



EduTrend Contents

W4C · WATER SPORTS · HIGH SCHOOL

Open Water Safety and Rescue

Cold water, currents and safe rescue decisions

Ages 15–18

Level: Advanced

75 minutes

Teams of 4–5

Activity 05

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 student worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 05 · AT A GLANCE

Open Water Safety and Rescue

Students learn the physiology of cold water immersion and the 1-10-1 principle, how rip currents form and how to escape them, and the rescue sequence that keeps rescuers safe. They practise throw-bag rescues on land and plan a risk-managed open water session.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- explain cold water shock and the 1-10-1 principle;
- describe how to spot and escape a rip current;
- apply a safe rescue sequence;
- plan a risk-managed open water activity.

KEY WORDS

cold water shock · hypothermia ·
1-10-1 · rip current · throw bag ·
rescue sequence · risk assessment

CURRICULUM LINKS

Biology: physiology and thermoregulation. Geography: coasts and waves. PE: water sports and leadership.

1**PREPARE**

Kit, rules and checks

2**LEARN**

Skill or idea

3**PRACTISE**

Try it safely

4**APPLY**

Game or challenge

5**REFLECT**

What did we learn?

6**STAY SAFE**

Rules to remember

Materials (per team)

- Throw bags or lines
- Beach and river photos, rip current diagrams
- Tide and weather information examples
- Planning templates
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Check throw bags.
- Mark a throw practice area on the field.
- Collect local water safety information.
- Prepare scenario cards.

SAFETY

Land-based session. Throwers stand with feet braced; receivers never wrap lines around hands. Clear the throw area.

ACTIVITY 05 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Emphasise that most drowning rescuers are untrained people who went in: the safe choice is to call, reach or throw.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–10 min Hook	Discuss statistics from a national water safety body.	<i>“Who is most at risk?”</i>
10–25 min Cold water	Explain cold water shock and 1-10-1.	<i>“Why do strong swimmers drown?”</i>
25–40 min Currents	Rip currents: spotting and escaping.	<i>“Which way should you swim?”</i>
40–60 min Rescue	Rescue sequence; practise throw-bag rescues on land.	<i>“When should you never go in?”</i>
60–75 min Plan	Teams plan a safe open water session.	<i>“What controls reduce the risks?”</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Perform an accurate throw-bag rescue on land and present a risk-managed plan for an open water session with clear go or no-go criteria.

ACTIVITY 05 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The water know-how in brief

Sudden immersion in cold water triggers cold water shock: a gasp reflex and rapid breathing that can cause water inhalation. The 1-10-1 principle describes about 1 minute to control breathing, about 10 minutes of useful movement before muscles cool, and around 1 hour before hypothermia may cause unconsciousness.

Rip currents are strong channels of water flowing away from the shore. People caught in one should not swim against it but float, swim parallel to the shore and signal for help. Rescuers should call the emergency services and reach or throw a buoyant aid rather than entering the water.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Hypothermia is the first danger.” Cold water shock acts within the first minute.
- “Swim straight back to shore in a rip.” Swim parallel or float.
- “Jump in to save someone.” Call, reach or throw instead.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use a sequence card: call, reach, throw, do not go.

Stretch

Research and present local drowning prevention data.

WORKSHEET 1

Cold water

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Explain each stage.

1-10-1

Stage	What happens	What to do
1 minute		
10 minutes		
1 hour		

WORKSHEET 2

Rescue decisions

Decide for each scenario.

Scenarios

Scenario	Safe action
Friend in a rip current	
Dog in a cold river	
Swimmer tired near a pier	

WORKSHEET 3

Session plan

Plan a safe session.

Hazards and controls

Go or no-go criteria

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight students; copy as needed.

Student	Explains cold water risks	Chooses safe rescues	Plans risk controls

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Open Water Safety and Rescue is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents W4C Water Sports programme (high school, level: advanced). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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