

Paddle Strokes

Another no wind, sunny day? Here is the second Kayak Plan B Brief, to follow on from the Capsize exercise.

Show the children how to carry the kayaks and the paddles, to the beach, stow the paddle in the kayak and carry using the toggles at each end. Place in a row facing into the sea

Starting with the Beach Demonstration

You will need;

1 Kayak Instructor, or another Instructor who can do this demo, and a paddle.



Facing the sea, with the children standing behind the Instructor, so that they can mimic instructors movements. Hold up the paddle for all to see, the bar is called the “ shaft” the paddles are called “blades”. Point out the star on the blade, explain that this star has to be on your right side - the star is for starboard. Hold paddle so you can see the star on paddle closest to your right hand, grab the shaft, in the middle of the black area, thumb under and fingers over it, and hold firmly. Your fingers will feel the long bump, at the back, that is called the 'key' and that is to help you keep the paddle blade always in that position.



So hold it firmly, when you take a stroke on the right side from front to back, the paddle is in the perfect position to be most effective, catching the most amount for water to make the kayak move forward. Right hand pulls the blade from front, whilst left hand pushes the blade, about where your feet are, to the back of your seat paddle out.



Now the left hand, is holding the paddle loosely so the shaft can move when the right wrist rotates forward, turning the paddle blade round a bit so it is now in perfect position to he catch the most amount of water. hold it tight. Left hand pulling, right hand pushing, front to back same as right side.

Just like a turtle moves their fins each time they move forward. Explain that once on the water, the skill is to do it evenly, so you can go in a straight line, to start with they may have to do extra strokes on one side or other to keep in a straight line.

Also could mention, when they are pulling with one hand, they are pushing with the other, can go faster, and easier on your arms.

Backwards Paddling, the opposite to going forward, but backwards, paddle in the water at the seat, and take forward to your feet. Do not turn paddle around.



To action a **Quick Turn**, put the blade in the water right beside you, and keep it still, it acts like a brake, and will turn in the same direction as the paddle.

Everyone is to have a practice of these movements, at least to familiarise themselves with holding the paddle correctly, and get used to holding the key.

Shallow water Paddle Strokes demonstration

Have an Instructor /confident person do this correctly.
With nice flat water, no waves, help the children, demonstrate safely;
Have a PB in water on standby.

How to help each other launch a Kayak.

Carry kayak, one person at each end, holding a toggle, facing forwards until just in the water, about calf deep.

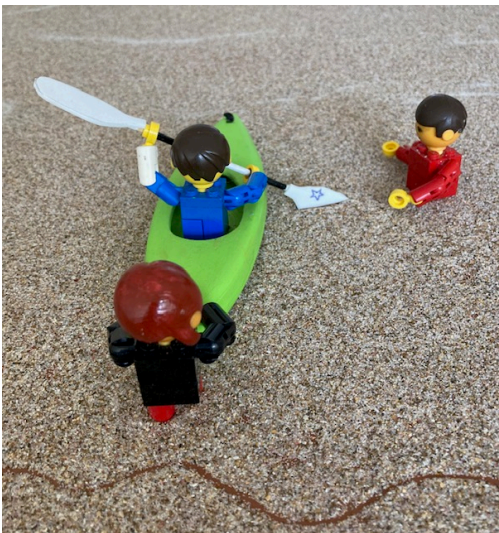


Place in water, with person at front still holding toggle. Person at the back to let go of toggle, and holding cockpit steady with both hands, on the opposite side to where the kayaker is getting in.

Let kayaker pick up the paddle, first identify where the star is , then place paddle across front of the cockpit, the right way round, ready to go. Kayaker steps into kayak with back foot first, holding on with both hands, stretch leg right across to other side, whilst kayak is being held firmly by helper.



Kayaker to sit down, shuffle bottom to back of seat and sit up straight, slightly leaning forward, pick up the paddle in correct position.



Tell person in front “ready”, so they can step aside. Person at the back can give kayaker a push, and kayaker can take their first stroke, it is important that they always leave the shore in straight line away from beach, continually paddling until they are clear of any breaking waves.



Second stroke



Third stroke and so on....



Sharp Turn

Like the beach demo, put blade straight into the water beside you, and hold it steady, kayak will turn same side the blade is in the water, and will stop turning when you lift the blade out of the water, or kayak loses momentum.

