

Effective Instructor Checklist

Use the following check list to perform a quick self-assessment. By checking your strategies, you can adjust your teaching to make class time more productive for your students.

- Is my assessment of the child's skills and abilities correct?
 - Be sure to keep assessing your students every class.
 - Students should experience challenges and successes.

- Does the lesson plan allow for maximum learning and progress?
 - Make sure that your lessons have as much movement and correction as possible.
 - Modify activities to individual student needs.

- Am I building from foundation skills upwards?
 - Always think in terms of progressions; breath control, body position, glides, kicks, etc.
 - If a child is struggling with an advanced skill, it is often related to a basic progression that needs more practice. For example, lack of breath control can cause head position problems in front crawl.

- Are the activities developmentally appropriate?
 - Make sure the child is mentally able to understand what you are asking of them and physically able to perform it.

- Is the workload appropriate for the child?
 - Ensure students are practicing proper distances and are getting enough endurance practice within every class.

- Is the child motivated?
 - It's up to you to keep it interesting and fun so that the child stays focused and motivated to learn.

- Is the child receiving enough practice time?
 - Plan and pace your lessons for maximum practice time.

Other things to consider:

- Do I need more knowledge to teach the skill?
 - If yes, ask your Deck Supervisor to help with drill ideas.
 - Use other available resources: instructor and equipment tip sheets, etc.

- Is the child having a growth spurt?
 - A sudden growth spurt can leave kids with less coordination as they get used to their new size. You may have to adjust and adapt body position to maximize success.

Refining Your Teaching Techniques

➤ **Back to Basics**

Practice the **fundamentals** each day as part of your warm-up and you will be rewarded with a beautiful stroke. (Breath control, glide, kick, etc.)

Moving too quickly on to combined arm and leg propulsion, while practicing poor body position and weak kick, will result in an uncoordinated stroke.

➤ **Glide then Float**

It is important to note that beginner swimmers in the preschool age group often move through the standard “beginner progressions” in an **unorderly** fashion. Many will bypass floats because they feel more comfortable moving in the water and have not yet learned to trust the buoyant properties of water.

➤ **Teach to the Individual**

Each child needs an individual approach. One will be able to swim with minimal assistance, and the next will need all of the support you can give. They need to feel equal in the class regardless of ability.

➤ **Acknowledge fear and uncertainty**

Reassure the uncertain child. When a child says: “I am afraid”, **DO NOT SAY**: “Oh, don’t worry about it”. This is the worst thing you can do. Often by just saying, in a soothing voice, “It’s OK to be afraid”, and then offering **extra comfort and support** will be all that is needed to spark the child over the fear.

➤ **The Best Teaching Tool**

YOU... You are the best teaching tool. Use your **facial expressions** and your **body language** to the ultimate. Think of yourself as an entertaining clown or mime artist. **Smile**... strain you cheek smiling! The kids love it!

➤ **Creativity**

Use creative, **age-appropriate** imagery. For example, instead of saying “put your face in the water”, say “point your nose to the bottom of the pool”. Instead of “blow your bubbles”, say “feed the fishies”.