

Managing the Learn to Swim Class

To Enhance Great Teaching.

Classes

- It is one thing to understand the science of learn to swim.
- Its another to understand and be able to use appropriate teaching sequences and progressions.
- Its another to be able to attend to the personality needs of teaching one on one.

And its yet another to be able to teach a class of multiple children.

This section is about teaching “the class” successfully.

- When you have 3 or more students in one teaching time, you have a “class” as opposed to “private or semi-private” lessons.
- Now, in addition to doing good teaching, you have to “manage the class”. This is a very difficult skill and by observation, not one that is usually well done.

The Problem.

- The issue that “managing the class” creates, is to AVOID doing the following:
- Teaching a series of individual one on one lessons with five children in the group.
- This is when the instructor works with one child, while four others “sit and watch”. Then it’s the next child’s turn.
- What this creates is not a 30 minute lesson, but a 6 and a half minute lesson in a 30 minute period. Not a desirable thing.

Why is it “not a desirable thing”?

- First, from the standpoint of teaching, the inactive children are bored, maybe cold, in an unsafe situation to a large degree, and once their attention wanders, very hard to get “refocused” on what is going on. Plus, from a safety standpoint, they still have to be “watched carefully”.
- Second, from a business standpoint, imagine the mother who has paid for a 30 minute lesson and is now watching her daughter cling to the wall for 24 minutes while the teacher works with other people.

What is the Solution?

- The properly prepared swim teacher knows how to manage a class so no more than $\frac{1}{2}$ the class is observing (inactive) at any given moment.
- Even in the very beginning groups, $\frac{1}{2}$ the children are moving and $\frac{1}{2}$ are “observing” or “resting”.

Its an old Physical Education Solution.....

- “count off by 2’s”
- Each child is either a “1” or a “2”.
- When the 1’s are active, the 2’s are observing.
- And vice versa.
- This means that the level of “inactivity” is kept to a minimum.
- And attention is better focused.
- Why 2’s and not 3’s?
- I don’t know, just experience speaking.

The second part of the management issue is the time of the class.

- Each class has a designated time period...for discussion, lets call it a 30 minute class.
- Those 30 minutes need to be active, fast paced, and ENGAGING.
- This requires high energy from the teacher.

Filling 30 minutes of Excitement

- In order to do this well, the teacher needs a very old fashioned concept....a LESSON plan.
- The purpose of the lesson plan is to keep the flow of the 30 minutes moving at a fast pace.
- Ideally, this creates a “Time Flies When You Are Having Fun” result.

To do a lesson plan....

- You need to know what you want to achieve.
- You need to know how to do “whole-part-whole” teaching.
- And you need to understand the importance of the law of repetition.
- You don’t really need a 30 minute lesson plan.
- You need a 10 minute (or 5 minute, or 3 minute solution, depending on the situation.)
- Then repeat.

Writing Out the Lesson Plan

- In the beginning, it will help THE TEACHER to write out their lesson plan.
- As time goes on, the teacher will internalize the lesson plan for anything they regularly teach.
- “time” is not days... “Time” is at least months.
- In the meantime, Write It Out. It focuses the mind.

Lets put some meat on the bones of this concept.

- For our discussion, lets divide learning to swim into three initial phases....
- Phase one is getting into the water, getting the face in the water, learning to blow bubbles and learning to float.
- Phase two is moving into motion...kicking, learning to use the arms and independently moving through the water.
- Phase three is coordinating breathing with motion.

Lets look at a sample lesson plan for each of these phases.

- ***Phase one. Here's a sequence.***
- Sit on the side of the pool.
- Stand on the bottom of the pool.
- Bring water to your face.
- Bring your face to the water.
- Put your face and head underwater.
- Learn to hold onto the wall and bob.
- Learn to bob with blowing bubbles.
- Learn to hold your breath

Phase one, continued....

- Be held by the instructor, face down and hold breath. (learn to float on the front.)
- Be held by the instructor, face up and hold breath. (learn to float on the back.)
- Be held by the instructor, face down, roll to their back and get a breath. Roll Back.
- Be held by the instructor, face up, and Breath.
- Sustain themselves floating on their face.
- Sustain themselves floating on their back.

Now, the lesson plan. First, divide the group in 1,2's.

- Take the first four tasks. Group them.
- FIVE MINUTE SEGMENTS.
- 1's – sit on side then
- Stand on bottom. Good.
- Now sit down on side.
- 2's sit on side, then Stand on Bottom. Good, sit down.
- 1's – stand on bottom, bring water to your face. Good. Sit down.
- 2's – same.
- 1's – stand on bottom, bring water to face, bring face to water. Good.Sit down.
- 2's – Same.
- FAST MOVING.

So in a class of 6....

- Three are 1's.
- The 1's are active.
- Then the 1's observe.
- Then the 1's are active again.
- Repeat.
- Three are 2's.
- The 2's observe(rest)
- And the 2's are active.
- And the 2's observe again.
- Repeat.

So in a 30 minute phase one class...

- You Take Your Five Minute Lesson plan and repeat it 6 times, continually.
- So they get six opportunities to do each segment of activity.
- Once they master those activities, move to the next segment.

