Boating Fun – Adventure on the Water



Produced Under a Grant From The Aquatic Resources
(Wallop-Breaux) Trust Fund
Administered by the U.S. Coast Guard

US Army Corps
of Engineers®

Dear Reader:
This story and activity book introduces basic precautions for safety in and around water and boats. We hope that you will share it with your child and talk about the safety messages in it. Of all the messages in the book, the six most important are:

1. A child should: know how to swim; swim with a buddy; and always swim under adult supervision.
2. A child should always wear a PFD (personal flotation device, also called a life jacket) when on a boat.
3. The equipment and people taken in a boat should be placed so that the boat is balanced.
4. People should always stay seated in a boat when it is being operated.
5. There should always be a lookout to find dangers in the water.
6. If the boat capsizes, people should always stay with the boat and climb onto it if they can.

Dear Teacher:
We have provided pictures for coloring, sized appropriately for you to make overhead transparencies for a group of students. This allows the group to talk about the pictures and story together. We suggest that if you are comfortable with interactive teaching, you gather the children together in one part of the room and "take them on a pretend boat ride" using the overhead transparencies as a focus for talking about each message indicated. This will be enhanced by use of PFDs or other equipment and demonstrations. You may wish to divide the material into more than one lesson. For your convenience, major points pertaining to a picture are on the page with that picture. Important points, in addition to those listed in the "Dear Reader" section, are:

1. A boat must carry proper equipment to be safe and legal. Know the equipment required in your state for your boat.
2. Each person on a boat must have a readily accessible, properly fitted U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD (personal flotation device or life jacket).
3. If people are suddenly in cold water and can't get out, they should try to prevent hypothermia by quickly getting into a position with arms crossed across their chests and legs pulled up. This is called the "Heat Escape Lessening Position" (H.E.L.P.).
4. The universal distress signal is to wave arms overhead.
5. People should pick up their trash to help keep the environment clean.

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Demonstrations and Activities:

PFDs -Bring or ask students to bring life jackets of various sizes and colors.

1. ***PFD Style Show:*** Ask small students to put on large jackets and large students to put on small jackets. Show how a jacket can be pulled up over the eyes of a person if it is too large. To add to the fun, use music and let them model the jackets along a designated walkway. Discuss the value of color for finding people who are in water. Discuss how the jackets should fit.

2. ***Who's Lost?*** Set four (or more) chairs in a row and get volunteer children to sit on them. Pretend this is a boat with four passengers. Put different sized life jackets under their chairs, zipped, turned inside out or tangled, making them difficult to put on. Tell the students that many people store life jackets under their seats in a boat. At your signal, "the boat is sinking"; the students must put on the jackets as quickly as possible. Time them, as well as watching for who wins. Discuss how long it takes for a boat to capsize and how long it would take to put on a jacket in the water. (Be advised that putting on a jacket while in the water is very difficult for anyone and probably impossible for a small child!) For added variety, with older children, let them be blindfolded during the time they put on the jackets. Alternatively, at the end of 60 seconds, give a signal and then determine how many students are properly jacketed and how many are not (and therefore "lost").

3. ***Jacket Race:*** Divide the class into two or more teams; line them up alongside one another and establish finish lines with a rope. Place a life jacket at the feet of the first person on each team. When you say go, the first person of each team puts on the life jacket correctly, runs across the finish line on the other side of the room and returns to the team, removes the life jacket and gives it to the second person in line. This is repeated until each team member has run the race. The team that changed jackets correctly in the least amount of time wins the race.

Hypothermia:

Place a small, squeezable ball in the bottom of an aquarium or bucket (preferably see through) and then fill with sufficient water and ice to allow the children to immerse their arms up to the elbows. The temperature of the water should be 45-60 degrees Fahrenheit. Ask the children if they think 90 seconds is a long time. Allow one or more children to immerse their arms. Using a stopwatch, time the immersion for about 90 seconds then ask them to try to squeeze the ball. Discuss how difficult it would be to put on a life jacket and zip a zipper under these conditions. (Note: Since plunging the arms into cold water can cause dizziness or faintness, do not include children in this exercise who have heart conditions or other chronic conditions.)

