



Longfellow's WHALE Tales

Water Habits Are Learned Early

Lesson 7

Think So You Don't Sink

ABOUT THIS LESSON

This lesson provides basic information about how participants can help themselves if they are starting to have trouble in the water or if a water emergency occurs. This includes the importance of staying calm as well as specific actions to take based on the situation. If you will be teaching Lesson 8, Reach or Throw, Don't Go, you should first cover the material in this lesson.

GUIDANCE FOR THE LEADER

Please refer to the section How to Lead Longfellow's WHALE Tales for full guidance on how to teach this lesson and the Longfellow's WHALE Tales Water Safety for Children program. Leaders are encouraged to follow the lesson plan provided. However, use of the course presentation and videos is optional. You should also adapt the language and activities as needed based on the age and learning level of participants, the teaching setting, local references and available time. In some cases, options are offered for activities based on these factors.

KEY TERMS

- **Current:** Continuous movement of water in one direction
- **Drowning:** An emergency that happens when a person's nose and mouth are covered by water and they are not able to breathe; this can cause a person to become injured or die
- **Hypothermia:** When the body gets so cold it loses heat faster than it can get warm again
- **Panic:** Sudden and overwhelming fear that can make a person unable to help themselves or others
- **Rapids:** A fast flowing section of a river where the water can have strong, uneven currents
- **Treading water:** A way to stay upright and at the surface of the water using certain arm and leg movements
- **Water emergency:** An emergency in the water in which a person is having trouble staying afloat or is drowning
- **Water trouble:** A water emergency when a person isn't drowning, but they are in danger of drowning if something doesn't change in the situation to help them return to safety

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

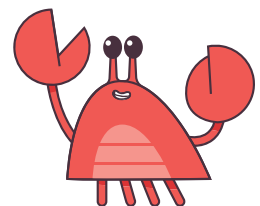
After completing this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Understand how water emergencies happen.
- Explain ways to help oneself if having trouble in the water by staying calm and being water smart.
- Know how to handle exhaustion or cramps while swimming and how to prevent these situations from happening.
- Explain how to escape if caught in an ocean or river current and how to prevent these situations from happening.
- Know what to do if suddenly immersed in water over one's head.
- Recognize the added dangers of being immersed in cold water, including hypothermia.
- Know how to spot the signs of hypothermia and how to prevent it from happening.
- Know basic steps to take in a boating emergency.
- Understand when to use the HELP and huddle positions to stay warmer in a cold-water emergency and demonstrate how to do these positions.

MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES


Review the lesson plan prior to leading it to determine which items you'll need for the options you choose. Materials may include:

- Course Presentation 7: Think So You Don't Sink
- Poster: Think So You Don't Sink
- Longfellow's WHALE Tales animated video: Think So You Don't Sink
- Longfellow's WHALE Tales live action video: Hypo-what?
- Monitor or computer, projector and screen (for use with downloadable course presentation and videos)
- Paper and writing utensils for participants (pencils/pens, crayons or markers)
- Dry erase board and marker or other method to record answers for all to see (newsprint and marker, chalkboard and chalk, etc.)
- Printable Activity Cards: Water Safety Charades
- Sticker badges (one for each participant)
- Coloring Sheet: Think So You Don't Sink (one for each participant)
- Activity Sheet 7-1 (one for each Level 1 participant)
- Activity Sheet 7-2 (one for each Level 2 participant)
- Caregiver Letter 7-1 (one for each participant)
- List of swim lesson locations, if available (one for each participant)



TOPIC: INTRODUCTION

Time: 1 to 5 minutes, depending on whether optional video is used

 **Leader's Note:** If needed, start by introducing yourself to participants and allow them to introduce themselves.

SHARE AND TELL DISCUSSION



LEVEL




MATERIALS

Course Presentation 7, Slide 1

■ Tell participants:

- In our first water safety lesson, we talked about how being water smart means knowing safer ways to act in, on and around the water.
- We also talked about how even when you are careful, accidents and emergencies can still happen.
- Having trouble in the water or being in danger of drowning can happen to someone who doesn't know how to swim very well. But these situations can also happen to a strong swimmer. They could happen to an adult. They could even happen to you.
- In this lesson, we are going to focus on how to help yourself if you are having trouble in the water so you can take action to return to safety before things turn into a bigger water emergency.
- In addition to the water smart things we've been learning in Longfellow's WHALE Tales, one of the best things you can do to help yourself be safer in the water is to learn to swim if you haven't already.
- During swim lessons, you'll practice important skills like floating on your back and treading water. These skills can help you if you ever have a water emergency.

 **Leader's Note:** If information is available, and you haven't shared it previously, share a list of American Red Cross Learn-to-Swim courses in your area at the end of the lesson.

VIDEO



LEVEL




MATERIALS NEEDED

Course Presentation 7, Slide 2

■ Tell participants: We are going to watch a short video.

■ Play animated video: Think So You Don't Sink

 **Leader's Note:** After watching the video, pose the following questions and allow a few participants to provide answers. If desired, and as appropriate for your participants and setting, you can create a Notice and Wonder chart for all to see by making a column for each and writing down what the participants say. You can refer to this throughout the lesson as you cover topics where relevant.

■ Ask participants:

- Who can tell me one thing they noticed when watching the video?
 - Allow two or three participants to answer.
- Who can tell me one thing they are wondering after watching the video?
 - Allow two or three participants to answer.

■ Tell participants: As we go through this lesson and we learn more about this topic, think about what you saw in the video to help you in our discussions and activities.

