

Reach or Throw, Don't Go

KEY TERMS

Buoyancy: The ability or tendency of an object or person to float; the upward force a fluid exerts on a body in it.

Drown: To be suffocated by immersion in water.

Drowning victim: A person showing behavior that includes struggling at the surface for 20 to 60 seconds before submerging.

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

Reaching assist: A method of helping someone out of the water by reaching out to that person with your hand, leg or an object.

Throwing assist: A method of helping someone out of the water by throwing a floating object with a line attached.

OBJECTIVES

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- Describe the behaviors (signs) of someone who is having trouble in the water.
- Describe the behaviors (signs) of a drowning person.
- Explain buoyancy.
- Explain how to help someone who is drowning or needs help in the water.
- Identify objects that would work for reaching assists.
- Identify objects that would be good for a throwing assist.
- Explain why only a lifeguard should go into the water to rescue someone.
- Demonstrate how to properly throw a floating object to someone who is drowning or needs help in the water.
- List some water rescue methods that are safe.
- Make a rescue throwing device (heaving jug).

MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

- Poster: Reach or Throw, Don't Go
- *Longfellow's WHALE Tales* video
- DVD player and monitor or computer with Internet access, projector and screen
- A variety of reaching items, such as a fishing pole, canoe paddle or boat oar, tree branch, foam noodle, rake, broom, baseball bat
- Items that float and could be used for a throwing assist, such as a life jacket, inner tube, beach ball, kickboard

- Ring buoy with 20 to 40 feet of lightweight line attached
- Lightweight, plastic traffic cone or sport training cone
- A rug or blanket
- Magazines
- Scissors (one for each student)
- Glue
- 1-gallon plastic jugs (one for each student; screw-on cap is preferred)
- Sand
- Lightweight rope (one 40-foot length for each student)
- Colorful, waterproof markers
- Crayons and pencils
- Fact Sheet 2: Longfellow's Safety and Rescue Equipment Information
- Student Handouts (one for each student):
 - Activity Sheet 5-1: Reach Out and Help
 - Activity Sheet 5-2: Find a Float
 - Activity Sheet 5-3: To the Rescue
 - Activity Sheet 5-4: Reach or Throw
 - Activity Sheet 5-5: Where There Is Ice, There Is Water
 - Activity Sheet 5-6: Make a Safety Post

Leader's Note

Display the poster, Reach or Throw, Don't Go, at the front of the classroom. Begin a discussion about the poster by pointing to each scene and asking students questions such as, "Is this a safe way to help someone in the water? Why or why not?" 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, "Reach or Throw, Don't Go," to support this topic.

TOPIC: INTRODUCTION

Key Points

- We can help someone who is having trouble in the water without getting wet.
- This is important because you need to stay safe. Going in the water to help someone who is having trouble could cause you to get in trouble too.
- When helping someone in the water it is always best to reach or throw, don't go.
- We are going to do some activities that will teach you how to help someone who is having trouble in the water while keeping yourself safe.

TOPIC: HELPING SOMEONE IN TROUBLE IN THE WATER

Key Points and Discussion

- Can you think of some reasons that people might get into trouble in the water and might drown?

Answer: Responses will vary but may include the following:

- *If they are in water over their head and can't swim*
 - *If they become too tired or too cold*
 - *If they panic*
-
- What does the poster show that you can do without getting in the water to help someone who is drowning or needs help in the water?

Answer: Reach or throw, don't go.

Signs of Trouble

Key Points

- A person can get into trouble in the water for a few reasons.
- The person may become tired or suddenly ill or may get a cramp.
- Someone who is in trouble in the water:
 - May be floating or treading water.
 - May be holding onto a safety line or other floating object.
 - May be trying to swim to safety but doesn't seem to be moving forward.
- A person in trouble in the water is usually able to call or wave for help.
- If the person does not get help, things may become worse:
 - His or her mouth may move closer to the water.
 - He or she may start to get scared.
 - He or she may be less able to stay afloat.
- If a swimmer in trouble does not receive help, he or she may drown.
- Some of the signs of a person who is drowning include:
 - The person is upright (vertical) in the water.
 - The person is unable to move forward or tread water.
 - The drowning person is pressing his or her arms down at the sides, trying to keep the head above water to breathe.
 - The person spends energy just trying to keep his or her head above water.
- A drowning person cannot call out for help.

Reaching Assist

Key Points and Discussion

- If someone is showing signs that he or she is having trouble in the water and is close to shore or close to the side of the pool, you should reach something out to the person.
- Do you see anything in this room that might be a good thing to use to reach out to someone in the water?

Answer: Responses should include the reaching items you have on hand such as:

- Fishing pole.
- Rake.
- Canoe paddle.
- Boat oar.
- Stick.
- Tree branch.
- Baseball bat.

Leader's Note: As students name the reaching items you have on hand, pick the item up and reach it out for a student to grab to demonstrate how a long pole can help you reach someone far away.

