SUN AND WATER SAFETY

Activity Pack -- FREE Resource

Ages 6-11 | No Prior Reading Required
Classroom, Library and Home Use

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CONTENTS

WS1 STEM - Science -- Sun and Shadow Detective

WS2 STEM - Science -- Five S's Safety Tracker

WS3 STEM - Technology -- Beach Safety Sign Design Lab

WS4 SEL - Mindset -- My Feelings About the Ocean

WS5 SEL - Values -- Thank You, Beach Helpers

WS6 SEL - Goals -- My Beach Safety Goals

TC Teacher's Companion -- Curriculum, Keys and Discussion

Sun and Shadow Detective

The sun and our own bodies send us signals all day long -- if we know how to read them. A short shadow means strong sun. Warm, tight-feeling skin means the sun is already at work. A good sun detective notices these signals early, understands what they mean, and takes action before a problem starts. Practise reading sun signals and making safe choices below.

Activity 1: Signal Spotter

Match each sun or skin signal to what it might mean, then write what you would do next.

Sun or Skin Signal	What It Might Mean	What Would You Do?
Shadow shorter than you	Sun is at its strongest	_____
Skin feels warm and tight	Sun is already working on it	_____
Skin looks pink or red	Early sign of sunburn	_____
Feeling very thirsty	Body needs more water	_____
Feeling dizzy or hot	Too much sun or heat	_____
Sunscreen feels washed off	Time to reapply	_____

Activity 2: The Safe Choice Path

For each situation below, write what a sun and water detective should do:

1. Your shadow is shorter than you and the beach umbrella has blown away. What do you do?

2. You swam an hour ago and haven't reapplied sunscreen since. What should you do before swimming again?

3. You notice a friend's shoulders look pink but they say they feel fine. What is the brave choice?

Think About It

* Your shadow can tell you how strong the sun is. Why is noticing a signal like this, before it becomes a problem, so useful?

* Why is it smarter to notice sun signals early, rather than waiting until your skin already hurts?

Five S's Safety Tracker

Sun safety experts recommend five simple habits, known as the five S's: Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek, Slide. Like any good habit, they work best when you do all five every time you're outdoors -- and sunscreen needs reapplying every two hours, or straight after swimming, because water washes it away faster than you'd think.

Activity 1: My Five S's Tracker

Colour a star each time you complete each S during a day at the beach.

Habit	Morn	Mid	Aft	Swim 1	Swim 2	Eve	Home
Slip on a shirt	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Slop on sunscreen	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Slap on a hat	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Seek shade at midday	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Slide on sunglasses	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Activity 2: A Day at the Beach -- Planning Ahead

What sun and water safety habit matters most at each stage of a beach day?

Time of Day	Sun Position	Key Safety Habit	Why It Matters
Early morning	Long shadows	Slip, slop, slap before leaving home	Sunscreen needs time to absorb
Late morning	Shadow getting shorter	Check the flags with a lifeguard	Confirms the safe swimming zone
Midday	Shadow shorter than you	Seek shade, take a break from the sun	Sun's rays are at their strongest
After a swim	Sunscreen washed off	Reapply sunscreen straight away	Water removes sunscreen fast
Late afternoon	Shadows lengthening again	Keep watching the flags and your buddy	Currents can still be strong

Choose ONE sun safety habit you will start doing every beach day:

Think About It

* If you reapply sunscreen every two hours during a six-hour beach day, how many times would you apply it in total?

* Why might checking the time and your shadow be a more reliable way to judge sun strength than just how hot you feel?

Beach Safety Sign Design Lab

Engineers design tools to solve real problems. A well-designed safety sign helps people make quick, correct decisions in an emergency, without needing to read a single word. The best safety signs are easy to remember, calm rather than scary, and work for many different people. Analyse an existing design then build your own.

Activity 1: Analyse the Beach Safety Sign

A beach safety sign has 4 key pictures for water emergencies. Fill in the 'Why It Matters' column.

