

Lesson Plan 3: Grades 3 - 4

Play Safe...Stay Away! Recognising the warning signs

Context:

Many of SunWater's dams and weirs are popular recreational destinations for local residents and tourists. SunWater currently owns and manages nineteen dams in Queensland and a much larger number of weirs.

Ensuring that users who visit these areas are safe is extremely important to SunWater. SunWater have invested in signage and fencing around restricted areas at their dams, weirs and channels to protect users from the safety hazards in the area.

SunWater have released a safety brochure for further tips on staying safe when visiting a SunWater Dam. An extract from the brochure is shown below, or you can download the full brochure [here](#).

Here are some tips to keep in mind when visiting a dam or weir:

 <p>Have fun without putting yours and other's lives in danger.</p>	 <p>Always read the signs – they contain important information about water, potential hazards and Blue-Green Algae levels.</p>	 <p>Stay away from dam and weir walls. Keep a distance of at least 200m away from the walls.</p>	 <p>Check for potential risks or hazards entering the water including rocks and stumps near the shoreline.</p>
 <p>Do not trespass on private property surrounding the lake or near the dam wall.</p>	 <p>Rethink drinking. Keep within the legal limit of blood alcohol concentration (BAC) if driving a vehicle or boat and do not drink if planning on going for a swim.</p>	 <p>If operating a boat, keep clear of swimmers and only tow skiers in deeper areas of the lake (never venture too close to dam walls).</p>	 <p>Whether a lake or weir is full, half full or empty, submerged hazards are always present – so take care when entering the water.</p>
 <p>Keep an eye out for your friends and family.</p>	 <p>Know your own swimming abilities. Swim safely and keep away from stumped areas that may contain lake debris.</p>	 <p>Consider carrying a first aid kit in case of an injury.</p>	 <p>Use your common sense, and remain alert and aware of your surroundings.</p>



While a restricted area may appear to be safe tragedy can occur when you least expect it. Illegally trespassing and other unsafe behaviour on SunWater property is serious and the consequences can be devastating. SunWater staff regularly patrol the facilities and report trespassers to the police.

SunWater's latest safety campaign focuses on reminding the community about the risks of trespassing and the potential hazards when visiting our dams, weirs and channels. The video is being distributed through a variety of digital platforms including social media and is also available via the SunWater [website](#).

There are also a number of '[Latest News](#)' articles on SunWater's website regarding users ignoring the warning signs around dams, weirs and water channels and putting their lives in danger. It is important that children can recognise and understand the warning signs around dams, weirs and water channels to ensure they stay safe and are aware of the potential safety hazards.

Teacher's note: You will need to use the 'Play Safe... Stay Away! Recognising the warning signs' PowerPoint presentation in this lesson plan.

Learning Outcomes

- Be able to recognise the purpose of warning signs encountered in everyday situations, and suggest why there is a need for warning signs around dams, weirs and water channels
- Be able to recognise and understand the various types of warning signs that are located around dams, weirs and water channels
- Understand the potential consequences if they choose to ignore these warning signs
- Respond to and pose questions about familiar and unfamiliar events
- Represent and communicate observations and ideas in a variety of ways

Class discussion & activity

- Using the PowerPoint presentation *Play Safe... Stay Away! Recognising the warning signs*, introduce students to the concept of warning signs; where are they found, why they are there and what purpose do they serve?
- Show slides 1 - 4 from the PowerPoint presentation. Ask students if they recognise the different warning signs and can explain what key safety messages they are portraying.
- Discuss the fact that we probably encounter many different types of warning signs every day of our lives, for example when we are travelling on the road. Ask the students to think about other places they may visit or times when they may have seen warning signs (PowerPoint slide 5) e.g. around the school, on roadsides, at swimming pools, at local dams and waterways etc. Can they describe these other types of warning signs?
- Ask the students if they have ever visited a dam. What did they do while they were there? Discuss some of the recreational activities that could take place at dams.
- With reference to PowerPoint slides 6 – 9, ask the students to identify some of the potential dangers and hazards that may be present at dams, weirs and waterways just from looking at the photos.

- Show students the PowerPoint slides 10 to 14 which depict some of the warning signs found around dams, weirs and water channels. Ask the students to suggest what are the key safety messages being shown in these warning signs.
- Play the [Play Safe...Stay Away! video](#) (via the SunWater website) and ask students to keep an eye out for the warning signs in the video.
- As a culminating activity, have a class discussion about the warning signs seen on the PowerPoint presentation and in the video. What do most of the warning signs look like? What sorts of colours are most commonly used on warning signs? Are there more words or pictures? Ask the students why they think this is the case. Where are warning signs located?
- Discuss the fact that that every action has a consequence. The warning signs are there to help people to make the right decision. Engage students in a discussion about what could happen if people decided to ignore the warning signs at a dam, weir or water channel?
- The students can then complete the activity sheet: **Play Safe...Stay Away! Recognising the warning signs.**

Links

Sun Water website	http://www.sunwater.com.au/
Play Safe...Stay away! video	http://www.sunwater.com.au/sustainability/water-safety/blue-safety-video
Water Safety Awareness	http://www.sunwater.com.au/sustainability/water-safety
Safety Tips when visiting a dam-brochure	http://www.sunwater.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/16864/Safety_tips_when_visiting_a_dam.pdf
Latest news	http://www.sunwater.com.au/about-sunwater/media-room/latest-news
SunWater safety campaign	http://www.sunwater.com.au/sustainability/water-safety
SunWater dams brochure	http://www.sunwater.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/17465/Sun_Water_Dams.pdf
Splash Facts	http://www.sunwater.com.au/sustainability/water-safety/blue-safety-video/teach-me!
SunWater infrastructure map	http://www.sunwater.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/1728/Sun_Water_Infrastructure_Map_2016.pdf
Free 'Blue Pack'	http://www.sunwater.com.au/sustainability/water-safety/blue-safety-video/for-teachers

All URLs and hyperlinks correct at May 2017



Reflection & extension

Over the course of a week, ask the students to look out for warning signs while they are driving to and from school, while they are at the shops, the beach, the dam or the park. Using the table template below, ask the students to draw or describe the different warning signs, what the potential danger or hazard was and where they saw them. Each student should aim to record at least five warning signs.