Trimming A Boat:

Obtain a 10-12 inch long plastic boat, 4-6 half-ounce fishing sinkers and a dishpan. Fill the dishpan with water and place the boat on it so that the boat is floating. Have the children place weights in the boat, one at a time, either in positions which will balance the boat or positions which will cause the boat to roll over and sink. Discuss how this is related to a big boat in which people ride. For added fun, paint the sinkers yellow and add smiling faces!

It was a beautiful day for a boat ride. Tommy and Sarah could hardly wait! Tommy's Aunt Wendy was going to take them for a ride in her family's boat.

It was National Safe Boating Week and the Marina where Wendy docked had a big display set up. Wendy was waiting for them next to the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary booth.

"Tommy and Sarah," said Wendy, "I want you to meet a friend of mine. This is Coastie, he's the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary mascot!"

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Key Messages

Like to teach kids about safe boating? Become an official instructor for the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

Call 1-800-368-5647

The US Army Corps of Engineers invites you to lend a helping hand; a variety of opportunities await your call. Contact the Volunteer Hotline at 1-800-865-8337.

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Wendy Introduces Sarah and Tommy to Coastie the Safety Boat

“Hello, Tommy! Hello, Sarah!” said Coastie, flashing his beacon light.

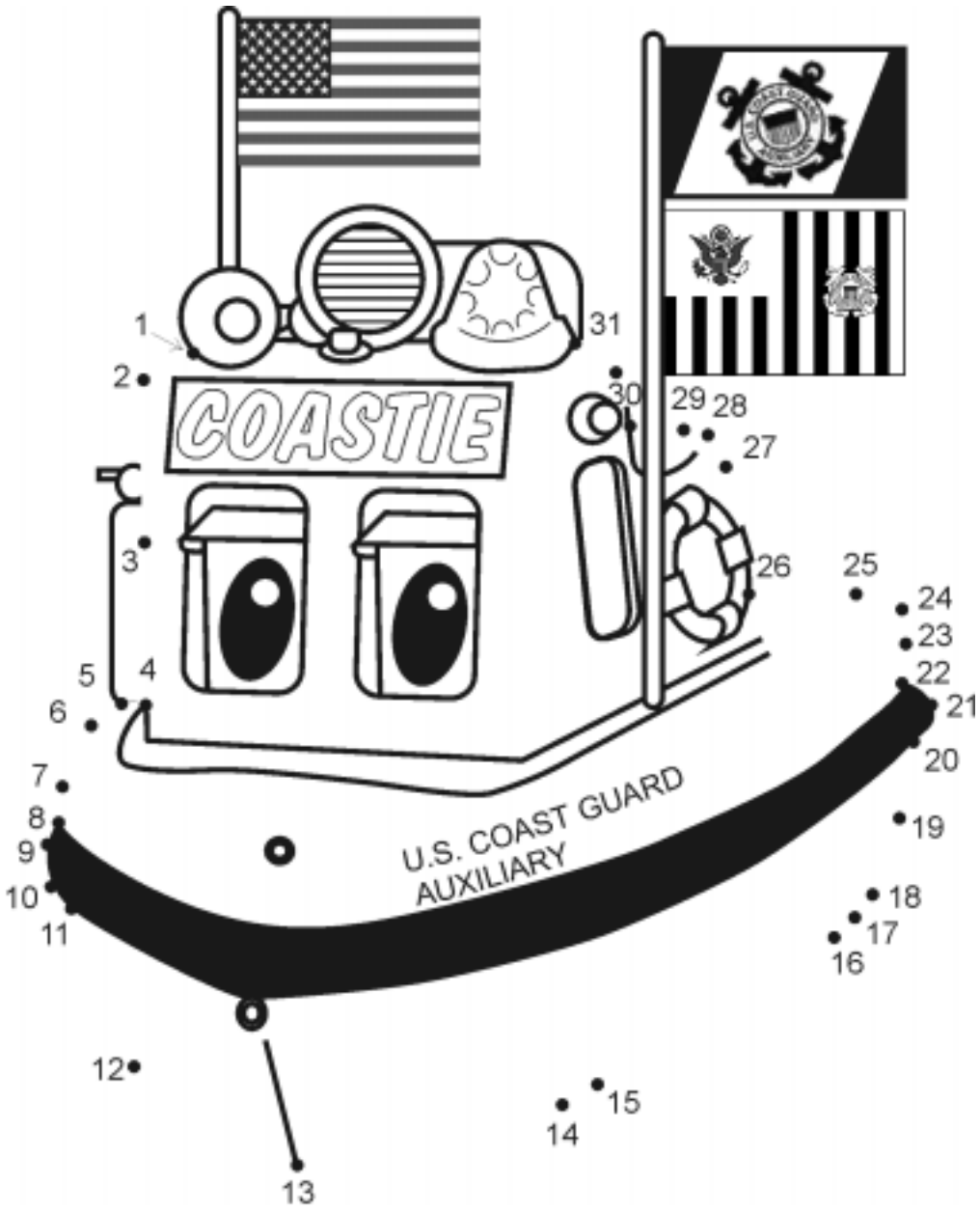
“Wow!” said Tommy. “That’s cool!”