TOPIC: REVIEW OF WATER SMARTS—OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Time: 10 minutes



Leader's Note: If time allows and it has been a while since you taught Lesson 1: Do Your Part, Be Water Smart, or if you think your participants would benefit from a review of key concepts, conduct one of the versions of this activity below:

- Option A: Water Safety Fix It (Brain Game—Level 1)
- Option B: Water Safety Charades (Get Up and Move—Level 2)

Option A: Water Safety Fix It

BRAIN GAME



LEVEL



MATERIALS

Course Presentation 7,
Slides 3–6



Leader's Note: This activity is based on images in the course presentation. If you will not be using the course presentation, you can pre-print the related slides for use with this activity.

- **Tell participants:** We are going to do a review activity to see what you remember about some important ways to be water smart. It's called: Water Safety Fix It!
- **Set up activity:** Break participants into groups of two or three. Use the course presentation to display the scenes that go with this activity.
- **Tell participants:** I'm going to show you two pictures. Each picture will have one or more things that are missing from the scene or that were drawn incorrectly. Your job is to think about what should be added or fixed in the scene so it's illustrating an important water safety rule.



Leader's Note: Show Scene 1: Water Safety Fix It (Slide 3). Provide prompts as needed to help participants give the answers below, then show the how Scene 1 has been fixed (Slide 4).

- **Ask participants:** What's missing in scene one and how can we fix it?
 - *Answers should include:*
 - *The kid doesn't have a water buddy. We can add one more kid so no one is swimming alone.*
 - *The scene is missing a lifeguard and other capable adult water watcher. We can add a lifeguard to the chair and a water watcher sitting nearby.*
- **Tell participants:** Great job! Everything looks much better now. You remember the important rule that you should always swim as a pair with a lifeguard or other capable adult water watcher there.



Leader's Note: Show Scene 2: Water Safety Fix It (Slide 5). Provide prompts as needed to help participants give the answers below, then show how Scene 2 has been fixed (Slide 6).

- **Ask participants:** What's missing or wrong in scene two and how can we fix it?
 - *Answer should include:*
 - *There is a no swimming sign. The kid on the dock should not be about to dive into the water.*
 - *Both kids are missing a water buddy; we can add two more kids so no one is on or around the water alone.*
 - *Capable adult water watchers are missing; they should be added.*
 - *The kid in the boat is missing a life jacket; they should put on a life jacket.*
- **Tell participants:** Great job! You fixed the scene by knowing you should always follow all rules you see or hear, like the no swimming sign. Rules are made for safety. You should also always wear a life jacket when boating. And there should always be supervision from capable adult water watchers when you are on or around the water.
- **Ask participants:** Does anyone have any questions about this activity?
 - *Answer any questions.*

Option B: Water Safety Charades

GET UP AND MOVE



LEVEL



MATERIALS

Printable Activity Cards: Water Safety Charades

Dry erase board and marker or similar

Timing device

- **Tell participants:** We are going to do a review activity to see what you remember about some important ways to be water smart. It's called Water Safety Charades.
- **Set up activity:** Break kids into four equal teams and assign each team one of the phrases included on the printable activity cards found at the end of this lesson. Tell the team not to share what's written on their card with any other group.



Leader's Note: As an alternative to charades, you can use the dry erase board and play with Pictionary™ rules.

- **Tell participants:**
 - Each group will be given 2 minutes for members of the group to act out the phrase they have been given.
 - As the other participants guess correct words in the phrase, the team who is performing can write them for all to see.
 - After the other participants guess the phrase or time is up, the team should share the rule.
- **Tell participants (after activity is complete):** Great job everyone. Knowing these ways to be water smart can help you avoid danger and help make sure being in, on and around the water stays fun.
- **Ask participants:** Does anyone have any questions about this activity?
 - *Answer any questions.*

TOPIC: HOW WATER EMERGENCIES HAPPEN AND WHY TO STAY CALM

Time: 3 minutes

SHARE AND TELL DISCUSSION



LEVEL



MATERIALS

Dry erase board and marker or similar



Leader's Note: Ask participants the following discussion questions. As they give answers, write them for all to see if desired. If needed, offer prompts to encourage answers such as those included on the list below.

- **Ask participants:** Can you think of some reasons that a person might start to have trouble in the water or be in danger of drowning when in the water?
 - *Answers will vary but should include the following:*
 - *If they end up in water over their head and can't swim*
 - *If they become too tired or too cold*
 - *If they panic*
 - *If they get a cramp*
 - *If they become ill suddenly*
 - *If they get caught in an ocean or river current*
 - *If they are in a boat that tips over*
 - *If they get pushed in the water or fall in the water and don't know how to swim or if they get hurt*
- **Ask participants:** Now imagine you are in one of these situations yourself. Let's pretend you're playing and swimming when you realize you've ended up in water that is deeper than you thought. How might you feel?
 - *Allow a few participants to answer. Responses will vary.*
- **Tell participants:**
 - If you find yourself in water that's deeper than you realized, you accidentally fall into the water or if you start to struggle for another reason, it can make you feel very scared or panicked.
 - But feeling scared can make it hard to think so you don't sink!
 - In order to best help yourself in a water emergency situation, it's important to try to first turn any sense of panic back into calm so you can take the right action next.
 - The things we've been learning in Longfellow's WHALE Tales can help you do this. Especially:
 - We learned to swim as a pair with a lifeguard and other water watchers there. When you do this, you'll be able to stay calmer knowing:
 - There are capable adults watching the swim scene, including someone whose job it is to help you out of trouble.
 - Your buddy is there to help alert the lifeguard or another water watcher that you need assistance.