Leader's Note: Have students complete Activity Sheet 5-1: Reach Out and Help.

- If you want to assist someone in trouble in the water and you can reach the person with an object, you should:
 - Stay out of the water.
 - Brace yourself on a pool deck, pier surface or shoreline.
 - Reach out to the person using any object that extends your reach, such as a pole, an oar, a paddle, a tree branch, a belt.
 - When the person grasps the object, slowly and carefully pull him or her to safety.
 - Keep your body low and lean back to avoid being pulled into the water.

Activity

- Establish a small area in the classroom as a body of water. Lay the rug or blanket down to represent the body of water.
- Select a volunteer from the class. Have the volunteer lie or sit down in the “body of water” and pretend to have problems and not be able to make it back to shore.
- Lay the reaching rescue items you have on hand on the floor near the “water.” Items could include a boat paddle or oar, water ski, fishing rod, tree branch.
- Let each student demonstrate how they could safely rescue the person by reaching one of the reaching items out to them.
- Make sure students are bracing themselves, keeping their bodies low and leaning back to avoid being pulled into the water.
- If necessary, have students repeat their rescues demonstrating safe practices.
- Emphasize that a person who is in trouble in the water could be rescued using ordinary items.

Throwing Assist

Key Points and Discussion

- How can you help a person who is out of your reach?

Answer: Throw an object that floats to the person.

- What kind of objects could be thrown to someone in trouble?

Answer: Responses may include the following:

- Kickboard
- Empty picnic cooler
- Life jacket
- Ring buoy
- Water jug
- Basketball
- Beach ball
- Inner tube

Leader's Note: As students name throwing items, if you have the item on hand, pick it up and show it to students.

Leader's Note: Have students complete Activity Sheet 5-2: Find a Float.

Activity

- Establish a small area in the classroom as a body of water. Lay the rug or blanket down to represent the body of water.
- Select a volunteer from the class. Have the volunteer lie or sit down in the “body of water” and pretend to be a swimmer who cannot make it back to shore.
- Lay several potential “throwing” rescue items on the floor on the opposite side of the room from the “water.” Items could include an inner tube, a life jacket, a beach ball or basketball. (The items should be lightweight so they don’t cause injuries when thrown.)
- Let each student practice throwing a rescue item to the swimmer.
- Tell the swimmer he should try to catch the objects when they are thrown, but he should not step off the blanket to do so. The rescue item has to come all the way to him.
- Emphasize that a person who is in trouble could be rescued using ordinary items that are usually available at a picnic or beach setting.

Leader's Note: Have students complete Activity Sheet 5-3: To the Rescue.

TOPIC: SAFE WAYS TO HELP SOMEONE IN TROUBLE IN THE WATER

Key Points and Discussion

- What is the one thing you do not want to do if you see someone who is having trouble in the water?

Answer: *Jump in the water to help.*

- Who is the only person who should get in the water to help a person who is drowning?

Answer: *A lifeguard*

- You could put yourself in a dangerous situation if you enter the water to try to rescue someone. It is possible you could drown.
- The best thing a person can do if he or she cannot reach or throw something to the person that is in trouble is to go and get help.
- People have drowned because they entered the water trying to rescue a person in trouble.
- Only a person who is trained in water rescue should enter the water to try and save someone in trouble.
- What is the rule for helping someone in trouble in the water?

Answer: *Reach or throw, don't go.*

Leader's Note: *Have students complete Activity Sheet 5-4: Reach or Throw.*

Activity

Leader's Note: *Read the scenario below to students. After each question, allow students to respond by telling what they think the person should do.*

Scenario

A fisherman slips into the water and is struggling to stay afloat. A person walking nearby sees the fisherman and thinks about jumping into the water to save the fisherman. Should the person do this?

Answer: *Allow time for responses.*

The person decides not to go in the water and finds a long stick. The person tries to reach the stick out to the fisherman, but the fisherman is just out of reach. What should the person do now?

Answer: *Allow time for responses.*

The person notices a cooler that belongs to the fisherman. The person empties the cooler, closes the lid and throws the cooler out to the fisherman. The fisherman reaches and grabs the cooler and uses it to float on. The fisherman kicks back to the shore and to safety.

Leader's Note: *Have students complete Activity Sheet 5-5: Where There Is Ice, There Is Water.*

TOPIC: RESCUE EQUIPMENT

Key Points and Discussion

- So far we have talked about everyday things that can be used as rescue equipment in an emergency.
- Now we are going to talk about rescue equipment that is normally found at a swimming area:
 - A safety post is a post with reaching and throwing equipment attached to it.
 - A heaving line is a strong, lightweight rope, 40 to 50 feet long. An object that floats, or is buoyant, can be attached to one end and thrown to someone who needs help in the water.
 - A ring buoy is a buoyant ring with 40 to 50 feet of lightweight line attached to it. The ring is thrown by a rescuer to someone who needs help in the water.
 - A reaching pole is a pole 10 to 15 feet long that is extended into the water to help someone in trouble.
 - A rescue tube is a vinyl foam-filled support with a towline and shoulder strap. It is usually carried by lifeguards.
 - A rescue buoy is made of lightweight, hard, buoyant plastic and has handles on the sides and a towline with a shoulder strap attached. It is used by lifeguards at waterfronts.
- Throwing rescue equipment has something that floats attached to about 40 to 50 feet of lightweight rope.