“I thought you would like it,” said Wendy, “so I got this for you.” Wendy opened her big polka-dotted bag and took out a little toy Coastie boat. She gave it to Tommy.

“Does this one talk?” asked Tommy.

“You’ll see!” answered Wendy with a wink. “How are you today, Sarah?”

“I’m excited about going for a boat ride!” Sarah answered.



Connect the Dots to Draw Coastie

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Key Message

Coastie’s Flags are:
United States Flag (left)
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flag (right top) and the U.S. Coast Guard operational flag flown on all USCG vessels (right bottom)

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"Before we go in the boat, said Wendy, "I'd like to know whether you two know how to swim."

"Sure we do," said Tommy. "We took lessons together. It's a lot more fun at the beach or at a pool when you know how to swim. Even my baby brother took lessons."

"Our swimming instructor told us to always swim with a buddy and never to swim without an adult watching us!" said Sarah.

"Great," said Wendy. "But even though you know how to swim, you need to wear a PFD in the boat!"

"A what?" interrupted Tommy and Sarah.

"Personal Flotation Device, that's another name for a life jacket," said Wendy, pulling a bright orange life jacket from her bag.

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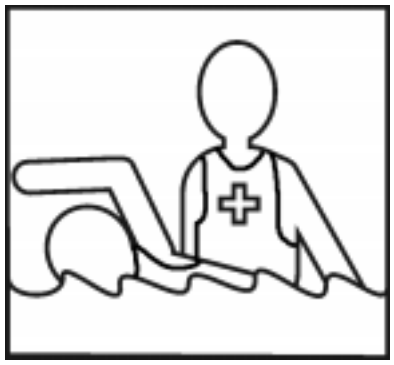
Key Messages

- Learn to swim
- Swim with a buddy
- Always swim under adult supervision

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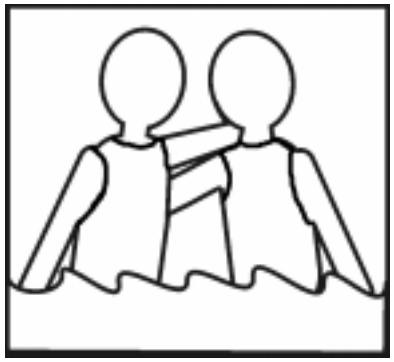
A = ✌ E = 👉 I = 🖐 O = 👌 U =👍

Use the Key Above to Put the Vowels Back Into These Messages:



#1

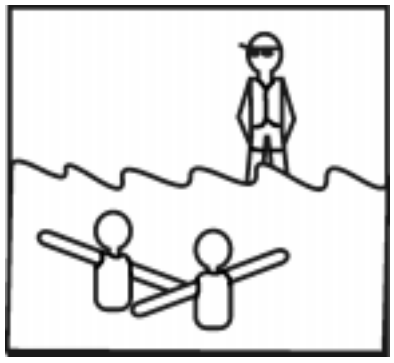
L👉✌RN T👌 SW🖐M



#2

✌LW✌YS SW🖐M

W🖐TH ✌ B👍DDY



#3

M✌K👉 S👍R👉

✌N ✌D👍LT 🖐S

W✌TCH🖐NG Y👌👍

ANSWERS: #1 LEARN TO SWIM #2 SWIM WITH A BUDDY #3 MAKE SURE AN ADULT IS WATCHING YOU

"PFDs come in lots of styles and bright colors to help a rescuer see you if you are in the water. Your PFD, must be Coast Guard approved, in good condition, and fit you *just right*!"

"My baby brother has one with a high collar behind his head," said Tommy.

"That collar would keep his head above water," said Wendy. "Some life jackets are made to keep your head out of the water and others are made just to help you float." Wendy pulled more PFDs from her big polka-dotted bag.

Sarah and Tommy each picked out a PFD. The jackets fit comfortably and looked cool, too.

"Tommy," said Wendy. "Push the green running light on the right side of Coastie's cabin."

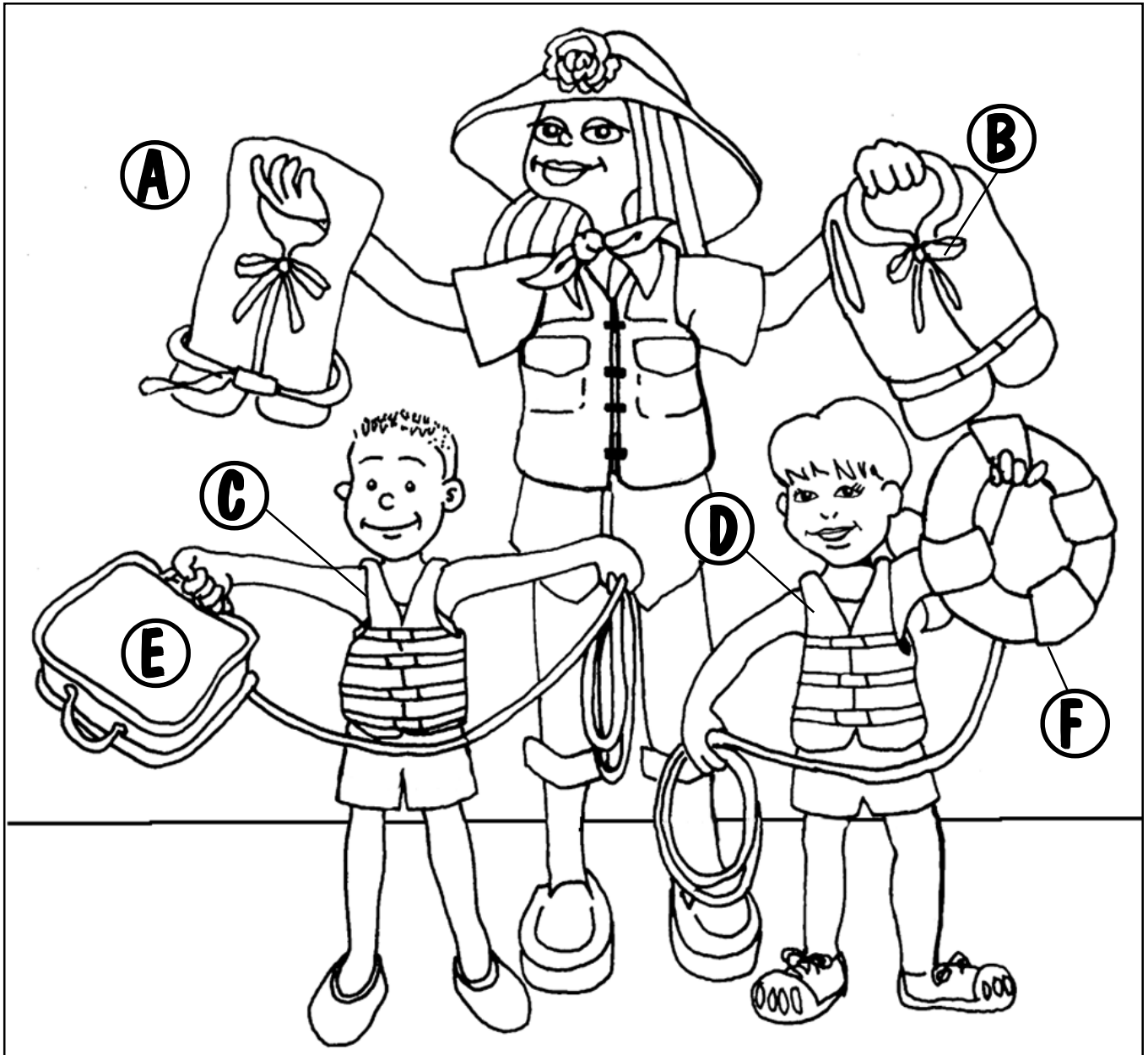
When Tommy pushed on the green button, little Coastie said, "Don't just pack it, *wear* your life jacket!"