- We also learned the phrase “don’t just pack it, wear your life jacket.” When you wear a life jacket when boating, or if you do not yet know how to swim, you can stay calmer knowing it will help you stay afloat while waiting for assistance to arrive.
- Knowing how to swim, including how to float and tread water, can also help you stay calmer until help arrives.

TOPIC: EXHAUSTION AND LEG CRAMPS

Time: 3 minutes

SHARE AND TELL DISCUSSION



LEVEL



MATERIALS

None

■ Tell participants:

- For the next part of our lesson, we’re going to talk about a few specific situations. The first is what to do if you are suddenly too tired to swim or if you get a painful cramp in your legs or side and can’t swim.
- If this happens, first stay calm! Then, use your water smarts. To help yourself, you can:
 - Roll over onto your back and float if you know how or try treading water. These moves use less energy than trying to swim if you are too tired or have a bad cramp.
 - Grab onto a safety line or other floating object if there is one nearby that you can reach and use it to help you stay afloat or get back to dry land.
 - For a leg cramp, you can also:
 - Stop the kicking action that caused the cramp and try to massage your muscle to make the cramp go away if you can.
 - Try swimming to shore using a different kick.
- If you need more help to get back to safety, you can also try to shout out to get the attention of the lifeguard or water watcher, or get your buddy’s attention so they can call for help for you.

■ Ask participants: Does anyone have a good idea to share about how you could prevent yourself from getting too exhausted in the first place, before you start having a water emergency?

- *Answers should include things like:*
 - *Take breaks out of the water or in the shallow water when you or your water buddy need one.*
 - *At a waterfront, stay close to shore—don’t swim too far out.*
 - *Think about the conditions where you are swimming. If the water is moving a lot, it will make you feel tired faster.*

■ Tell participants: Great thinking! When you know your limits, it can help keep you safer in the water.

TOPIC: ESCAPING AN OCEAN CURRENT

Time: 8 minutes

SHARE AND TELL DISCUSSION



LEVEL



MATERIALS

None

■ Tell participants:

- Now let's talk about what to do if you get caught in a strong current when swimming in the ocean.
- A current is water that is moving in a set path. If it's strong enough or moving fast enough, it can carry you along with it where you don't want to go.
- If that happens, the first thing to remember is to stay calm. This will help you think more clearly so you can escape to safety back on dry land.



Leader's Note: For the next section of the lesson, there are two options for how participants are taught. Choose the one that works best for your participants learning level and resources:

- Option A: Talking About Ocean Currents (Share and Tell Discussion)
- Option B: Plot Your Escape (Brain Game—Level 2)

Option A: Talking About Ocean Currents

SHARE AND TELL DISCUSSION



LEVEL



MATERIALS

Course Presentation 7, Slides 7–8



Leader's Note: As you show participants the images on the course presentation slides, point out the arrows that show the direction of the current and other labels to help participants understand the discussion points. If you are not using the course presentation, you can pre-print the related slides to show during the lesson, or use hand gestures or objects in your lesson setting to illustrate the concepts of moving parallel to shore versus away from shore.

■ Tell participants:

- Some ocean currents move along the shore. These are called longshore currents. If you get caught in a current like this, it can carry you down the beach further away from where you started than you would like to go.
- If this happens to you:
 - Stay calm.
 - Swim or move toward the shore to get out of the current and back to land.
 - Once you are on land, you can walk back to where you want to be.
 - If you are too tired to swim out of the current or are starting to struggle, try to wave your arms and call for help. Have your buddy call for help, too. Float on your back until help arrives.

- A second kind of ocean current is one that moves out quickly away from shore and can pull people away from shore with it. These are called rip currents. If you get caught in a current like this, you will not be able to swim back to shore unless you get out of the current first.
- To get out of a current that is pulling you into deeper water, away from the shore, stay calm and then:
 - Face toward shore and try to wave your hands and call for help. If your buddy is near enough to hear you, have your buddy call for help, too.
 - Swim to your left or right side, along the beach. Once you're free from the current, you can then swim with the waves back toward shore.
 - If you still can't escape the current or are getting tired, put your feet up and float on your back until help arrives.
- To best prevent getting caught in a current, know what the conditions are before you go in the water. Look for warning signs or flags that give information about any currents that may be present at a given time. You can also ask the lifeguard on duty if there are strong currents in the area.
- It's also important to know your limits, especially in the ocean. Don't go in water that is more than waist deep. And if it starts to get too rough, get out.

Option B: Plot Your Escape

BRAIN GAME



LEVEL




MATERIALS

Course Presentation 7,
Slides 7–8

Activity Sheet 7-2

Writing utensils

 **Leader's Note:** To do this Brain Game, you'll need to distribute copies of Activity Sheet 7-2. If you don't use the activity sheet here to teach about escaping an ocean current, you can give to participants as a take-home activity.

- **Tell participants:** We are going to play a game called Plot Your Escape to learn more about ocean currents.
- **Set up activity:** Display course presentation slide 7 and distribute Activity Sheet 7-2 along with writing utensils. Have participants work alone or divide them into small groups of two or three people. Allow participants to try to plot out their escape by answering the questions on the activity sheet in each scenario, then have one or more participants share their answers.
- **Tell participants:**
 - After we talk about each ocean current type, I want you to think about how you might be able to escape the current if you got caught in one.
 - As you make your plan, remember: The key word is escape! If you are stuck in a current, you want to get out of the current first so you can then get back to shore!