Leader's Note: Show the ring buoy to the students. Set up the plastic traffic cone or sport training cone about 10 feet away from you. Demonstrate each step below as you explain to students.

- If you want to help someone in trouble in the water using a ring buoy or similar rescue equipment, you should:
 - Hold the coil of line (lightweight rope) in the open palm of your nonthrowing hand. Grasp the ring buoy with throwing hand.
 - Step on the nonthrowing end of the line.
 - Step back with your leg on the throwing side, swing the ring buoy backward and then forward for an underhand toss.
 - Aim the throw so that the ring buoy lands just beyond the person with the line lying on the person's shoulder. Tell the person to grab the object.
 - After the person has a firm grasp on the ring buoy or line, drop the remaining coil, if any, and pull the person to safety.
 - Keep your body low and lean back to avoid being pulled into the water.
 - Slowly pull the person to safety by reaching out with one hand and grasping the line with your thumb inward.
 - Pull the line in to your side with that hand while reaching out with the other.
 - Continue the alternate pulling and reaching action until the person is at the side or is able to stand in shallow water.

Leader's Note: See Fact Sheet 2, Longfellow's Safety and Rescue Equipment Information, for more information about safety and rescue equipment. You can provide this information to students, depending on the level of the group.

Activity

- Have students line up on one side of the room.
- Position the traffic or sport training cone about 10 to 20 feet away. (For younger children, position the cone closer.)
- Allow each student two attempts to throw the ring buoy around the traffic cone. If a student cannot get the ring buoy around the cone after two tries, you should place it.
- Once the ring buoy is around the cone, the student should drop the remaining coil of rope and pull the ring buoy “to safety.”
- Make sure students are following the instructions you gave them.

Heaving Jug

Activity

- Tell students, “A heaving jug is a homemade throwing device. It is easy to make and easy to carry with you when you are around water.”
- Lead students through the steps of making a heaving jug:
 - Put ½-inch of water or sand in the plastic jug and screw the top on tightly. (If the jug has a snap-on top, secure it with strong glue.)
 - Tie the 40-foot rope to the handle of the jug.
 - Use the waterproof markers to decorate and personalize your jug.

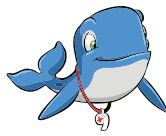
Leader’s Note: Give each student a copy of Activity Sheet 5-6: Make a Safety Post. Explain that they can bring these instructions home with them and do this project with their families.

TOPIC: WRAP-UP

Leader’s Note: Refer back to the poster, Reach or Throw, Don’t Go, as you review the lesson.

Discussion

- How can you help someone who is in trouble in the water close to shore or near the side of a pool?
Answer: You can help someone who is close to the shore or near the side by reaching out using your hand, leg or an object.
- How can you help someone out of reach who is in trouble in the water?
Answer: You can help someone who is out of reach by throwing a floating object with a line attached.
- Remember to keep your weight low when making a reaching or throwing assist.
- Remember the important rule: Reach or throw, don’t go.

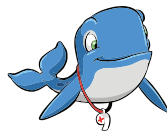


Reach Out and Help

Name: _____

How many things can you see that could be used to reach out to the person in the water? Color each item that could be used for a reaching assist.



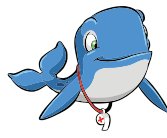


Find a Float

Name: _____

Look through magazines and find pictures of things that float. Cut them out and paste them below in a collage.

Write about why you think these objects would float.

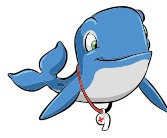


To the Rescue

Name: _____

How many things can you see that could be used to throw to the person in the water? Color each item that could be used for a throwing assist. Then on the lines below the pictures, write why you think these things would work.