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Key Messages

- Each person in a boat must have a Coast Guard approved, wearable PFD readily accessible. It must be in good and serviceable condition, and of appropriate size for the intended user.

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Different Types of PFDs

A, B, C, and D are wearable PFDs. E and F are throwable PFDs. A and B are designed to keep your head above water. C and D are designed to be comfortable and easy to wear.

"Here's our boat," said Wendy, as they walked out onto the dock. "You must remember to stay seated in the boat whenever we are moving!" said Wendy, looking at Sarah and Tommy. "It's very dangerous to stand in a boat. Now, before we go out, let's check to be sure we have all the safety things on board that we are supposed to have!"

"OK," said Sarah. "Can we help?"

"Sure," said Wendy, pulling a first aid kit out of her big bag. "I never go on a trip without this," she said, "but it's not all we take. We need everything on this list…"

"We need to be protected from the sun and heat, too," said Sarah.

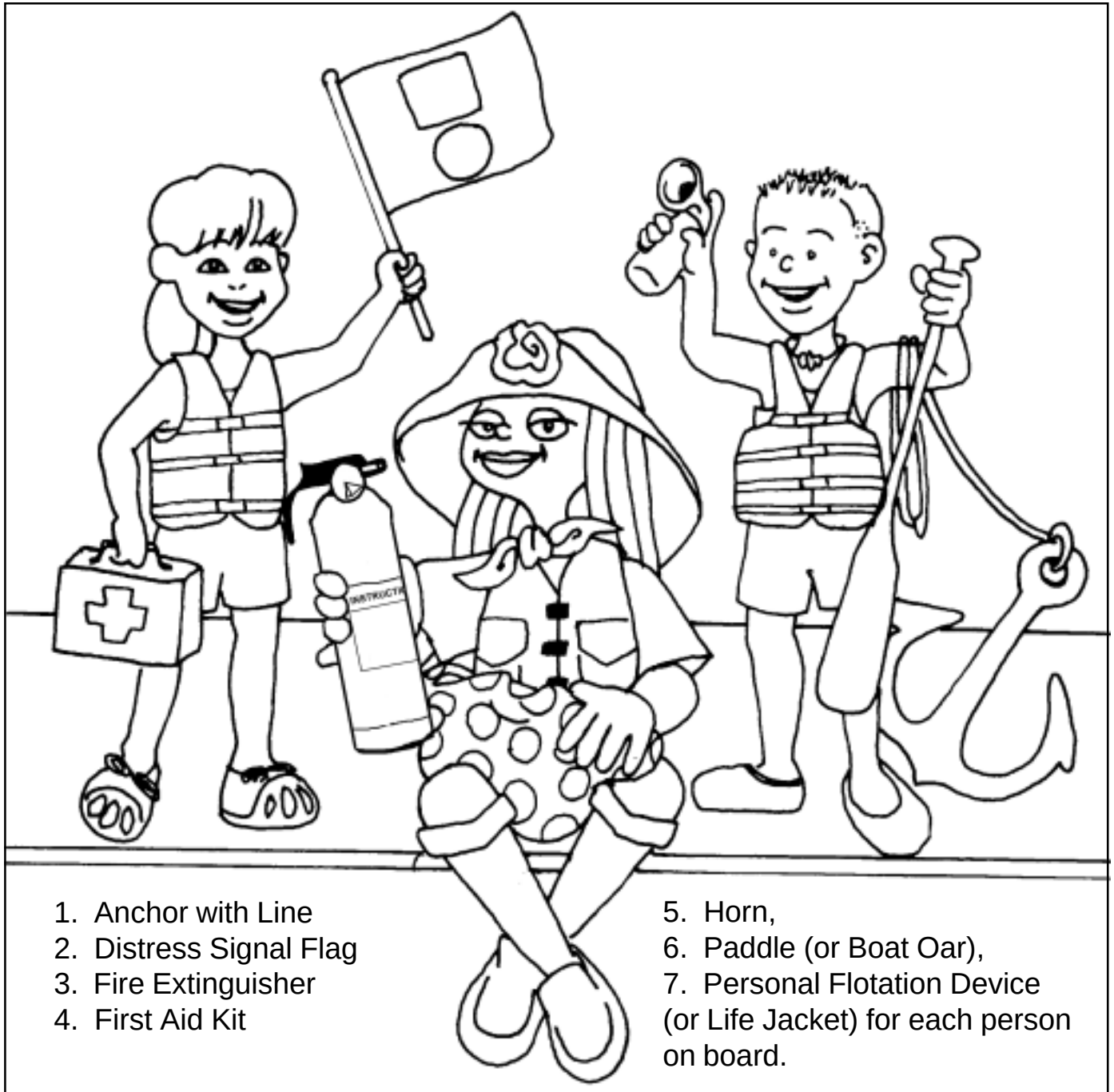
"That's right!" said Wendy. She opened up her big polka-dotted bag again, pulling out sunscreen, hats, sunglasses, and bottles of water.

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Key Messages

- Certain equipment is required by Federal or State law for safety
- Know the legal requirements in your state

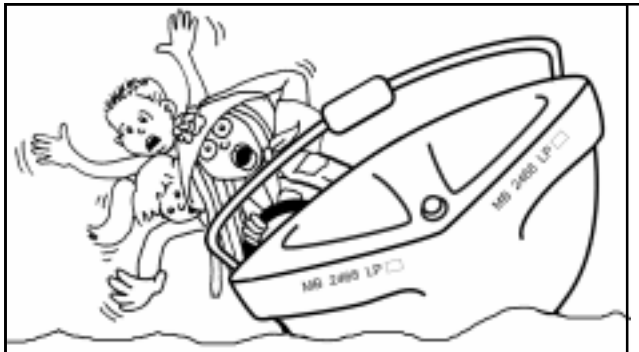
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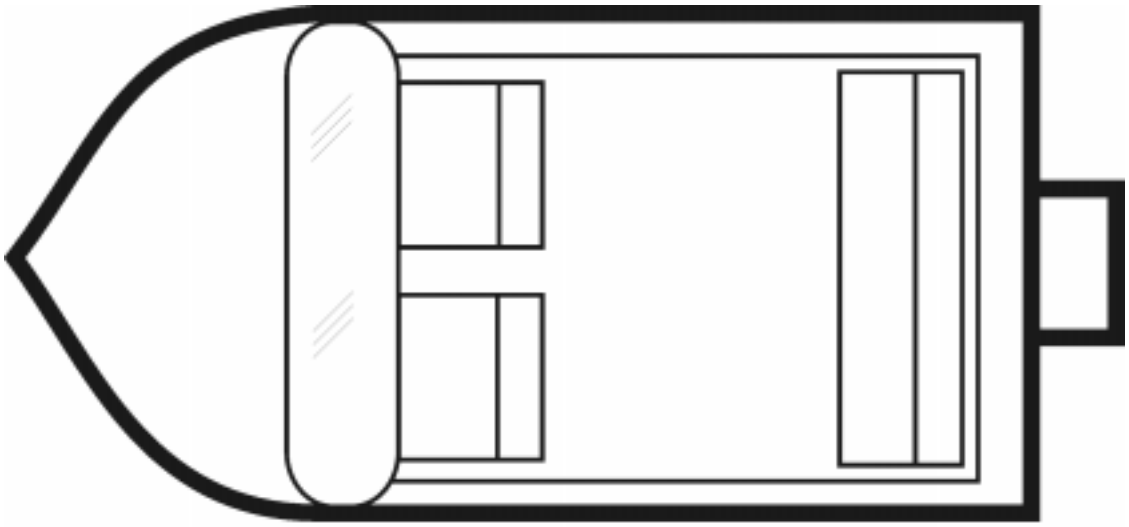
1. Anchor with Line
2. Distress Signal Flag
3. Fire Extinguisher
4. First Aid Kit
5. Horn,
6. Paddle (or Boat Oar),
7. Personal Flotation Device (or Life Jacket) for each person on board.

