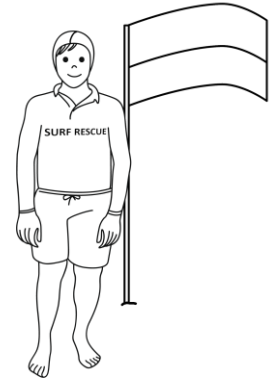


Water Safety

Level 4

Swimming is a great way to build strength, improve fitness and have fun. It can, however, be very dangerous. It is important that you take great care in and around the water. Always have an adult with you. Active supervision is the number one factor that can keep you safe in the water.

Beaches, lakes and ponds are very popular swimming spots; however there are hidden dangers that swimmers need to be aware of. When swimming at a beach, always swim between the red and yellow flags. These flags indicate which the part of the beach has been designated by lifeguards as safe for swimming. The flags also show that lifesavers are on duty and ready to help in case you find yourself in trouble.



The ocean is very powerful. Waves can knock you about and the current can tire you out. You should always be able to touch the bottom with your feet. This is particularly important if you are not a strong swimmer.

Another danger at the beach is rip currents. A rip is a channel of fast-moving water which can pull you away from the beach and out to sea. If you do get caught in a rip, it is important not to fight against it. Instead, stay calm and wave your hand above your head to get the attention of a lifesaver. You can also try and swim parallel to the shore to escape the rip and then allow the waves to take you back to shore.

Swimming in a pond or a lake presents unique dangers. As always, adult supervision is crucial. It is also important to always ensure the bottom of a lake or pond is free from dangerous objects, such as glass, sharp rocks or branches. Stepping on these objects, or even some marine animals, can cause injuries. It is a good idea to wear protective footwear to be sure. Before jumping in, the depth of the water must be checked. Jumping into shallow water can cause serious injuries.

Even though pools are more of a controlled environment than beaches, lakes and ponds, they can still be very dangerous. Slips and falls are very common causes of injuries in the pool. For this reason, it is important to always walk in the pool surround area. Tragically, accidental falls into a pool account for almost 80% of drownings.



Whether swimming at a pool, a beach or a pond, it's important to take safety precautions. Number one on the list is always having an adult to supervise you having fun in the water.

Questions

Water Safety – Level 4

1. What are the three benefits of swimming mentioned by the author?

2. Give two reasons it is important to swim between the flags at a beach.

3. Make a list of five pieces of water safety advice the author gives.
Which does the text say is most important?

4. Explain how pools are a more 'controlled' environment than other swimming spots.

5. The author says it is dangerous to fight a rip. Why do you think this is so?

6. Do you think anyone can provide safe supervision? Explain.



Answers

Water Safety – Level 4

1. What are the three benefits of swimming mentioned by the author?

Swimming builds strength, fitness and is fun.

2. Give two reasons it is important to swim between the flags at a beach.

It means a lifesaver is on duty to supervise, and it also means that that part of the beach is safe for swimming.

3. Make a list of five pieces of water safety advice the author gives. Which does the text say is most important?

Swim between the flags. Don't swim out where you can't touch the bottom. Don't fight against a rip. Check the bottom of a lake or pond is safe. Wear protective footwear. Check water depth. Always walk in pool areas. The text says active supervision is the most important.

4. Explain how pools are a more 'controlled' environment than other swimming spots.

Pools are more controlled because the conditions are more predictable and easy to predict. There aren't dangerous animals or tide currents to worry about.

5. The author says it is dangerous to fight a rip. Why do you think this is so?

Answers may vary. It is dangerous to fight a rip because you will get tired out and then you risk drowning.

6. Do you think anyone can provide safe supervision? Explain.

No.

Answers may vary. It needs to be an adult who is strong enough to help in case something goes wrong.