Reach or Throw

Name: _____

Find the hidden words listed below. They describe things that could be used for a reaching or throwing assist. The words can run across or down.

o a r v t t b h r j r f k u g b x v p g
b y e j u h a e r z b i q n c u w t y d
a e h k q s s b e f i s h i n g r o d u
k t b b a i r m a t t r e s s v s z b c
m n e y d h x u w x j r z o p j e n q i
o t p a d d l e x q o f c q t b r r e n
l z i t t r e f v q d h c p t r i v l w
i i c y a p o w x v a s b v s o z x y p
f p o n b t i r e i e n e n r o e a n l
e k o j l g j l r t j o a v u m b q w a
j h l r a c f r e b t r c s b j t x d s
a r e w k e a v w p e k h b x x u o x t
c v r r k o l a g u z e b j e x j j q i
k m t j e c t d k u k l a v r k a o q c
e u o q t e r o p e w b l a r s d o w j
t k m p r p i a o a a d l j a b v k c u
o g q s g j f q i p p z u j f e c s u g
c q k m c m k d e r e f q t t t y h n a
w i z w a t e r s k i t h x k x b l w e
r i n g b u o y v n n r q b r a n c h j

Word List

air mattress

cooler

paddle

rope

beach ball

fishing rod

plastic jug

snorkel

branch

life jacket

raft

tire

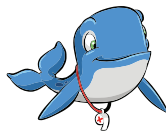
broom

oar

ring buoy

water ski



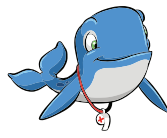


Where There Is Ice, There Is Water

Name: _____

A friend has fallen through the ice. If you were nearby, you could use a reaching assist. If you were farther away, you could use a throwing assist. Circle all the things in the picture you could use to help your friend. Draw in other things you might have with you that you could use.





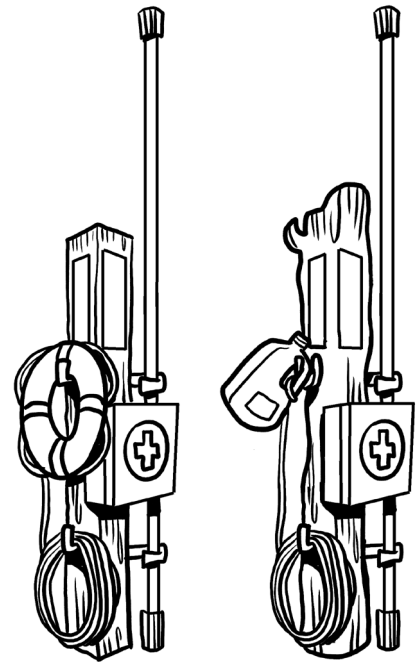
Make a Safety Post

Name: _____

A safety post holds safety equipment, such as a heaving jug and a reaching pole. It is a useful piece of equipment for a home pool or a pond that is used for swimming or ice skating.

To make a safety post, you will need:

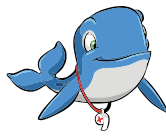
- 4-inch × 4-inch post, 6 feet long
- Screw-in hanging hook large enough to hold the throwing equipment
- Throwing equipment, such as a ring buoy or a heaving jug*
- Reaching equipment, such as a 10- to 12-foot reaching pole
- Clips to secure the reaching equipment OR two 6-ounce cans with both ends removed and a hammer and nails
- Plastic zipper bag
- First aid kit
- Emergency contact information, including phone numbers for summoning help and information that will help responders find your location (i.e., the street address and the names of the nearest cross streets)
- Safety poster or first aid booklet (optional)



*To make a heaving jug, you will also need a 1-gallon plastic jug with a cap, 40 to 50 feet of lightweight rope and sand or water.