Find the Items on Wendy's Safety List

Then Wendy stepped carefully into the boat and got behind the wheel. Sarah got in behind her and Tommy did too, clutching Coastie tightly in his hand.
"Whoa!" they exclaimed when the boat tipped to that side. Wendy quickly moved to the other side of the boat before Sarah went overboard. "I should have warned you!" said Wendy. "Riding in a boat is not the same as riding in a car. You have to place people and things in a boat so as to keep it balanced, so that the weight isn't all over on one side. A boat can tip over or capsize if it isn't balanced."
"I guess we learned our lesson!" said Tommy. "Are we ready to go now?"



This boat is not balanced!



Draw Sarah, Tommy, Wendy and Their Stuff in the Boat
Be sure to keep the boat balanced.

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Key Messages

- People and equipment must be placed in a boat so that it is kept balanced
- People should be seated while a boat is underway (in operation).

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"Let's see," said Wendy. "We have all our safety stuff and the weather forecast is fine. Now all we need is a lookout."

"A lookout?" asked Sarah. "Why do we need a lookout?"

"The boat operator can't watch everything at once," said Wendy. "A lookout watches for dangers in the water like floating junk or branches that could damage the boat or get caught in the propeller. A lookout can also watch for the markers that tell where to go and where not to go," said Wendy.

"Cool!" said Tommy. "Can I be lookout?"

"No, me!" said Sarah.