■ **Say to participants:**

- Here's the first scenario. You are playing in the ocean with your water buddy, having a great time when your buddy says, "Um, why don't I see our stuff on the beach anymore?" As you glance around, you see that you have moved far away from where you started and soon you will be beyond the lifeguarded swim area and where your water watcher can see you easily. You are caught in a longshore current! It's time to plot your escape!
- First answer the questions at the top of the activity sheet that apply to any ocean current. Then, look at the first image. It shows a longshore current. Like its name says, a longshore current moves along the shore and can carry a swimmer farther down the beach than they would like to go.
- Use your activity sheet to plot out a plan for what you'll do!

■ **Ask participants:** Who would like to share their answers with the group?

- *Allow a few participants to share as time allows. If no participant has the right answer, provide prompts as needed. Answers should include:*
 - *Question 1: I will stay calm.*
 - *Question 2: If you can't escape the current or are too tired, you should wave your arms and call for help (or have your water buddy call for help). You can also float on your back until help arrives.*
 - *Question 3: Arrows should be drawn to show that you should swim toward the shore to get out of the current.*
 - *Question 4: Arrows should be drawn to show that to return to where you started, you should walk back along the shore.*

■ **Say to participants as you show slide 8:**

- Here's your next scenario. You and your buddy are playing catch in the water, when you notice the water is getting deeper and your buddy looks further away than before. You try to move back toward shore, but don't seem to be getting any closer. In fact, the opposite is happening and now the water is practically over your head. You're caught in a rip current! It's time to plot your escape!
- Look at the second image on your activity sheet. It shows a rip current, which is a current that moves quickly away from the shore and can pull people far away from the shore with it. Swimmers who are caught in a rip current cannot make any progress if they try to swim back to shore.
- Use your activity sheet to plot out a plan for what you'll do!

■ **Ask participants:** Who would like to share their answers with the group?

- *Allow a few participants to share as time allows. If no participant has the right answer, provide prompts as needed. Answers should include:*
 - *Question 5: Arrows should be drawn to show that a person should swim to either side, in the same direction as the shore, until they are out of the current.*
 - *Question 6: Arrows should be drawn to show that a person should next swim toward the shore with the waves.*

■ **Tell participants:**

- To prevent getting caught in a current, stop and think. Know what the conditions are before you go in the water. Look for warning signs or flags that give information about any currents that may be nearby. You can also ask the lifeguard on duty if there are strong currents that day.
- It's also important to know your limits, especially in the ocean. Unless you are a very strong swimmer with experience in the ocean, don't go in water that is more than waist deep. And if it starts to get too rough, get out.

TOPIC: ESCAPING A RIVER CURRENT

Time: 2 minutes

SHARE AND TELL DISCUSSION



LEVEL



MATERIALS

Course Presentation 7,
Slide 9

■ **Tell participants:**

- If you are swimming in a river or stream, you also need to be aware of the current, which will always be moving downstream.
- Sometimes the current will be gentle and moving in a steady flow. But currents can also move very fast and create rapids when they are affected by things like rocks and debris under the surface, the depth of the water and other things in the environment.
- You should always wear a life jacket when swimming in a river even if you are a very strong swimmer.
- If you get caught in a fast downstream current, the actions you take will be a little bit different than when you are caught in an ocean current. These actions will help you keep your head above water and help keep you from getting injured or caught up in objects under the water.
- First, stay calm. Then:
 - Roll over onto your back and position your body so you are moving downstream feetfirst.
 - Use your arms to do a backwards paddle to try to steer away from the main current.
 - When you are out of the fast-moving water, swim or wade straight toward the shore.
- Now let's talk prevention! Because rivers are always flowing downstream, they can be especially tricky to swim in.
- You should stop and think before you enter any water. Only swim in designated swimming areas, where the water is likely to be moving at a calmer, slower rate and where there are likely fewer underwater hazards.
- Whether boating or swimming in a river, always wear a life jacket! A life jacket may not keep you safe from getting caught in a current, but it will help keep your head above water if this happens.
- Keep in mind, even shallow water can sweep you off your feet in a river. Just 6 inches is deep enough for fast-moving water to be able to knock over an adult. It could take even less water to knock over a small child.

TOPIC: SUDDEN IMMERSION

Time: 2 minutes

SHARE AND TELL DISCUSSION



LEVEL



MATERIALS

Poster: Think So You Don't Sink

OR

Course Presentation 7, Slide 10

Dry erase board and marker

■ Tell participants:

- Now we are going to talk about what to do if you fall into water accidentally or suddenly find yourself in water that is too deep. This is called sudden immersion.
- Whether you are able to swim or not, ending up in the water without expecting it can be a bad surprise.

■ Ask participants: Who can think of a reason why you might end up in the water by accident?

- *Answers may vary but should include:*
 - *Slipping and falling in (from side of pool or a dock for example)*
 - *Getting pushed in the water*
 - *Being in a boat that tips over*



Leader's Note: As participants give answers to the scenario below, write them for all to see if desired. If needed, offer prompts to encourage answers similar to those below.

■ Say to participants: Let's look at the scene shown on the poster. Here's the story: Two friends, Mateo and Owen, are on a pier when Mateo catches a frog as it hops by. They want a photo, but as Owen steps back to get a good shot, he gets too close to the edge and falls into the water. Owen comes up to the surface coughing and sputtering after swallowing some water. What could Owen do?