Instructions

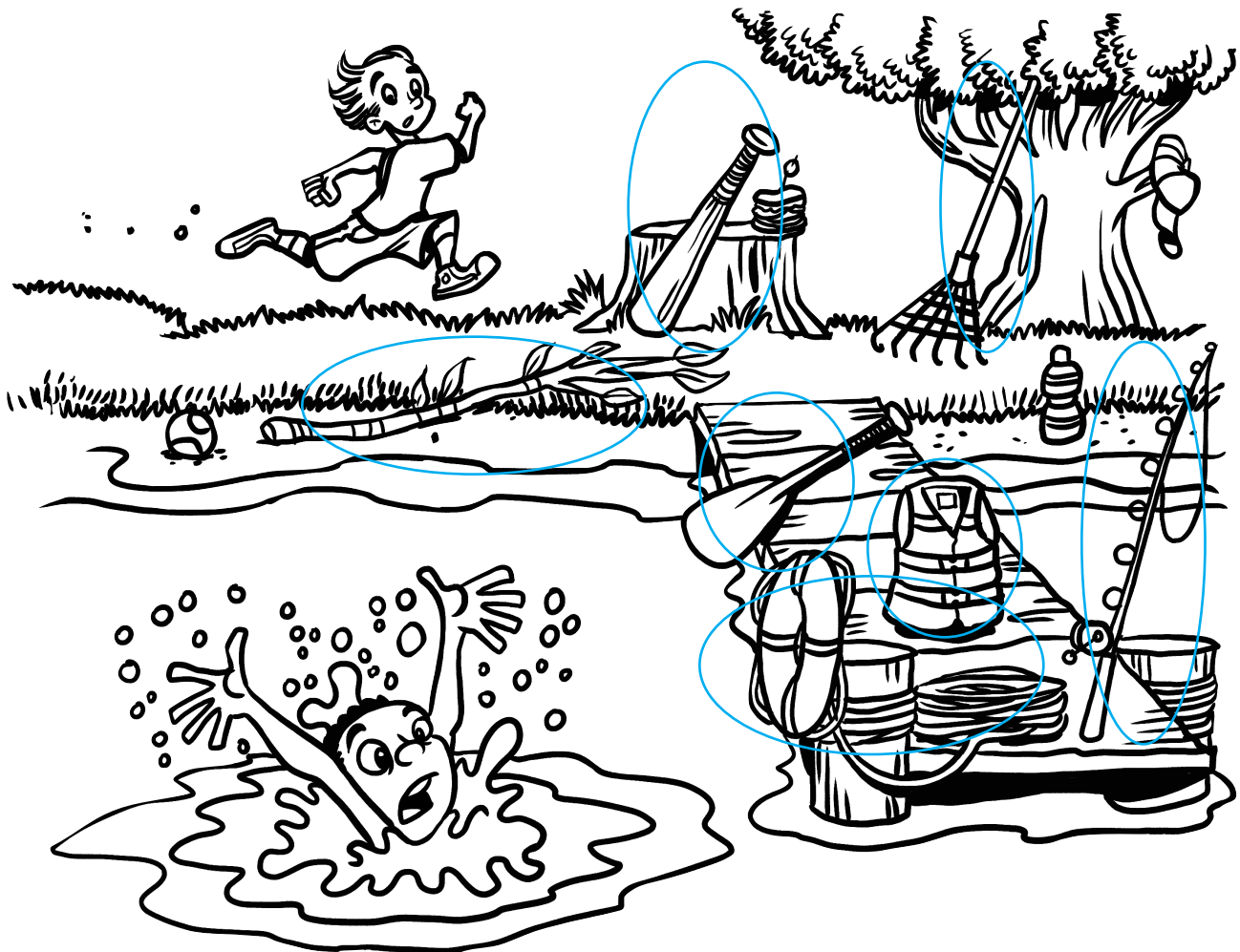
1. On one side of the post, screw in the hanging hook about 1 foot from the top of the post.
2. On the other side of the post, secure the clips or nail the two open-ended cans, one about 1 foot above the other, no lower than 2½ feet from the bottom of the post.
3. Set the post 2 feet in the ground.
4. To make a heaving jug, put ½ inch of water or sand in the 1-gallon plastic jug and screw the cap on tightly. (If the jug has a snap-on cap, secure it with very strong glue.) Tie the rope to the handle of the jug.
5. Hang the ring buoy or heaving jug and line on the hanging hook.
6. Secure the reaching pole with the clips or put the reaching pole through the cans.
7. Put emergency contact information, the first aid kit and the first aid booklet or poster (if you are including one) in the plastic zipper bag and attach it to the top of the post.

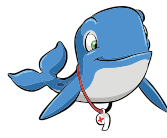


Reach Out and Help

Name: _____

How many things can you see that could be used to reach out to the person in the water? Color each item that could be used for a reaching assist.

