

National Curriculum Reference: KS 2, KS 3

**Aim:**

To raise the pupil's awareness of safety at the beach, recognizing dangers and understanding how to deal with them.

**Objectives:**

- To have some understanding of sea safety and rip currents.

**Assessment/Success Criteria:** Most pupils will have an understanding of the SAFE messages, and their importance for their own and other's safety. Most pupils will be aware of rip currents and others will be able to explain the safe and correct way to swim out of one to a friend.

**Teacher Notes:** Preparation prior to the screen activity: Ask pupils to do some research on rip currents and the SAFE message.

**Resources:** Information on the SAFE messages can be found at the following link

<http://www.rnli.org.uk/shorething/Youth/Safety/safe.aspx>

Copies of the worksheet The Rescue.

**Key Vocabulary:**

Danger	Emergency	Lifeguard
SAFE	Rip Current	

Lesson Plan:

Timing	Section	Activity
10 mins	Introduction	What have pupils already found out for themselves about rip currents and the SAFE message. Discuss how and where they found their information. How accurate do they think their information is? Look at the website: <a href="http://www.rnli.org.uk/shorething/Youth/Safety/safe.aspx">http://www.rnli.org.uk/shorething/Youth/Safety/safe.aspx</a> and compare information.
	Activity	Go to the whiteboard screen activity. Discuss the scene and identify different areas and label on the screen, save using whiteboard software. What are the dangers here for the swimmer? Discuss. Click 'NEXT'. How many pupils were able to correctly identify the rip current? Continue to the next screen, explain that the pupils need to drag and drop each label to its correct position. Read each label carefully and identify any words or phrases that pupils are unsure of. Find the meaning of unknown words before completing the screen activity. Discuss each option before placing any phrase or word. Find out through discussion what pupils know about rip currents and what they should do. Ask them to imagine being caught in a rip current and brainstorm possible reactions. Write these on a separate sheet of paper and keep the sheet to one side before moving onto the next screen. There are 3 possible options. Ask for a show of hands for each option and make a note of the number of votes. Ask pupils to give reasons for their choice. This could work as a whole class, group or individual activity. Look at the possible options on the screen and discuss why options 2 & 3 are not the best. Click on option 1 and ask the pupils to describe how the swimmer was able to get away from the rip current safely. Read through the Safety messages on the next screen and discuss.
	Extension activity 1	Pupils make safety posters which should appeal to younger children. Discuss how the poster should be made attractive to these younger children by choice of fonts, graphics and simple language.
	Extension activity 2	Organise pupils to work in small groups, with a partner or individually. Give out the copies of 'The Rescue'. Younger pupils may need to read through this together. Ask the pupils to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight any words or phrases that describe the conditions of the sea in blue.</li> <li>• Highlight all references to the qualities of the lifeguard in yellow.</li> <li>• Underline any reference to danger in red.</li> </ul> Bring the class back together and discuss each reference together. Encourage the pupils to check out the SAFE message. What lessons do they think can be learned?
10 mins	Plenary	Discuss the safety messages together. Ask volunteers to explain to the rest of the class about the dangers of a rip current and the safest way to swim out of one.

## The Rescue

Off-duty RNLI lifeguard, Rod, was walking near Fistral Beach on 3 October 2003 when he was approached by a woman who told him there was someone in trouble in the water. A man had gone out from the narrow beach to bodyboard. He had been caught by a rip current and swept towards rocks.

The lifeguarding season finished just three days before. If lifeguards had been around, Rod thinks that they 'would have had the guy before he even got close to the rocks'. Rod had just been surfing himself, but had stopped as the surf was 'big, messy and rippy'. The sea conditions were rough and there was a ground swell of up to 2m.

Instinctively, Rod ran out to the edge of the cliff to see if he could help. Further along, towards Little Fistral Bay, he heard the shouts for help. Rod raced down to the scene and spotted the man 50m from the shore.

He asked a passer-by to call 999 for the Coastguard. Rod clambered down the cliff, waded along a gully then swam over rocks and breaking surf to reach the casualty, 20m away. Rod found it relatively easy to get out to the man: 'I got sucked out there really quickly. To get to him was really easy, but getting back to the beach was a struggle.' The man was completely exhausted from fighting against the current for 20 minutes. He had let go of his bodyboard when trying to swim to shore and now waves were breaking over his head.

Rod grabbed hold of the man and tried to get up on the rocks. The pair were washed into shoulder-depth water, only to be sucked back out of their depth, again and again. Two passers-by entered the water to help Rod bring the man out over the rocky bank, with waves sucking them back into the sea. They managed to lift him to the top of the gully, clear of the waves.

Laid out on the sand, the man vomited and Rod was glad to see this sign that he was alive. Rod was trying to stop the bleeding from the large wound in the man's head and was concerned that he may have a spinal injury. The man had cuts all over his arms and back, from where he had been thrown against the sharp rocks by the breaking waves. He was in deep shock. Then he started to turn white and cold, and a pulse was hard to find, but Rod could see his chest rising and falling. An ambulance crew arrived and stabilised the man's condition. He was then winched to a Sea King helicopter from RNAS Culdrose and taken to hospital, where he made a full recovery.

As a highly trained and experienced lifeguard, Rod knows that he broke the golden rule of lifesaving by entering the water without any rescue equipment or protective clothing. He suffered cuts and bruises as a result but his instincts to save the man were strong: 'During the incident itself adrenaline just takes over.'

Rod received a Bronze Medal for his quick thinking, initiative and courage. He was praised for his actions in conditions 'that are probably the most difficult in which any lifeguard can experience: heavy surf, strong currents, waves breaking over rocks and nowhere safe to bring a casualty to shore.' Rod modestly says: 'Any of the guys that I work with, if they were in my position, they would have done exactly the same.' But the rescued man sees things differently. He knows full well that without Rod, his life may have been lost.