Instructor also to demonstrate, how to stop, keeping paddle low and dip blades quickly left, right, left right, evenly, blades acting like breaks, also paddle backwards, without turning the paddle.

Doing a U Turn from a stationary position

This can be quite tricky for some children, could do later, or save for another day, or give it a go.



Starting point. Using a small buoy as the stationary object, to help make this manoeuvre visually clearer.
Bow to Buoy



First stroke is from very back to very front of **left** side of kayak, keeping paddle low, holding more towards blade over the kayak, get ready to do a big sweep over the water almost drawing a half circle with blade.



Kayak will spin about $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ depending on how well you do this.



Second stroke, prepare to do sweep stroke from front to very back, **right side** (the other side).



Kayak will spin another $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ circle



U turn completed. Stern to buoy.
You can continue to do a 360 degrees turn.
Just repeat step 1 and 2 again.
See if you can do it in 3 strokes!!

Returning to shore



Paddle fast in a straight line for the shore and keep paddling until the front half of the kayak is on the beach.



Someone should be ready to hold front toggle to steady kayak and let kayaker hop out safely.

Now everyone is ready to have a go, and then have some kayaking fun

Relay races

This is a good activity to practice these skills.

Divide your class into equal teams, depending on how many children and PB you have. It is ok to have parent instructors helping as well, in a Kayak. They can't be counted as Kayak Instructors, but as they can get closer to the kayakers than the PB, it can be quite comforting for the nervous children to have someone close by.

There are a lot of ways to get started with the basics, this is our favourite.



This is a simple way to set the course, that has a lot of options. 2 buoys and an anchored opti hull, or a double kayak anchored at both ends. The buoys are closer to shore, just to get them started. Tell the children to go round all the buoys on the right side of the kayak. Clockwise, It might help to draw the course on the beach, so everyone understands.



RELAY RACING RULES

Races start and finish with the teams kayak just out of the water, bow first, with the team sitting in a line behind it. When the whistle goes, the first person hops up to start pulling their kayak into the water and the second in line can help keep kayak steady till first person is ready, then give a little push. Then helps when person returns, next person can help the second person, and so on. For every race. The winner is the first team out of the water, kayak in starting position, with all of the team sitting behind it, in a row



First Race,

Hands only, children have to find a way to do this, kneeling, lying on front, sitting...

This race helps the children to better understand what a paddle does, leave the paddles on the beach, out of the way. They just need to go round the nearest buoy, in this case 2 teams round the orange buoy and 2 teams round the red buoy. Tell them which way round, to avoid collisions, and back to shore, the children sometimes find this surprisingly difficult.



Second Race

1st team member using paddle to go straight to the anchored opti, ignoring the buoys, and puts their paddle on it, and hand paddles back to shore.

2nd team member hand paddles to opti gets the paddle and paddles back to shore. And so on. If the team has an even number then the paddle will end up back to shore. If not the PB will have to bring them back.

Third Race

Just a straight paddle round the 3 objects and back to shore.

Fourth Race

Paddle to first buoy, put paddle in straight to turn the kayak round. Or try a U turn. Now have a go at paddling backwards for a little bit, then turn round to continue the course.

Fifth Race

You need a bag of small floating balls, (school fairs are a good place to get them, or small sponges) enough for 1 each, just has to float, and small enough for their hand to easily pick up. PB can drop these in the middle of course. Another PB may have to be assigned to pick up the ones that get away. Children can return to team when have a ball.

Sixth Race

For this race you need enough ribbons for 1 each child. They need to be about 2cm wide, and 18 cm long. Instructions, give each child a ribbon and show them to thread through their vest strap, do not tie it. When it's the child's turn, they paddle up to the opti, and climb into it opti, without letting go of the kayak, they pull the ribbon off their vest and thread through their kayak toggle, tie ONCE then get back into their kayak and paddle back to shore, The double Kayak may be easier for the kids to do this.

Last race

This involves the children swimming. Go round the whole course same way as usual, with paddles, then child to capsize their kayak after the last buoy, and swim it back to shore, pushing or pulling the capsized kayak, taking the shortest route, team members to help see saw the upturned kayak and bring back to starting place.

There are endless activities you can do this way, that involves the whole class, Just pick the options that suit your class, help etc.

You may need to have more than 1 anchored opti, if you have more than 4 teams.

This is another great water confidence building activity