Sign Picture	Safety Message	Why It Matters
Pointing hand	Point at the person in trouble	_____
Life ring	Throw a flotation device	_____
Reaching person	Reach with a stick, don't go in	_____
Lifeguard tower	Get a trained lifeguard fast	_____

Activity 2: Design Your Own Safety Sign

Pick a safety challenge and design a sign to help. Draw and label it.

Choose one:
[] Rip Current Warning Sign [] Sun Safety Reminder Sign [] Buddy System Sign [] My Own Idea: _____

My sign is called: _____
It helps with: _____

DRAW YOUR SIGN HERE:

Label 3 features:
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Think About It

* What makes the beach safety sign a good design? Is it easy to understand quickly? Does it work even if you can't read yet?

* If you could add a fifth picture to the beach safety sign, what would it show? Why?

My Feelings About the Ocean

Note to students and adults:
This worksheet explores feelings about waves, currents, and scary moments at the beach. All feelings are valid -- there are no wrong answers. If any question brings up big feelings, please talk with a trusted adult. You may skip any question.

Waves, currents, and watching someone get into trouble in the water can bring up many different feelings. Learning to name and manage these feelings is an important life skill. Wellbeing experts tell us that naming a worry is the first step to managing it -- and that it's normal for your body to feel shaky for a while after something scary happens, even once it's over.

Activity 1: Feeling Check-In

Circle or underline words that describe how you feel about each situation:

Swimming between the flags:
Safe Fine Uncertain Nervous Confident Curious Other: _____

Seeing a big wave coming:
Excited Worried Scared Brave Calm after Other: _____

Watching someone struggle in water:
Calm Fine Anxious Panicked Ready to help Other: _____

Telling a lifeguard something is wrong:
Easy Hard Brave Relieved Unsure Other: _____

Activity 2: Reframe the Worry

Wellbeing experts suggest: Name the worry. Ask what will happen. Take slow breaths. Sit with someone you trust. Choose ONE worry and practise reframing it here.

My worry: _____

What might actually happen (ask an adult if unsure):

One thing that would help me feel safer:

A trusted person I could sit with: _____

My reframed thought (change 'I am scared' to 'I can get through this because...'):

Think About It

* Can your body still feel shaky even after a scary moment has ended? Think of an example.

* If a friend was scared of swimming in the ocean, what would you say to help them?

Thank You, Beach Helpers

We are kept safe at the beach by many people around us: lifeguards, parents, carers, and even other children who notice when something is wrong. Gratitude means noticing and appreciating this care -- and giving back means sharing what we learn. When one person shares beach safety knowledge, it creates a ripple effect of safety throughout the whole community.

Activity 1: My Beach Safety Gratitude Inventory

Write one thing each person does to keep you safe at the beach and how it makes you feel.

Person Who Helps Me	What They Do to Keep Me Safe	How It Makes Me Feel
A parent or carer		
A lifeguard		
A friend or buddy		
A sibling		
Someone else: _____		

Activity 2: The Ripple Effect -- Share What You Know

Think of a beach safety message you could share with someone younger. Plan it below.

I want to share this beach safety message:

I will share it with: _____

How I will share it (tick one):
[] Draw a poster [] Tell a story [] Make a display [] Write a note [] Other: _____

One kind thing I could say to a friend who is scared of the ocean:

Think About It

* Who are people in your life you could team up with to help someone at the beach?

* What is one beach safety message you would most like to teach someone in your family?

My Beach Safety Goals

Setting goals is how we turn knowledge into action. Beach safety goals help us make safe choices a regular part of every trip to the water. The best goals are specific, realistic, and have a clear start date. Like building good habits over time, small safety goals achieved consistently lead to confident, capable adventurers.

Activity 1: My Beach Safety Goal Tiers

Set beach safety goals at three levels.