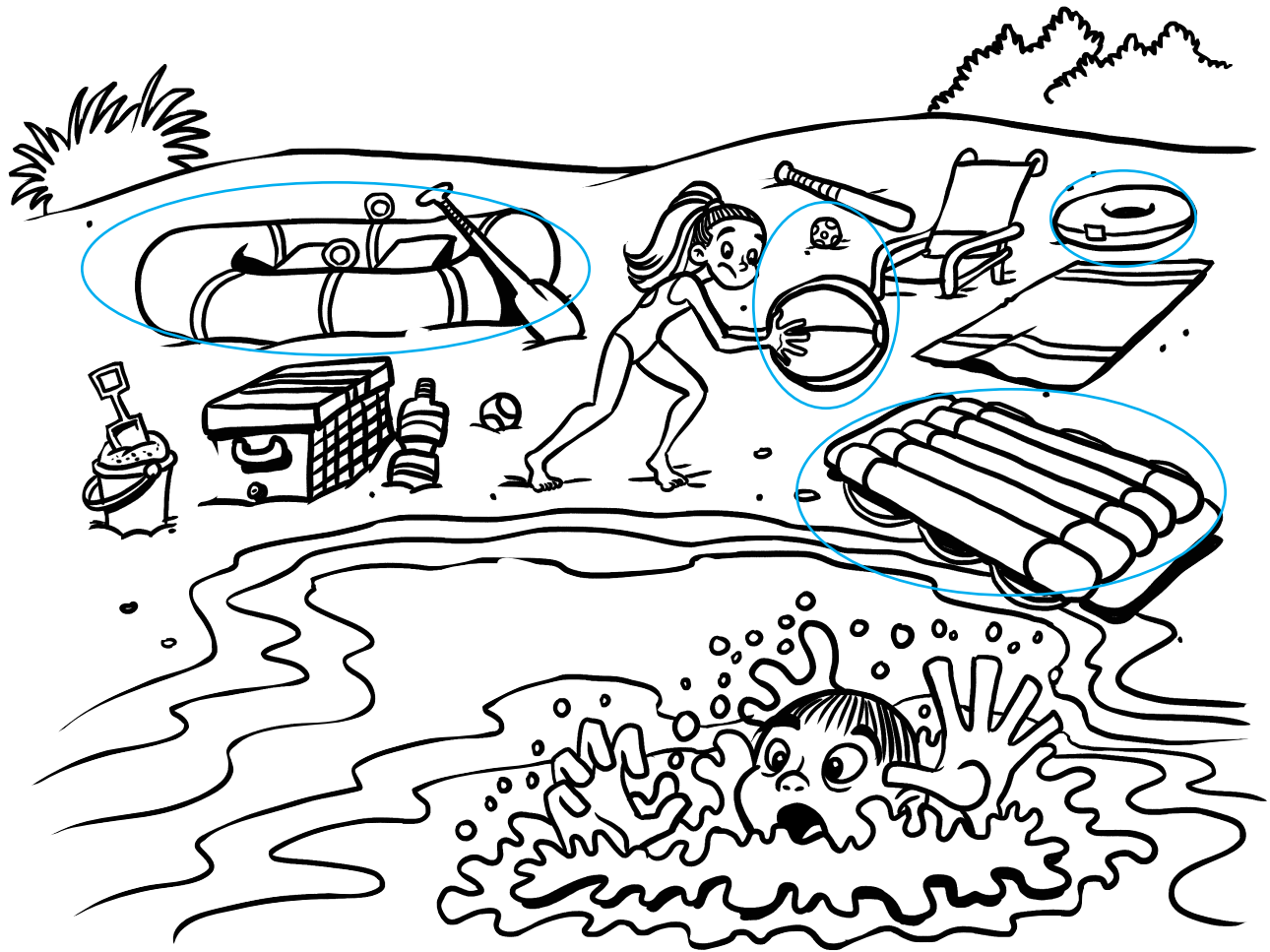




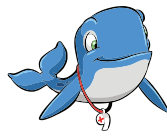
To the Rescue

Name: _____

How many things can you see that could be used to throw to the person in the water? Color each item that could be used for a throwing assist. Then on the lines below the pictures, write why you think these things would work.



These objects float. The person could hold onto the object and kick toward shore or just hold on and float until a professional rescuer or lifeguard arrives.



Reach or Throw

Name: _____

Find the hidden words listed below. They describe things that could be used for a reaching or throwing assist. The words can run across or down.

o a r v t t b h r j r f k u g b x v p g
b y e j u h a e r z b i q n c u w t y d
a e h k q s s b e f i s h i n g r o d u
k t b b a i r m a t t r e s s v s z b c
m n e y d h x u w x j r z o p j e n q i
o t p a d d l e x q o f c q t b r r e n
l z i t t r e f v q d h c p t r i v l w
i i c y a p o w x v a s b v s o z x y p
f p o n b t i r e i e n e n r o e a n l
e k o j l g j l r t j o a v u m b q w a
j h l r a c f r e b t r c s b j t x d s
a r e w k e a v w p e k h b x x u o x t
c v r r k o l a g u z e b j e x j j q i
k m t j e c t d k u k l a v r k a o q c
e u o q t e r o p e w b l a r s d o w j
t k m p r p i a o a a d l j a b v k c u
o g q s g j f q i p p z u j f e c s u g
c q k m c m k d e r e f q t t t y h n a
w i z w a t e r s k i t h x k x b l w e
r i n g b u o y v n n r q b r a n c h j

