

Beginner C Lesson Plan #1 – 45 minutes

The aim of this lesson is to

1. Undergo Muscle activation drills so kids can *feel* what body shapes they are making.
2. Undertake a drill progression that will enhance their body awareness whilst simultaneously teach them correct head position, body position and breathing position for kicking and streamlining.
3. Be able to maintain this position Back and front when arms are introduced AND when side breathing occurs.

Introduction

Stationary Float Drill: (approximately 5 -10 minutes)

Aim: To improve body awareness and body position in the water as a prelude to streamlines and kicking. To activate correct muscles to maintain a straight body line and straight legs to aid kicking technique. This drill is best at the start of the term for the first couple of lessons and then shouldn't be needed once mastered.

Equipment: Back bubbles and wall edge.

- The teacher should be IN the water for this exercise.
- Have children hold the wall and check that their arms are shoulder width apart and straight. Reinforce the words “LONG ARMS” and “LONG LEGS”.
- Question children by asking them what number each arm looks like (the number one) and what number do they look like when you have 2 number ones? (Number eleven). From now on refer to the Number 11 position and use this on the kickboard.
- Do the same with their legs and ask them to hold their legs closed at the ankles while you gently try to open them. They must resist, which activates their muscles and gives tone to the shape. We call their body shape with long arms and legs the “letter L shape” ie long and skinny like a simple L.
- This is an example of using 2 different learning styles – the *visual* and the *kinaesthetic*.
- Have them begin kicking their legs slowly maintaining straight legs and if they can do this have them pick up the foot speed.
- Add in the bubble blowing and watch their face for breathing technique (ie soft bubbles with face down increasing to fast on the way up so they blow out candles on an imaginary birthday cake). This technique is to be reinforced every lesson.
- If their head is too high, place your hand palm up, under water so when they put their face in, ask them to put their nose into your palm and blow bubbles to tickle your hand. In this way, get them to lower their head to the right depth. Eyes must look straight down perpendicular to the bottom, not forward.

Streamline (ie Torpedoes or 'Flying') Drills (5min.)

Aim: This drill tunes swimmers into the different parts of their body. Body awareness and sensitivity to water is critical to mastery of swimming. The more we can tune swimmers into this, the better co-ordinated they will be. Make sure they have good breath control so they can really hold the body shape.

- "Push; Glide
- Push: Glide: Kick
- Push: Glide: Kick: Swim sequence

Kicking Drills: (5-10 minutes)

Aim: To reinforce body position and body TONE from previous exercise along with correcting technique and strengthening kick.

Equipment: Kickboard turned width wise.

- **Freestyle Kick:** Once this has been practiced, get them to do the same thing on a kickboard while kicking, reinforcing the words long legs, long and skinny, number 11. (Tip turning the board width wise instead of lengthwise is better and is a bit more stable for them as well as giving them a sense of hand placement in Freestyle (in line with shoulders).
- **Backstroke Kick:** Practice kicking on the back holding the board over the knees and making sure the thighs are pressed firmly against the underside of the board for the duration. (Watch that they don't *push* the board *down* to the legs, rather they *lift* the legs *up* to the board. The first way is tense, the second is relaxed and yields a better result.) If the knees bang on the board it gives instant feedback. (Tip: hold your hand over the top of the feet and tell child to "kick my hand" on each and every kick with equal pressure.)

Freestyle Drills (15-20 minutes)

Aim: Improve arm action and develop coordination with side breathing.

Equipment: From the platform using kickboards, wall, back bubble, fins

- **Catchup drill:** With a kickboard, revise Beg B drill of 4 freestyle arms then take a breath to the front and repeat. Teacher to check head position and where eyes are looking. Stress NOT to look forward to where they are going. Ensure arms do a big full movement with adequate shoulder rotation.
- **Wall Drill:** Have class in back bubbles holding wall in a line. Children to practice side breathing on right arm, blowing on left arm. Teacher moves from swimmer to swimmer correcting, and manipulating arm movement slowly, along with head movement to ensure accuracy. Children should be able to work independently of teacher. Watch that legs are kicking. Children NOT coordinating arms and legs well, needs the teacher to manipulate arms in slow motion, whilst reinforcing "Fast Feet", so they can FEEL what is required. Ensure adequate body/shoulder rotation on each side.

- **Single arm drill:** with fins and kickboard (bubble optional) swimmers to practice side breathing using the right arm only. Check where eyes are looking.
- **Catchup Freestyle:** As above but using both arms. Right arm to breathe; Left arm to blow.
- **Single Arm Drill no board:** AS above but do this without the board, still using fins. Ensure lead arm is maintained at surface all the time, and points forward to steer accurately.
- **Catchup Drill no board:** As above with fins and no board. Make sure swimmer makes a torpedo between each stroke. Check where eyes are looking, range of movement and shoulder /body rotation. **Snaking** will occur if swimmer can't control/steer the lead arm, OR if head gets out of alignment; OR if arm pulls across body; OR if swimmer twists upper body rather than rotates whole body, OR if legs are held straight while kicking. These issues need fixing.
- **Backstroke Drills:** Revise Beg B drills with fins and kickboard. Support swimmer underneath the head and raise arm up, turn hand to position pinky, stretch and enter hand accurately and push to leg. Repeat on other arm. After doing this a few times allow the swimmer to try on their own reminding them to **look** at their arm/hand to check it is correct and **feel** their hand/arm enter against their face.

Close (3-5min)

- ⇒ Diving from edge assisted
- ⇒ Mushroom floats
- ⇒ Pin drops