Goal Tier	My Goal	How I Will Do It	When I Will Start
SHORT-TERM (next visit)			
MID-TERM (this season)			
LONG-TERM (this year)			

Activity 2: Beach Bravery Self-Rating

Rate yourself 1-5 on each beach and water safety skill.

Rate 1-5: 1 = still working on it, 5 = I've got this!

Beach and Water Safety Skill	My Rating (1-5)	My Target
I check the safety flags before swimming	/5	
I ask a lifeguard questions if I'm unsure	/5	
I know to Reach or Throw, Don't Go	/5	
I always swim with a buddy	/5	
I help others understand beach safety	/5	
I stay calm and get help fast in an emergency	/5	

Think About It

* Write your own personal beach safety motto in 10 words or fewer.

* If you started a beach safety club, what would its two rules be?

Teacher's Companion

No Prior Reading Required
This pack is fully standalone. No book or characters are referenced. Any student can complete these worksheets without prior reading. Suitable for classroom, library, and home learning programmes. This pack is an excerpt of a full book-specific learning pack available with purchase at **learningsmart.au**

Australian Curriculum Alignment

Learning Area	Strand	Year Level	Content Description (summary)
Health and PE	Personal, Social and Community Health	Yr 2-4	Identify safety information sources and trusted adults; describe sun and body signals
Health and PE	Being Healthy, Safe and Active	Yr 2-4	Practise safe behaviours and water safety decisions; understand sun protection
Health and PE	Personal and Social Capability	Yr 2-4	Recognise and manage emotions; self-awareness in scary or unfamiliar situations
Science	Earth and Space Sciences	Yr 3-4	Sun position and shadows change throughout the day; observable patterns
Science	Science Inquiry Skills	Yr 3-5	Pose questions, gather evidence, communicate findings (WS2 tracker)
English	Language -- Expressing Ideas	Yr 2-4	Vocabulary for feelings, processes, safety instructions (WS4)
Gen. Capabilities	Ethical Understanding	Yr 2-4	Consequences of actions; responsible choices in an emergency (Reach or Throw, Don't Go)

16 Key Sun and Water Safety Lessons

#	Lesson
1	A shorter shadow than your height means the sun's rays are at their strongest.
2	Sunscreen needs reapplying every two hours, or straight after swimming.
3	The five S's are Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek, Slide -- do all five, every time.
4	Always swim between the red-and-yellow flags, in the lifeguard-patrolled zone.
5	A rip current is like a river hiding inside the ocean -- it can pull swimmers out unnoticed.
6	The rule for helping someone in trouble in water is Reach or Throw, Don't Go.
7	Only a trained lifeguard should swim out to help -- even for someone you know.
8	A life jacket works because trapped air is lighter than water and holds you up.
9	Warm, tight-feeling skin is the body's way of signalling that the sun is already at work.
10	Wraparound sunglasses protect better than round ones because they block light from the sides.
11	It is completely normal to feel shaky after something scary, even once it's over.
12	Getting help fast in an emergency is the bravest thing a child can do.
13	The buddy system means always knowing who is watching out for you at the beach.
14	Children who share beach safety knowledge create a ripple effect of safety for others.
15	Lifeguards, parents, and carers are there to help and explain -- not judge.
16	Beach safety motto: Being safe and having fun are never two different things.

Answer Keys and Discussion Guidance

WS1 -- Signal Spotter (Sample Responses)
Short shadow: seek shade, reapply sunscreen. Warm/tight skin: cover up, move to shade now. Pink or red skin: get out of the sun, tell an adult. Very thirsty: drink water straight away. Dizzy or hot: sit in shade, sip water, tell a trusted adult. Sunscreen washed off: reapply immediately, before more sun exposure.

WS1 -- Safe Choice Path (Model Answers)
1. Move to shade or under a hat/shirt and reapply sunscreen straight away. 2. Reapply sunscreen before swimming again -- water washes it off fast. 3. The brave choice is to speak up and tell the friend or a trusted adult.