Word List

air mattress

cooler

paddle

rope

beach ball

fishing rod

plastic jug

snorkel

branch

life jacket

raft

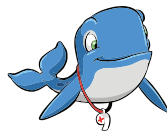
tire

broom

oar

ring buoy

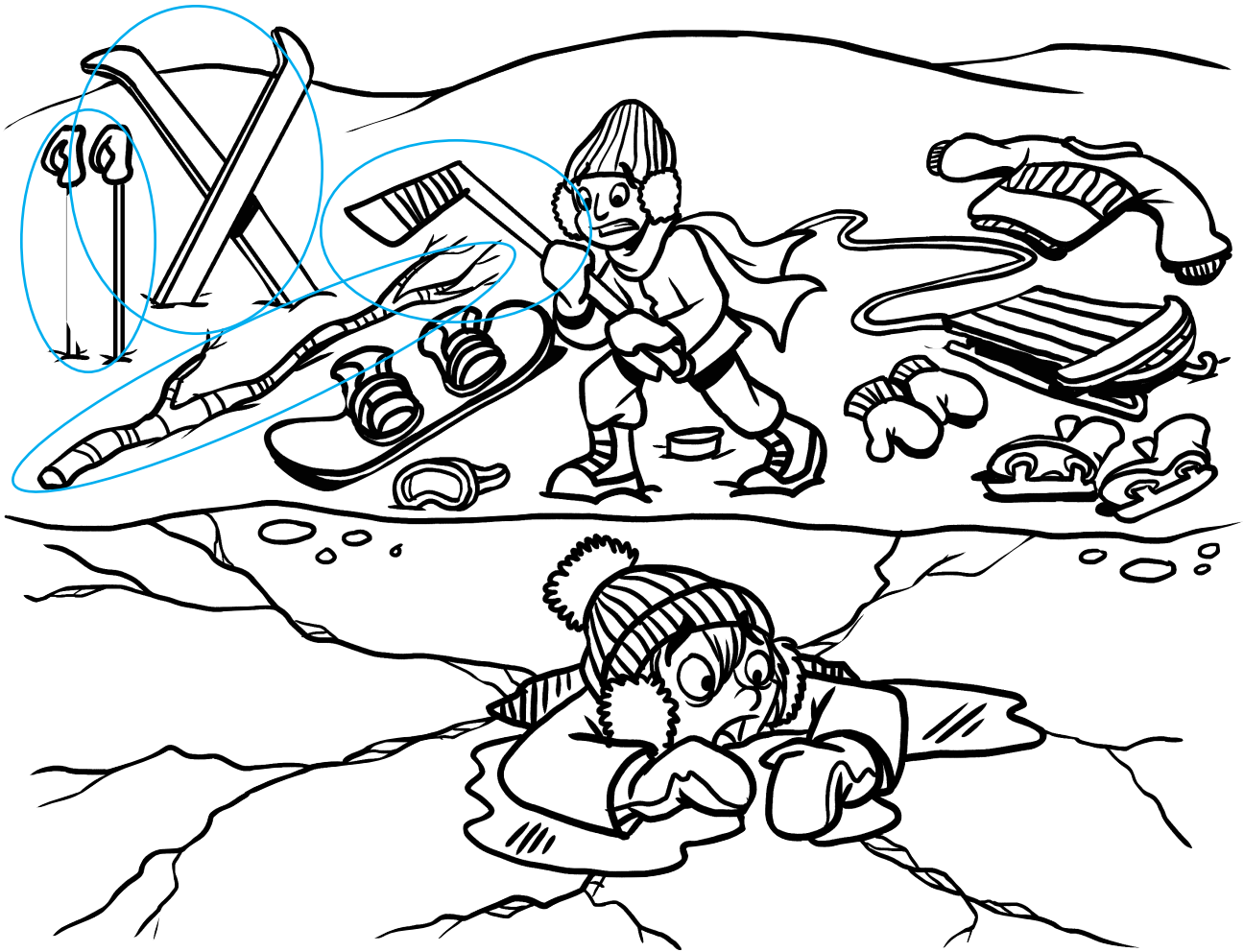
water ski

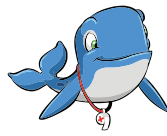


Where There Is Ice, There Is Water

Name: _____

A friend has fallen through the ice. If you were nearby, you could use a reaching assist. If you were farther away, you could use a throwing assist. Circle all the things in the picture you could use to help your friend. Draw in other things you might have with you that you could use.





Longfellow's Safety and Rescue Equipment Information

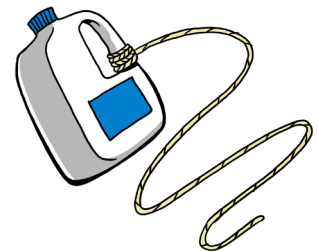
Safety and Rescue Equipment

When helping someone in the water, it is always best to reach or throw, don't go. This is because only someone who is trained in water rescue, such as a lifeguard, should go in the water to help someone who is having trouble. Rescue equipment is used to help someone in the water. It can be used without going into the water.

Safety equipment helps keep people safe. Every swimming area should have safety equipment and rescue equipment.

Heaving Jug

A homemade, emergency throwing device made from a 1-gallon plastic container with ½ inch of water inside and a line attached to the handle.



Ring Buoy

A ring that floats and has 40 to 50 feet of lightweight line attached. The ring is thrown by the rescuer to someone in trouble in the water. A handle or object on the end of the line prevents it from slipping out of the rescuer's grasp.

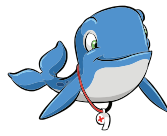


Heaving Line

A strong, lightweight line, 40 to 50 feet long. A weighted object that floats is attached to one end. This helps direct the line out to the person in the water when it is thrown.



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Longfellow's Safety and Rescue Equipment Information

Throw-Rope Bag

A nylon bag containing line (rope) that floats. It is a throwing device often used to rescue someone who has fallen from a boat.



