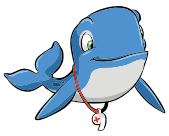
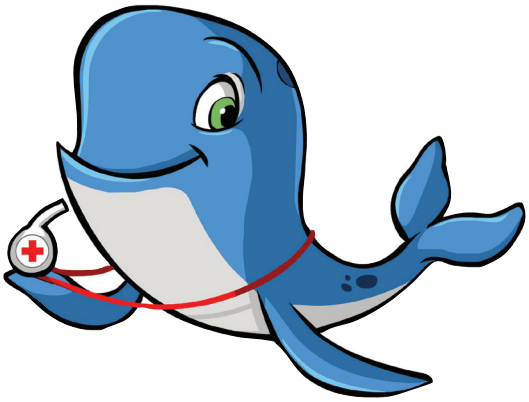


How to Conduct Longfellow's WHALE Tales

INTRODUCTION

The American Red Cross believes that one way to help reduce drowning incidents among children ages 5 through 12 is to teach water safety education in elementary schools and other youth programs. The American Red Cross created Longfellow's WHALE Tales to help teachers and youth leaders teach children about safe behavior in, on and around the water. The materials in the *Longfellow's WHALE Tales K–6 Educational Packet* are designed to give children an awareness of being safe around the water and to help promote healthful aquatic recreation.

Commodore Wilbert E. Longfellow started the Red Cross Lifesaving Corps in 1914 to train volunteers in the methods of lifesaving and resuscitation. His next step was to provide large-scale instruction in swimming. The commodore's teaching philosophy was to "entertain the public hugely while educating them gently." He did just that. In tribute to Commodore Longfellow, who was known as the "amiable whale," the mascot for the education packet and the video is Longfellow, a blue whale. WHALE is an acronym for Water Habits Are Learned Early.



PRESENTING LONGFELLOW'S WHALE TALES

The American Red Cross Longfellow's WHALE Tales lessons teach children about water safety in different environments, such as pools, waterparks, oceans, lakes and rivers. It teaches them about water hazards around the home and neighborhood and covers sun safety, boating safety and much more. The program features fun, animated videos; colorful posters; stickers; activity worksheets; illustrated, color fact sheets; and three types of completion certificates.

There are 11 lessons that cover specific safety topics. Each topic is presented as a rhyme that will help students remember the water safety rule being taught. The safety topics are:

- Swim as a Pair Near a Lifeguard's Chair
- Be Cool, Follow the Rules
- Look Before You Leap

- Think So You Don't Sink
- Reach or Throw, Don't Go
- Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket
- Think Twice Before Going Near Cold Water or Ice
- Know About Boating Before You Go Floating
- Too Much Sun Is No Fun
- In Your House and in Your Yard, Watch for Water, Be on Guard
- Wave, Tide or Ride, Follow the Guide

Leaders

The *Longfellow's WHALE Tales K–6 Educational Packet* has been developed for use by elementary school teachers and youth leaders. No prior swimming experience or water safety training is necessary for an individual to lead the activities in this packet. Leaders should be registered in the American Red Cross Learning Center. To register, go to https://classes.redcross.org.

Design and Length

Longfellow's WHALE Tales is designed to be flexible to meet the needs of the students. A leader can choose any of the safety topics when making a presentation. A leader can also choose the activity sheets for that lesson. There is no set format and no minimum or maximum amount of time to present the information.

Presentation Reporting

Leaders should report their teaching activity at redcross.org/courserecords. To report Longfellow's WHALE Tales courses, select the option to enter records for courses without fees.

Certificates

Leaders should photocopy or print certificates for each student attending a presentation. Customizable certificates for leaders to use are found on Instructor's Corner.

LONGFELLOW'S WHALE TALES K–6 EDUCATIONAL PACKET DESIGN

Before you conduct a presentation, familiarize yourself with the components of the American Red Cross *Longfellow's WHALE Tales K–6 Educational Packet*. The educational packet can be purchased from shopstaywell.com or RedCrossStore.org. The following components are included in the *Longfellow's WHALE Tales K–6 Educational Packet* or can be downloaded from Instructor's Corner:

- Lesson Plans. Lesson plans for 11 safety topics include key terms; learning objectives; materials, equipment and supplies lists; and a lesson format that facilitates instruction. Each lesson consists of an introduction, key points organized by topic, discussion questions designed to encourage student participation, fun classroom activities, suggested activity sheets and a lesson wrap-up.

- Fact Sheets. Colorful, illustrated fact sheets provide the leader with additional information. The fact sheets can be used to expand the lessons if desired. The fact sheets can be given out as student handouts if desired.
- Activity Sheets. Reproducible activity sheets support the safety topics. Leaders can choose activity sheets best suited for their students' needs. Activity sheets can be used as an activity in the classroom or the students can take the sheets home as an assignment.
- Posters. Printed color posters are included in the *Longfellow's WHALE Tales K–6 Educational Packet*. The dramatic 17-by-22-inch posters provide visual support and reinforcement for each of the 11 safety topics. The images on the posters are also provided electronically on Instructor's Corner and can be projected on a screen in the classroom.

Longfellow's WHALE Tales DVD

The *Longfellow's WHALE Tales* DVD contains video segments for nine of the safety topics. The videos feature Longfellow the whale, an animated blue whale who guides students through the safety topics. Each video shows children in various scenarios who must make a safe choice. The following video segments are included on the DVD or can be streamed from Instructor's Corner:

- Swim as a Pair Near a Lifeguard's Chair
- Be Cool, Follow the Rules
- Look Before You Leap
- Reach or Throw, Don't Go
- Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket
- Think So You Don't Sink
- Too Much Sun Is No Fun
- In Your House and in Your Yard, Watch for Water, Be on Guard
- Wave, Tide or Ride, Follow the Guide

Longfellow's WHALE Tales Stickers

Colorful stickers support the safety topics in each lesson. The stickers can be used for safety fairs or other events to promote water safety, and they can be used as recognition awards. Stickers can be purchased from shopstaywell.com or RedCrossStore.org.

LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

Your responsibilities when conducting a Longfellow's WHALE Tales presentation are to:

- Ensure that students know that they should consult with you if they have concerns about their physical ability to perform or participate in any of the activities.
- Ensure that the classroom area is free of hazards.
- Be familiar with the presentation materials and equipment and know how to use them effectively.

- Be familiar with the local Red Cross chapter services and be able to provide students with information on training and volunteer opportunities with the Red Cross.
- Create a nonthreatening environment that encourages students to achieve the learning objectives.
- Adapt your teaching approach to match the experience and abilities of the students.
- Be prepared to answer students' questions or know where to find the answers.
- Provide a positive example by showing healthy habits when interacting with students.
- Sign the Leader Agreement and Code of Conduct. The Leader agreement and Code of Conduct is signed by both the leader and a Red Cross representative. The general purpose of this agreement is to provide both parties with an outline of the mutual expectations, rights and responsibilities of the leader and the Red Cross. The Leader Agreement and Code of Conduct is available on Instructor's Corner (instructorscorner.org/n/instructor-tools/administrative-tools) along with instructions for signing and submitting the document.
- Report any presentations conducted at redcross.org/courserecords.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To learn about the history, mission and structure of the American Red Cross and to learn more about Red Cross Swimming and Water Safety, Lifeguarding, First Aid, CPR and AED courses, go to www.redcross.org.