WS2 -- Five S's Tracker (Key Insight)
Over a six-hour beach day, sunscreen should be reapplied roughly every two hours -- about three times, plus straight after each swim. Key insight: consistency across a whole day matters more than doing it once at the start.

WS3 -- Beach Safety Sign Analysis (Sample 'Why It Matters')
Pointing hand: keeps sight of the person in trouble so they are not lost in the water. Life ring: gives a struggling swimmer something to hold onto without anyone entering the water. Reaching person: rescuers should reach or throw first, never go in themselves. Lifeguard tower: only trained lifeguards are equipped to swim out safely.

WS4 -- Sensitivity Note for Educators
Some students may have had a frightening water experience themselves or know someone who has. Do NOT require students to share responses aloud. Offer private written submission or drawing as an alternative. If a student discloses a concern, follow your school's wellbeing and child safety protocol.

WS6 -- Beach Bravery Rating
There are no correct scores. Any rating below 3 is an opportunity for a wellbeing conversation, not correction.

Upsell Note for Educators
This generic pack is based on the Learning Smart book series. The full book-specific learning pack -- which references the characters, story moments, and adventure narrative -- is available with book purchase or subscription at **learningsmart.au**. Book-specific packs significantly increase student engagement and reading motivation.

Differentiation Strategies

Level	Strategy	Example Application
Below Level (support)	Reduce written output; use sentence starters; allow verbal responses; pair with peer.	WS1: provide pre-filled signal descriptions. WS4: use feeling cards instead of open writing.
On Level (standard)	Complete all activities as written. Use discussion partner for Think About It sections.	Standard completion with class debrief of Think About It questions.
Extension (enrichment)	Research rip currents and the UV index in depth; compare sunscreen ratings; present to a younger class.	WS3: design a digital beach safety app concept. WS2: design a family beach-day safety checklist.

7 Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between being scared of the ocean and being wise about it? How can we help children move from one to the other?

2. How do the red-and-yellow flags help keep everyone safe? Why is it worth walking further to swim between them?

3. Some children want to jump straight in to help a friend in trouble. Why is Reach or Throw, Don't Go the safer rule, even for someone you love?

4. Why might the sun be at its strongest exactly when children most want to be outside playing? How can we plan around this rather than avoid the outdoors altogether?

5. When children teach beach safety to younger students, they understand it more deeply themselves. How might you use peer teaching for this topic?

6. The five S's tracker (WS2) is about consistency, not intensity. Can students think of other examples where doing a small thing every time matters more than doing it perfectly once?

7. What responsibilities do lifeguards have toward beachgoers? How can we help children feel comfortable approaching a lifeguard with a concern?

Classroom Display Ideas

Five S's Wheel: Large class wheel with one message per S -- students vote on examples to add to each section.

Beach Buddy Network: Students draw their beach safety buddies in a network diagram. Display to reinforce the buddy system.

Signal Spotter Chart: Class poster of sun and skin signals and responses -- laminate as a year-round reference.

Anonymous Question Box: Students post beach safety questions anonymously for the teacher to address during health time.

Brave Statements Bunting: Students complete 'I was brave when I...' -- display as classroom bunting.

Beach Safety Pledge: Class creates and signs a shared two-rule beach safety pledge.

Want the Full Adventure?

This free activity pack is inspired by the **Learning Smart book series** -- educational adventures featuring Belinda, James, and their guide Professor Bee.

The Full Book-Specific Learning Pack Includes:

* Worksheets tied directly to the book's characters and story moments
* Story-based Think About It questions that deepen reading comprehension
* A Teacher's Companion with book-specific discussion questions
* Access to the full Learning Smart resource library

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Books in the Learning Smart Series

Title	Topic
The Treasure Map of Money Mountain	Financial Literacy
Professor Bee's Body Expedition	Human Body and Science
Belinda and James: Beach Smart	Sun and Water Safety
Guardians of the Web	Internet Safety
The Magical ABC Adventures: Letters A-F	Early Literacy and Phonics

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