and keep the children active, so they do not get cold.
- Give the children enough time to explore and practise their skills and ideas.
- Give the children specific guidance on the skills they need to use and how to use them correctly, as well as general feedback and praise.
- Make sure the children have an opportunity to watch, copy and describe what others do. Resource cards and other visual images could be useful. Back in the classroom, give the children opportunities to talk about what they have done.
- The children should keep a personal record of some of their attainment and achievement. They could use ICT to design their own certificate, or use a word-processing package to design a poster about water safety or pool hygiene.

SELECTING AND APPLYING SKILLS, TACTICS AND COMPOSITIONAL IDEAS

- how to choose and use skills for different swimming tasks
 - to improve the control and coordination of their bodies in water
- Help the children to feel how the water supports their bodies. Help them to feel safe enough to put their heads and then their bodies under the water.
 - Show them how their arms help them to stay upright and balanced. Ask them which way they would push against the water if they wanted to move in a particular direction. Encourage them to use different types of leg kicking action to help them move. Show them how to coordinate their arms and legs to help them move through water with support.
 - Listen to the children's ideas on ways to travel in the water, and their ideas on what challenges to set themselves.

- talk about what their body feels like in the water and describe how it feels different when moving in the same way in water and on land
- use different arm and leg actions to propel themselves through the water, at first upright and then horizontal, using swimming aids and support
- gradually coordinate these actions, so that they remain balanced and in control of their bodies
- stretch out and keep afloat on the surface, using a number of body shapes

Health and safety

- Is the space around the pool free from clutter?
- Are the non-swimmers and those with less confidence in water that is shallow enough for them to stand comfortably?
- Has the pool been checked for health and safety?
- Is a qualified lifesaver in attendance who can see all the children?
- Have all the children been accounted for at the beginning and end of a lesson?
- Show the children a video on water safety and make sure that they know the safety rules and conventions for swimming in, and being near, a pool.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF FITNESS AND HEALTH

- that being active is fun and good for them
 - to recognise what their bodies feel like during different activities
- Ask the children to describe how their bodies feel when they are swimming and what happens to their breathing. Ask them how the temperature of the water makes them feel, and how their bodies react to the temperature.
 - Talk to the children about the rules they need to follow in and near water. Talk to them about both the fun and the dangers of being in water. Tell them how to keep an eye out for others and to help them feel safe.

- describe how the temperature of the water affects their bodies
- explain what they do to feel warmer in the water
- know and explain the rules and routines that keep them safe near water
- take care of themselves and are aware of others in and around the swimming pool

EVALUATING AND IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

- to watch, copy and describe what they and others have done, and to use the information to improve their work
- Ask the children to describe and copy swimming actions that they are shown. Ask them what the difference is between actions.
 - Help the children to choose what swimming aids to use.
 - Listen to their comments on how to get their arms and legs to work together.
 - Ask them which activities they enjoy most in the water.

- use actions and words to explain what they and others do in the pool
- copy and describe what they see in short demonstrations

PRIOR LEARNING

It is helpful if children have:

- some idea of what swimming is
- developed the ability to travel in different ways on land
- played in pairs and groups
- developed the ability to listen to instructions

CORE TASKS

Following are core tasks the children could be asked to carry out.

Task 1

Individually, in pairs or small groups, move around or across the pool while wearing swimming aids. See how fast or quietly you can move across the pool, using walking, running, jumping, hopping, skipping, lunging and floating, and swimming actions.

Adaptations and variations on the task

Ask the children to:

- play 'follow my leader'
- take part in short races for individuals and relay teams
- go backwards and sideways, as well as forwards

Task 2

How long can you stay still with your feet off the ground when:

- using different body shapes, *eg tuck and stretch?*
- lying on your front or back?
- holding your breath?

Adaptations and variations on the task

Ask the children to:

- use swimming aids that give more or less support
- keep their head in the water to make the task harder, or out of the water to make it easier
- plunge under the surface after taking a big breath, to see if they float for five seconds

Task 3

See how far you can swim. Try to cover between 5 and 20 metres using swimming aids, *eg armbands and floats*.

Adaptations and variations on the task

Ask the children to:

- take part in time and distance challenges. Put floating markers in the water for children to reach, or start them further and further away from the side
- try kicking while on their front and on their back
- try to swim the distance without using swimming aids or support

Children will need different levels of support from swimming aids. Over time, there should be a gradual reduction in the amount of support they need. Some children may need one-to-one support in the pool.

EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Out of lessons, at home and in the community, children could be encouraged to:

- swim regularly, to help develop confidence
- go swimming with their parents or guardians
- swim after school and at weekends
- find out about going to local pools, and about swimming lessons in clubs and the community

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

This unit could be linked to:

- science – understanding floating and sinking, exploring forces
- mathematics – measuring and recording distances
- literacy – using specialist language; vocabulary extension is an objective in each term of the *National Literacy Strategy: Framework for teaching*
- PSHE – learning to work safely with others