- *Answers may vary but could include:*
 - *Stay calm*
 - *Start floating or treading water*
 - *Try to stand up if it's shallow enough*
 - *Grab onto the pier*
 - *Calmly swim to shallow water*
 - *Wave and call for help*

■ Tell participants: If this happened to you, the exact action you should take may depend on where you fall into the water and what skills you have, but in any situation where you are suddenly in the water, you should stay calm and then try one or more of these actions:

- If you are unable to stand, try to float on your back or tread water to save energy.
- Look for something that you can grab a hold of to help you stay afloat.
- Swim back toward shallow water if you are close to land and you are able to swim.
- If you are not able to get out of the water or you are not able to stay afloat, wave your arms and call for help. Have your buddy call for help, too.

TOPIC: HYPOTHERMIA

Time: 5 minutes



Leader's Note: For the next section of the lesson, there are two options for how participants are taught. Choose the one that works best for your setting, participant learning level and resources:

- Option A: Hypo-what? What to Know About Hypothermia (Video)
- Option B: Let's Talk About Hypothermia (Share and Tell Discussion and Get Up and Move)

Option A: Hypo-what? What to Know About Hypothermia

VIDEO



LEVEL



MATERIALS

Course Presentation 7,
Slide 11

- **Tell participants:** We are going to watch a short video to learn about our next topic: hypothermia.
- **Play live action video:** Hypo-what?
- **Tell participants:**
 - It's important to remember that hypothermia can happen anytime a person is cold and can't warm up—even in the summer.
 - In real life, if you were feeling very cold, you'd probably shiver a lot and even have a hard time breathing.
 - If this happens to you or a friend and you don't have a way to warm up, hypothermia could happen next.
 - When someone gets hypothermia, they may:
 - Just stare off into the distance.
 - Seem like they don't care what is happening around them.
 - Lose consciousness or pass out.
- If a person has any of these signs, they need help to get warmed up! If you have dry clothes or warm blankets around, you should give them to the person. You should also get the attention of a capable adult and call 9-1-1 for assistance.
- **Ask participants:** Does anyone have any questions about what we just watched or talked about?
 - *Answer any questions.*

Option B: Let's Talk About Hypothermia

What Is Hypothermia?

SHARE AND TELL DISCUSSION



LEVEL



MATERIALS

None

■ Tell participants:

- If the water you are swimming in or you fall into happens to be very cold, there are other dangers to know about.
- Cold water doesn't just feel more shocking to fall into. It can also make it harder to stay calm and can cause your body temperature to drop very quickly.

■ Ask participants: Has anyone ever heard the word hypothermia before? What do you think it means?

- *Allow one or two participants to answer if they think they know what hypothermia means.*

■ Tell participants:

- Hypothermia is an emergency that happens when your body gets so cold it loses heat faster than it can warm up. This can happen if you fall into very cold water. But it can also happen if you choose to go into cold water to swim or play—even in the summer. Or if you are wet and it's a windy day that's cool enough to make you shiver.
- If you don't get help and get warm, hypothermia starts and your heart and other organs eventually cannot work as they are supposed to. This is very dangerous and can even be life-threatening.
- If you fall into water that's very cold, you'll want to use your water smarts to stay calm and keep as warm as you can until you can get help.

GET UP AND MOVE



LEVEL



MATERIALS

None

■ Tell participants: We're going to do an activity to learn a little more about how you can tell when a person is too cold and may be in danger of getting hypothermia.

■ Set up activity: Have participants stand up where they are.

■ Tell participants:

- Remember the scenario we just talked about. Two friends were on a pier when one accidentally stepped backward off the pier while taking a picture of the frog? This time, imagine it's you who was trying to take the photo and it's a cold, cloudy day. It might even have snowed recently. So, when you fall into the water, it feels like you fell into an ice bath! You're able to get out, but you're soaked!
- Are you shivering yet? Show me how cold you feel!
 - *Allow participants to act out how cold they are. There should be lots of shivering and chattering teeth!*

■ Tell participants:

- That was great acting. Now go ahead and sit back down. You can pretend you are wrapped up in a warm blanket while we do the rest of the lesson!

SHARE AND TELL DISCUSSION



LEVEL



MATERIALS

None

■ Tell participants:

- In real life, if you fell into very cold water, you'd shiver a lot and probably have a hard time breathing. This is a normal response that's a sign that you are very cold.
- If you or a friend are shivering a lot and don't have a way to warm up, hypothermia could happen next.
- When someone gets hypothermia, they may:
 - Just stare off into the distance.
 - Seem like they don't care what is happening around them.
 - Lose consciousness or pass out.
- If a person has any of these signs, they need help quickly to get warmed up! You should get the attention of a capable adult and call 9-1-1 for assistance.

Protecting Yourself from Hypothermia

SHARE AND TELL DISCUSSION



LEVEL



MATERIALS

None

■ Tell participants:

- If you know you'll be doing activities in or near cold water, such as fishing or boating, you can take steps to protect yourself from being too cold.
 - Wear layers of insulated clothing that keep you warm, even when you are wet.
 - Wear a hat. Body heat is quickly lost through the head.
 - Wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket. If you fall in, a life jacket will help conserve body heat and help you keep your head out of water.
- Being water smart also means keeping an eye out for signs that you are getting too cold, even if it's in the middle of summer.
- Preventing hypothermia when you are swimming isn't hard. If you are starting to feel very cold and are shivering a lot, it's time to get out of the water as quickly as you can.
 - If you are swimming or playing in the water, return to shore and grab a towel to warm yourself up.
 - If it's your friend who is getting too cold while swimming, be a good water buddy and suggest you take a break from the water and go do other activities for a while.