Date	Picture/ description of warning sign	What was the hazard?	Where was it?

Ask the students to design their own warning sign to display at school. For example, this could be a reminder to walk inside, be careful of tripping or slipping on the stairs, no littering in the playground or no swinging on chairs in the classroom.



**Activity sheet: Play Safe...Stay Away!
Recognising the warning signs**

1. What do each of these warning signs show? Write a short description in the table below.

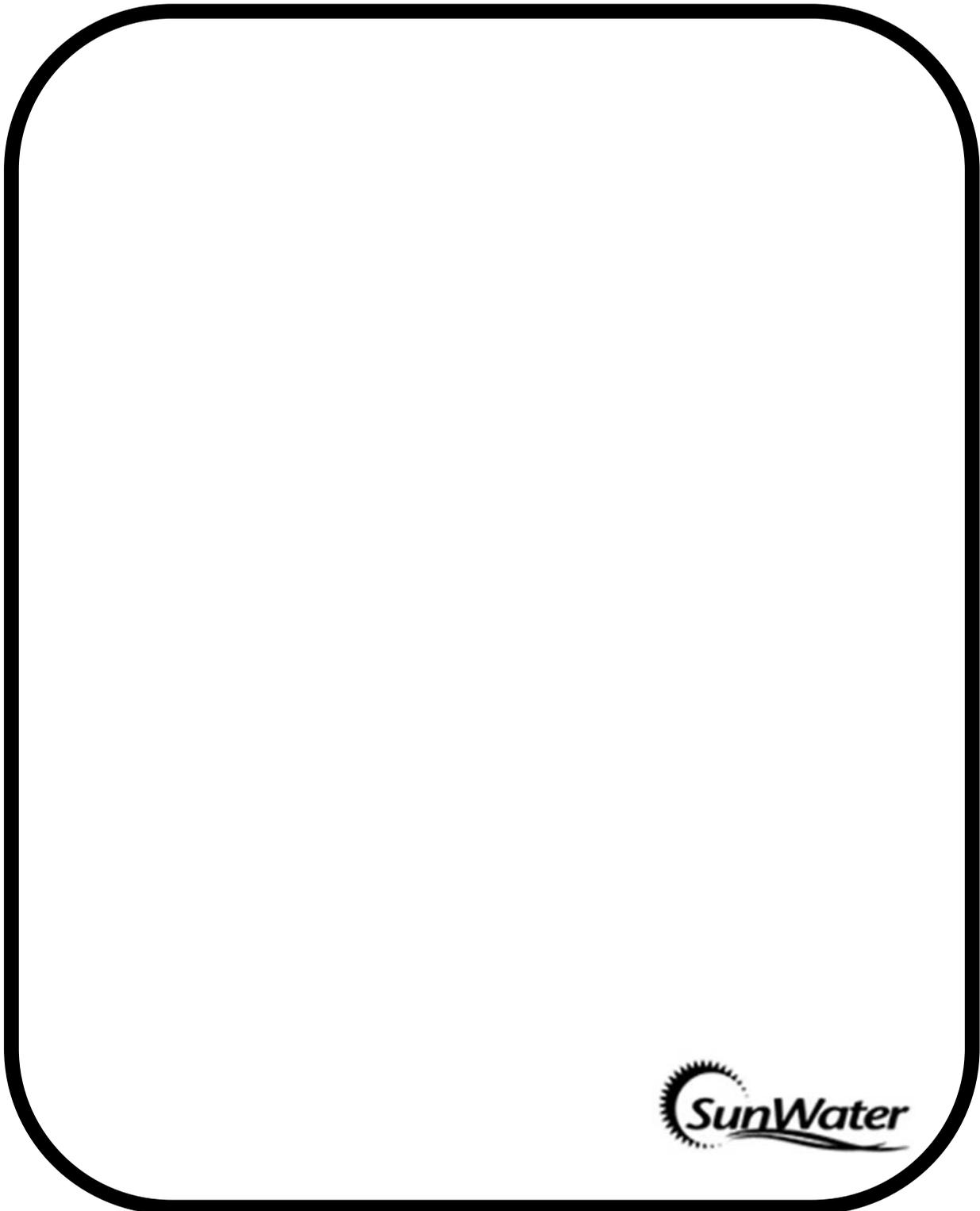
			
			
			
			

2. Look at the SunWater warning sign then answer the questions below in your books.



- What six things are you **not** allowed to do at this site?
- What are the four potential hazards at this site that could be a safety issue?
- Use a dictionary or the internet to write out the meaning of the following words:
unauthorised recreational activities prohibited comply hazards
- Finish this sentence. Warning signs at dams, weirs and water channels are important because....

- Using the template provided below, design your own warning sign for your local dam, weir or water channel. Using the safety signs shown in the table above or from the PowerPoint presentation, to show what potential hazards may be present and what people are not allowed to do at the site.

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for students to design their own warning sign. The box is centered on the page and occupies most of the lower half of the document.