Lesson plan phase one, segment two.

- 1's – hold breath above water.
- 2's – hold breath above water.
- 1's – put face underwater, hold breath.
- 2's – put face underwater, hold breath.
- 1's – on surface, blow bubbles.
- 2's – on surface, blow bubbles.
- 1's – Underwater, blow bubbles.
- 2's – Underwater, blow bubbles.
- 1's – Underwater, blow bubbles, BOB, 2x,3x etc.
- 2's – Underwater, blow bubbles, BOB, 2x, 3x, etc.
- This is fast paced, repeats...then sit and rest a minute. So it's a three minute lesson plan repeated 10 times in 30 minutes.
- Good, Phase one, segment two complete.
- Onward....on another day.

Lesson Plan, phase one, segment three.

- Now we're going to float...so the "instructor involvement is higher" and the lesson plan is longer (3-5 Minutes.)
- If you have an all-shallow teaching area, its easier to move faster since they can stand up.

Floating...

- Use a “noodle” that 3 people can hold onto all at one time with their hands....
- Off the noodle, hands under the arms by the instructor...float face down. Recover, stand.
- 1's – on the noodle, float with face in water.
- Get a breath.
- Face down, float again.
- Stand.
- Repeat, then sit...
- 2's repeat. Whole sequence takes 3-5 minutes.
- Then move towards floating, on the back.
- Then float on front, roll over, breath, roll back.

The main idea...

- *Is to keep as many people **ACTIVELY LEARNING** as much of the time as possible.*
- *This engages their interest and keeps it.*
- *Children need time to absorb ideas. So watching the other group is a good thing.*

Phase Two Sequences.

- ***Moving Through the Water.***
- Kicking freestyle on a kickboard.
- Kicking freestyle on front, no board.
- Kicking freestyle on side, no board.
- Streamline and kick on front.
- Streamline, kick, use arms.

Phase Two: Moving, lesson plan.

- Fast alternation.
 - First five minutes..
 - 1's – kick on board. Stop, rest.
 - 2's kick on board. Stop, rest. REPEAT
 - Second five minutes...
 - 1's – kick on front, recover, stand, rest.
 - 2's- same
 - Repeat.

Moving...

- Third five minutes...
- 1's – kick on side, recover, stand, rest.
- 2's – kick on side, recover, stand, rest.
- Rest.
- 1's – Streamline (on deck) Rest, watch
- 2's – same
- Repeat.
- Fourth five minutes...
- 1's Learn front ready position. Relax
- 2's Learn front ready position. Relax
- Repeat.
- Fifth five minutes...
- 1's- front ready..GO!
Streamline, push off, kick, stand, recover.
- 2's – same
- REPEAT.

Moving.

- Fifth five minutes.
- 1's – front ready, Go!
Streamline, push off, kick, use arms.
Recover, stand. Watch.
- 2's – same.
- Repeat.
- Count arm strokes Add 1 more each time.
- Sixth five minutes – ***review all.***
- 1's – kick on board
- 2's same
- 1's Kick on front no board
- 2's same
- 1's kick on side no board
- 2's same
- 1's – kick on front no board
- 2's same
- 1's front ready, streamline, GO!, kick, arms, count.
- 2's – same.
- Great job!

Phase Three –Integrating Beathing.

- ***Sequence:***
- Swim with arms on kickboard alternate
- Swim with arms on KB, alt, add breath to side.
- Roll to breath with swim
- 6kicks, 3 stroke, 6 kicks, 3 strokes
- Finger drag with breath.
- Work on breathing on both sides.
- Lesson Plan
- 1-swim with kickboard.
- Stop, watch.
- 2's – same.
- 1's – same, add breath
- 2's same.
- REPEAT.
- 2nd half of a 30 minute class
- 1's – 6K,3S, stop
- 2's – same
- 1's – finger drag, with breath, stop.
- 2's – Same
- Repeat.

An alternative thought for a 30 minute class.

- Do the ENTIRE progression in each class....Review, new, review, SUCCESS.
- 1's –wall bobs. Stop.
- 2's – same
- 1's – free bobs. Stop
- 2's – same
- 1's – Front float. Good. Stop.
- 2's same
- 1's back float. Good. Stop
- 2's same
- 1's – kick on board. Stop
- 2's – same
- 1's – side glidekick. Stop
- 2's – same.
- 1's – streamline kick. Stop
- 2's – same
- 1's Swim with board. Stop
- 2's same
- 1's Swim 6 strokes with breathing. Stop
- 2's same
- 1's Swim 6 strokes finger drag. Stop.
- 2's same
- Go back, to kick on board. Repe

Keys to Great Teaching.

- 1) Teacher Energy.
- 2) Engage. Personality
- 3) Move fast, “don’t take no for an answer”.
- 4) Concentrate attention on those that do, not those that don’t. You get what you reward.
- Some children process slower than others. See #4.
- Praise when the child engages, don’t disparage when they are not.
- Language and voice...
- “Ready, Go!” not “ready?, go?”
- Preparatory commands and execution commands.
“1, 2, 3!”