TOPIC: BOATING EMERGENCIES

Time: 7 minutes

SHARE AND TELL DISCUSSION



LEVEL



MATERIALS

None

■ Tell participants:

- For our last topic in this lesson, we are going to talk about what to do if you are in a boat that tips over, including if this happens in cold water.
- The first thing is to stay calm! Remember, if you are wearing a life jacket (as you should if you are in a boat), it will help you float, so you shouldn't panic. The life jacket will also help keep you warmer if the water is cold.
- If you are able to get back into the boat, do that, even if it is filled with water.
- If you can't get back in the boat, just stay with it and hold onto the boat to help you stay afloat.
- You should not try to swim to shore unless you are very close to land and know how to swim. Boats are bigger than people and rescuers can find boats easier than people in the water. So you should stay with the boat.

- ### ■ Ask participants:
- Can anyone guess what you should do if you are in a boat that overturns into very cold water? Remember: We just said that if a boat flips and you can't get back in, you should grab onto it to help you float. If the water is very cold, can you think of another way you might be able to use the boat to help?

- *Answer: Climb on top of the boat*

■ Tell participants:

- If it's possible, you can try to climb on top of the boat in order to get out of the cold water.
- While you are waiting to be rescued:
 - Keep all of your clothes on. Even though they may feel wet and cold, they will still help keep your body warmer.
- If you can't get out of the water:
 - Do your best to keep your head out of the water. Your life jacket will help you do that.
 - Get into the HELP position. We'll learn that next.
 - If you are with others, also use the Huddle position to stay warmer. We'll also learn that.



Leader's Note: If you used the video to teach hypothermia, your participants will already have learned about the HELP and Huddle positions. You can skip the next section that follows or use it to provide an opportunity for participants to practice the positions if desired.

HELP and Huddle Positions

GET UP AND MOVE



LEVEL



MATERIALS

Course Presentation 7,
Slides 12–13

- **Tell participants:** We are going to learn how to do the HELP and Huddle positions. For both of these, you'd need to be wearing a life jacket to do it in the water. But since we are on dry land, we can practice without one.
- **Set up activity:** Have everyone sit down in a circle or break the group into several small circles of four or five people. Ask for a volunteer to help demonstrate. Let participants know the positions are also illustrated on the course presentation slides (if you are showing the slides).
- **Tell participants (if they did not watch the Hypo-what? live action video):** When we talk about the HELP position, the letters in the word HELP mean something: Heat Escape Lessening Posture. This is a fancy way to say the HELP position can help keep you a little warmer if you can't get out of the water.
- **Tell participants:** Our volunteer will show you how to get in the HELP position first and then we will all try it.
- **Say to volunteer:**
 - Pull your knees up to your chest.
 - Keep your face forward. Hold your head up high. You want to keep your head out of the water.
 - Hold your upper arms at your sides.
 - Then fold your lower arms across your chest, as if hugging yourself.
- **Say to participants:** Now everyone try.



Leader's Note: If anyone is having trouble getting in the right position, provide guidance.

- **Tell participants:**
 - If you are with other people, you can also stay warmer if you do the Huddle position. It's very important to only try this in the water if you are all wearing life jackets so you don't accidentally pull each other under the water.
 - To do the Huddle position, put your arms over each other's shoulders so that you are side-by-side, making a circle, and get as close as possible.
- **Say to participants:** Try that now with the people in your group.

TOPIC: WRAP-UP

Time: 1 minute

SHARE AND TELL DISCUSSION



LEVEL



MATERIALS

Sticker badge

Coloring Sheet: Think So You Don't Sink

Activity Sheet 7-1 or 7-2

Caregiver Letter 7-1

List of swim lesson locations, if available

■ Tell participants:

- Great job today everyone. You learned a lot.
- In today's lesson, we all learned more about water smart ways to help yourself if you are starting to get into trouble in the water or are experiencing a water emergency.
- The activity sheets will help you remember some of the key points we learned.
- Never be afraid to ask questions if you aren't sure how to be safe. Lifeguards and other adult water watchers are there to help.

■ Ask participants: Does anyone have any questions about what we learned today?

- *Answer any questions.*

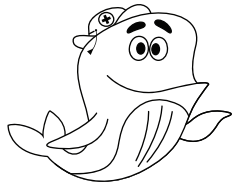
■ Tell participants:

- You've all earned a safety champion badge to add to your collection.
- If you have Internet access at home, you can also view and share videos about what we learned today by following the link on the activity sheet I am going to hand out.



Leader's Note: Hand out a sticker badge to each participant along with the coloring sheet, activity sheet (if not already used in the lesson), caregiver letter and the list of swim lesson locations if available.

If this is the final lesson you will be teaching in Longfellow's WHALE Tales, allow time to do the Closing Ceremony at the end of this lesson to celebrate what participants have learned. You can find this in the Closing Ceremony section of Longfellow's WHALE Tales.



ACTIVITY CARDS: WATER SAFETY CHARADES

Directions: Cut out each card and give one to each group to perform.



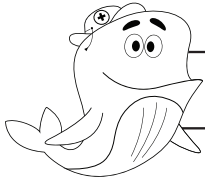
Swim as a Pair with
a Lifeguard There

Follow All Rules
You See or Hear

Don't Just Pack It,
Wear Your Life Jacket

Know Your Limits

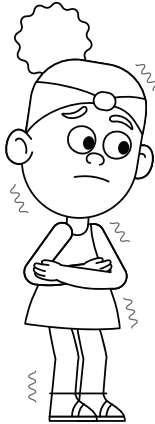
Name: _____



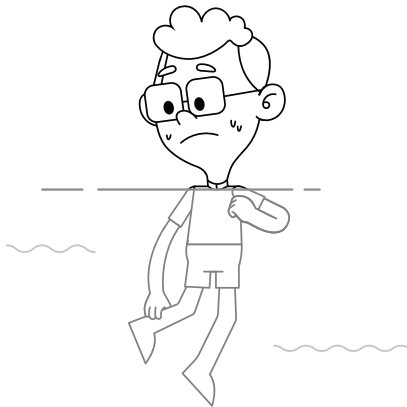
Think Fast!

