

LESSON 3: ELEMENTARY BACKSTROKE AND RESCUES

Grade-Level Outcomes

Primary Outcomes

Lifetime activities: Refines activity-specific movement skills 1 or more lifetime activities (outdoor pursuits, individual-performance activities, aquatics, net/wall games or target games). (S1.H1.L2)

Fitness activities: Demonstrates competency in 1 or more specialized skills in health-related fitness activities. (S1.H3.L1)

Safety: Applies best practices for participating safely in physical activity, exercise and dance (e.g., injury prevention, proper alignment, hydration, use of equipment, implementation of rules, sun protection). (S4.H5.L1)

Embedded Outcome

Rules & etiquette: Exhibits proper etiquette, respect for others and teamwork while engaging in physical activity and/or social dance. (S4.H2.L1)

Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- demonstrate the elementary backstroke.
- increase endurance in the freestyle and backstroke.
- demonstrate basic rescue skills.

Equipment and Materials

- Kickboards*
- Life jackets or flotation belts*
- Kickbar floats (optional)*
- Peer assessments and pencils

*Make flotation devices available for students to use in all practice tasks.

Introduction

Today, you will increase swimming distance of the freestyle and backstroke. You also will learn the elementary backstroke, treading water, and rescue skills.

Instructional Task:

Increase Endurance for Freestyle and Backstroke

■ PRACTICE TASK

Students swim 3 × 50 yards or meters each of freestyle and backstroke.

Refinements

- Make sure students do not sacrifice stroke technique for distance.
- Make sure students are still using their kick and arm extensions.

Student Choices/Differentiation

Learners who are more comfortable can do 5 × 50 yards or meters.

What to Look For

- Students maintain correct technique while swimming longer distances.
- Students are increasingly comfortable with swimming longer distances.

Instructional Task: Elementary Backstroke-Kick**■ PRACTICE TASK**

While hugging a kickboard and lying on their backs, students kick the width of the pool two times.

Refinement

Remind students to use a strong whip kick and a glide.

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Students swim at their own pace.
- Students choose their lanes.

What to Look For

- Feet are dorsiflexed.
- Knees are closer together than feet.
- Glide is noticeable.

Instructional Task: Elementary Backstroke**■ PRACTICE TASK**

Students swim 4 × 25 yards or meters of elementary backstroke. Give students the chicken, airplane, and rocket cues for the three parts of the stroke.

Extension

In pairs, one student evaluates the other's stroke using a checklist or rubric.

Refinement

Coordinating the arm motion and the kick can be challenging. Have students focus on the rhythm of the stroke and how everything comes together in the glide portion. Arms and legs curl, spread, and then snap together.

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Students can choose fewer or more lengths (up to six).
- Students may review video clips to help with timing.
- Students having difficulty with timing may practice arms and legs together on the pool deck.

What to Look For

- Movement is synchronized; arms and hands move at the same pace.
- Glide is noticeable.

Instructional Task: Treading Water**■ PRACTICE TASK**

In water at least shoulder depth, swimmers use their hands and elementary backstroke kick to keep their heads above water for 30 seconds.

Extension

Repeat with students using a different type of kick (e.g., flutter, egg beater, butterfly).

Guiding questions for students:

- Which type of kick is most efficient for survival swimming?
- Why?

Student Choices/Differentiation

Students can tread longer, use no hands (just kick), and use other kicks. For a real challenge, they can try to keep their navels out of the water.

What to Look For

- Students are calm.
- Students can keep their heads above water for at least 30 seconds.

Instructional Task: Rescuing a Swimmer in Distress

■ PRACTICE TASK

“Reach or throw but don’t go” means that the rescuer reaches out and grabs the victim and pulls him or her in.

Using an extension (e.g., rescue tube, towel, or pole), the rescuer reaches out to the victim, who grabs the object and is pulled in by the rescuer.

EMBEDDED OUTCOME: S4.H2.L1. To build rescuers’ confidence, victims should play the role respectfully and not try to pull rescuers into the water on initial attempts.

Extension

Students throw a flotation device out to the victim and pull her or him in with the attached rope.

Guiding questions for students:

- What should you do when you see someone in distress in the water?
- Why would you use an extension instead of jumping in?

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Students choose their partners.
- Students choose the shallow or deep end of the pool.
- Victims who aren’t confident treading water may use a flotation device.

What to Look For

- Rescuers are keeping their weight low while pulling in the victims.
 - Rescuers are talking to the victims to keep them calm.
 - Students are working together to practice the rescue technique.
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Formal and Informal Assessments

- Peer assessments
- Exit slip: What are the key points for rescuing a swimmer in distress?

Closure

- Today, you started building your endurance for fitness swimming, and you will continue to work on that.
- You also worked on a basic rescue skill.
- Remember, realize your limitations when seeing a swimmer in distress.
- Do not risk your own life; instead, use equipment to extend your reach and be safe.

Reflection

- Were students fatigued after increasing the number of laps?
- Where did they struggle with the new stroke?
- Review peer assessments for common themes.

Homework

Review videos of the backstroke open turn to get ready for next class.

Resources

American Red Cross: www.redcross.org