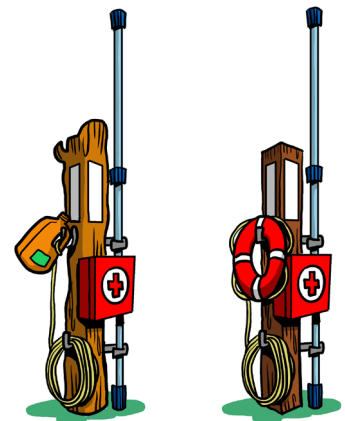
Reaching Pole

A pole, 10 to 15 feet long, made of bamboo, aluminum or fiberglass. It is extended into the water to help someone in trouble. A long tree branch or fishing pole could serve the same purpose.



Safety Post

A post with reaching and throwing devices attached. It is usually located at home pools or private ponds.

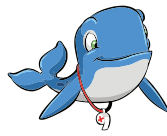


Rescue Tube

A vinyl, foam-filled floating support, approximately 45 to 54 inches long. It has a towline with a shoulder strap attached. It may be used as a throwing device.



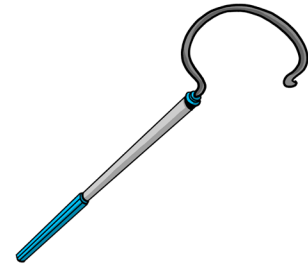
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Longfellow's Safety and Rescue Equipment Information

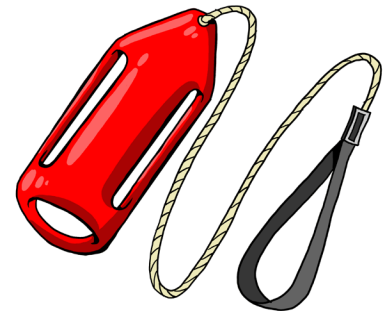
Shepherd's Crook

A long, lightweight pole with a rounded hook at one end. It is used as a reaching pole or to encircle an unconscious victim in the water.



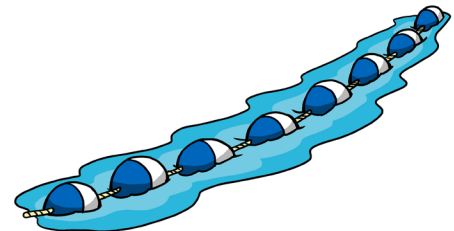
Rescue Buoy

A hard, plastic buoy with handles on the sides. It has a towline with a shoulder strap attached. It is used by waterfront lifeguards when making a swimming rescue.



Lifeline

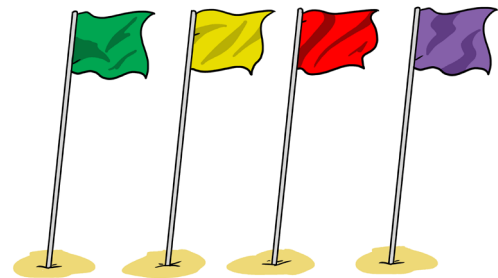
Floating line that marks and separates swimming and diving areas and shallow and deep water.



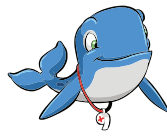
Warning Flags

Flags of various colors that describe safety conditions in the water. Here are some examples:

- Green Flag—safe, open for swimming
- Yellow Flag—caution, limited swimming because of currents or other conditions
- Red Flag—unsafe, closed for swimming
- Purple Flag—dangerous marine life



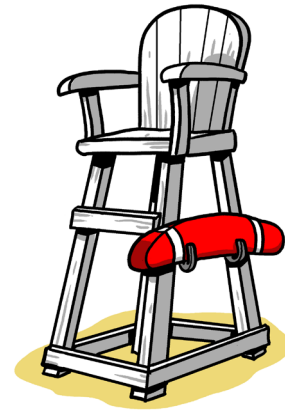
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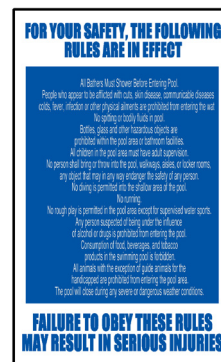
Lifeguard Chair

A lifeguard chair is a tall chair where a lifeguard sits, keeping an eye on swimmers and the water. The height of the chair allows the lifeguard to have an unblocked view of the water they are guarding, and it allows them to watch swimmers carefully for signs of distress. There is usually a ladder attached to one side that can be easily climbed. The tall chair helps people find a lifeguard if there is an emergency.



Posted Rules

Rules posted near supervised swimming areas. They contain facility rules and warnings.



Phone

Communication devices such as phones, two-way radios or megaphones are important safety items.

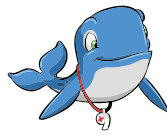


First Aid Kit

A first aid kit has supplies to care for someone who is sick or injured.



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Backboard

A board that is used for a person with a possible head, neck or spinal injury. It keeps the person from moving in order to avoid further injury.