Here are some pictures of trouble that could happen to you around water. Draw a line from each problem on the left to the self-help picture on the right that shows how to solve the problem.

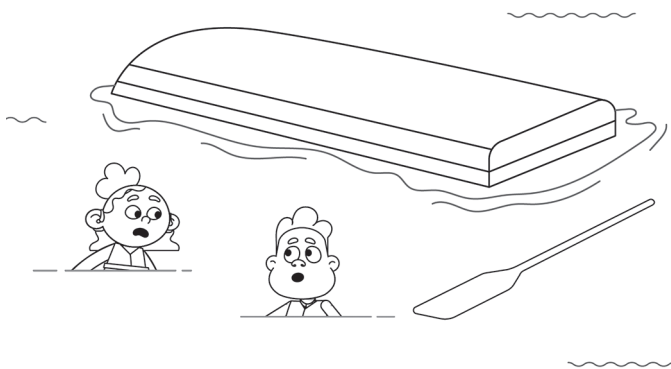
1.



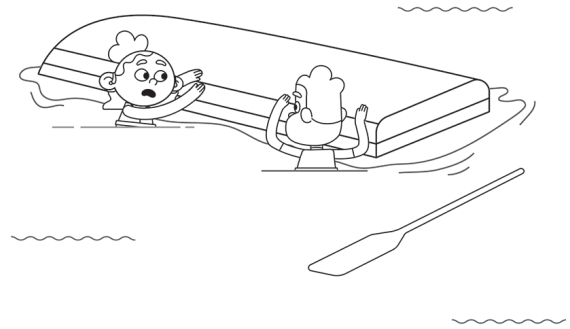
2.



3.



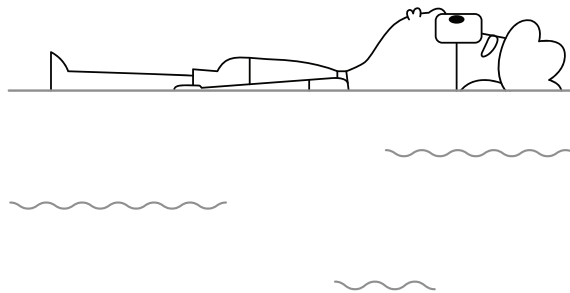
a.



b.

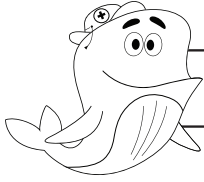


c.



See the answer key, plus learn more at [redcross.org/watersafetyforkids](https://www.redcross.org/watersafetyforkids).

Name: _____

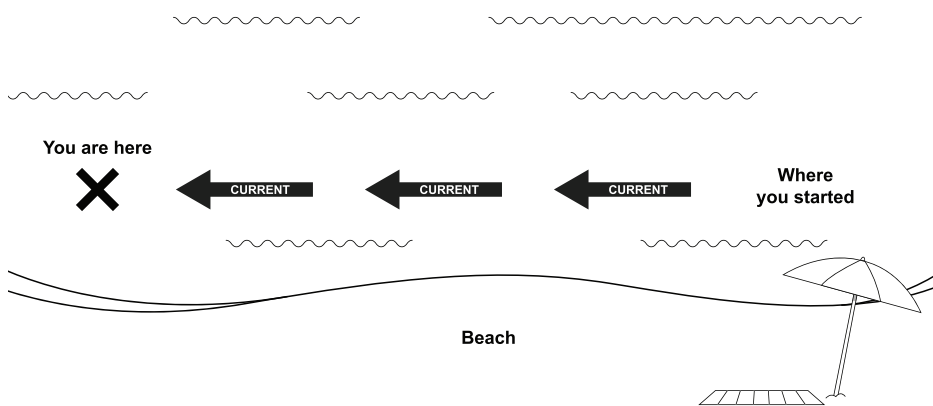


Plot Your Escape—Ocean Currents

Answer each question below using the images provided.

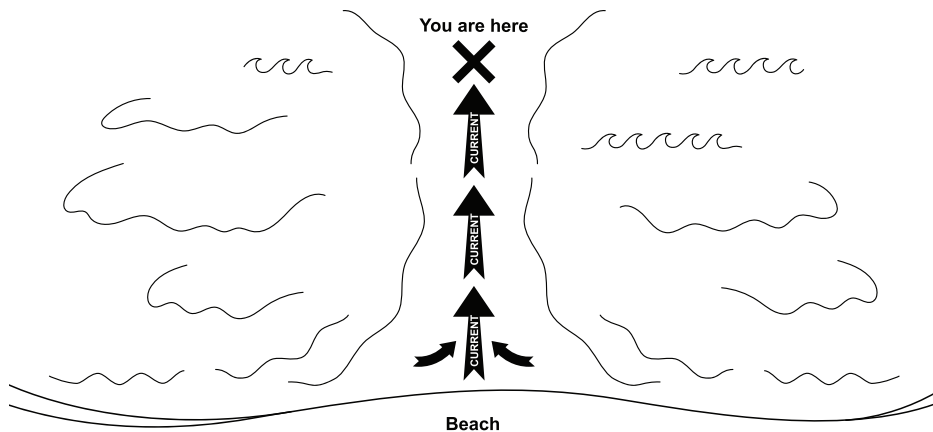
First things first! Finish each statement:

1. If I am ever caught in an ocean current of any kind, I will stay _____.
2. If I am tired or cannot escape the current I will _____.



My Plan to Escape a Longshore Current

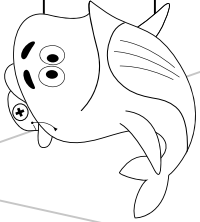
3. Draw an arrow from the spot that says “You are here,” on the image to show which way you should swim to escape the longshore current.
4. Draw arrows on the image to show what route you will take to get back to where you started.



My Plan to Escape a Rip Current

5. Draw an arrow from the spot that says “You are here,” on the image to show which direction you should swim in first to escape the rip current.
6. Draw arrows on the image to show what route you will take to get back to land.

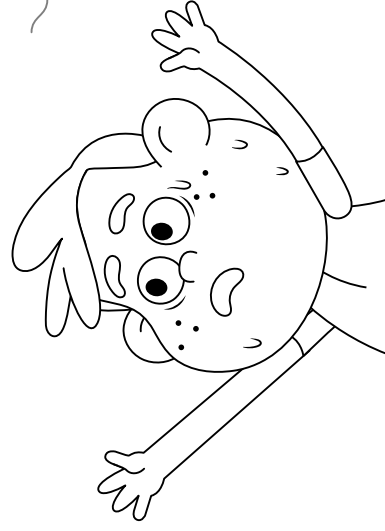
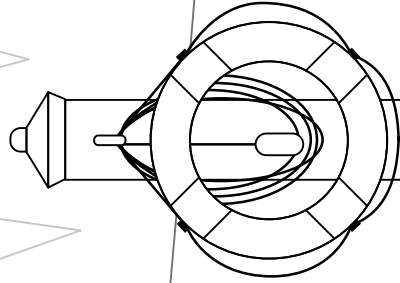
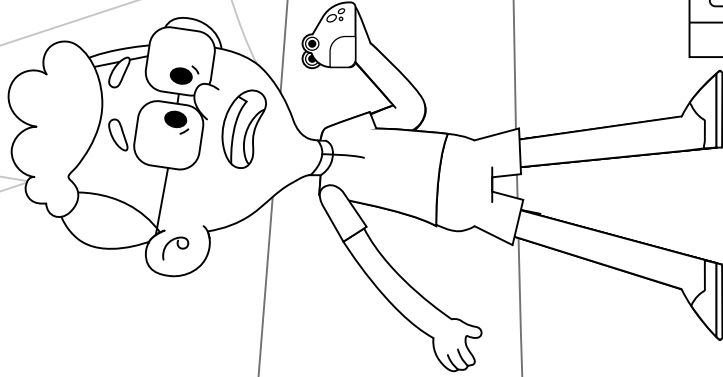
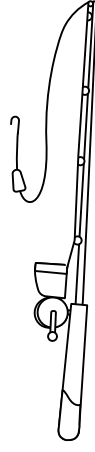
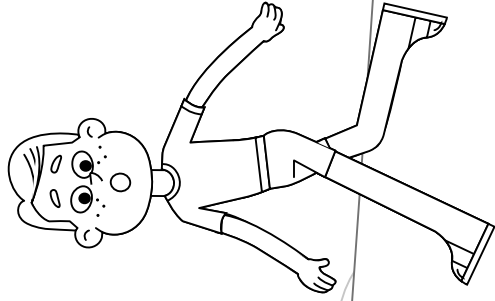
See the answer key, plus learn more at [redcross.org/watersafetyforkids](https://www.redcross.org/watersafetyforkids).



THINK SO YOU DON'T SINK



**American
Red Cross**



Name _____

In an emergency, stay calm and use your water smarts!



Longfellow's WHALE Tales

Water Habits Are Learned Early

Dear Parent/Caregiver,

You might be surprised to know that today's Longfellow's WHALE Tales water safety lesson included a topic more commonly associated with snow, cold and ice: hypothermia.

Hypothermia happens when the body loses heat and a person's body temperature drops faster than it can warm up. If a person experiencing hypothermia doesn't get help, their heart and other organs aren't able to work as they are supposed to. This is very dangerous and can even be life-threatening.

So why are we concerned about hypothermia in a program that has mainly been about swimming and warm weather water activities so far? There are a few reasons why.

- **Even in the summer**, many bodies of water such as lakes, rivers and oceans can stay at cooler temperatures. When your child spends a long period of time in water that is cooler than their body temperature (about 98.6° F), they can lose heat rapidly, leading to hypothermia.
- **And let's face it**, kids are known for their boundless energy for swimming and water play. It's not uncommon for a child to not realize when they are getting too cold and could use a break to warm up.
- **Add in wind and wet clothing** on a day that's more mild than hot, and body heat can quickly be lost, even when a child is out of the water.
- **If you like to boat or fish together**, you may also be in situations where an accident could lead to sudden immersion in cold water.

As your child's caregiver and water watcher, you can help prevent hypothermia by doing regular check-ins with your child during water activities, even in warm weather. Encourage them to take breaks and warm up when you see it's needed—ideally before shivering sets in!

We also encourage you to participate in water safety, first aid and CPR/AED training that includes hypothermia as a topic. That way you'll know how to best help if you notice someone is having signs of hypothermia. You can find a list of American Red Cross classes by visiting [redcross.org/watersafety](https://www.redcross.org/watersafety).

With warm regards,