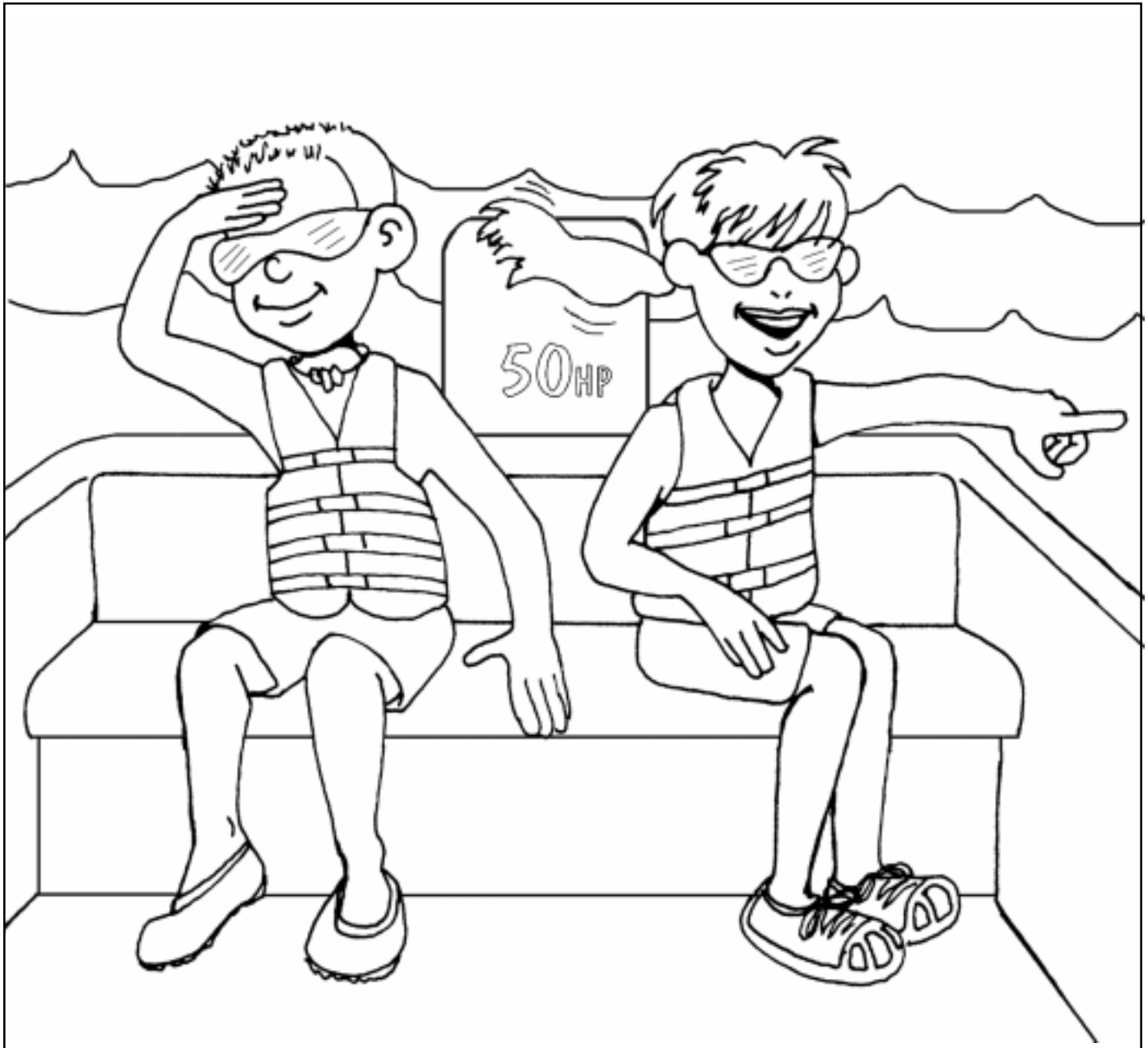
"Okay," said Wendy. "We'll have two lookouts!"

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Key Messages

- Always maintain a proper lookout – it helps to assign someone as a lookout
- A lookout watches for other boats and hazards in the water

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"Eagle-Eye" Tommy and "Sing-Out" Sarah on the Lookout

Wendy did a good job of operating the boat. They rode slowly around looking at lots of things. Then they found just the right place to stop for lunch. They tied the boat to a dock and Wendy laid out a picnic lunch.

As they finished eating, Sarah announced, “Don’t forget, trash and litter can hurt animals and fish. We have to clean up after ourselves and put the trash where it can’t wash out of our boat on to a beach.”

“We need to cut these plastic soda can rings open so that a fish doesn’t get his head stuck in there!” said Tommy.



Tommy and Sarah Clean Up After Their Picnic

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Key Messages

- Trash can be harmful to wildlife and should always be cleaned up
- Take extra care with plastic soda can holders and cut the rings open

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"Now then," said Wendy. "I am a good operator and we will have a safe trip; but what if you were on a boat that *did* capsize?"

"I'd swim for shore," said Tommy.

"No, No, No!" exclaimed Wendy. If a boat capsizes, always stay with the boat! Climb up on the boat if you can, then you can wave your arms to get help. People can see you better than if you are in the water and everyone stops to help people who are waving their arms!"

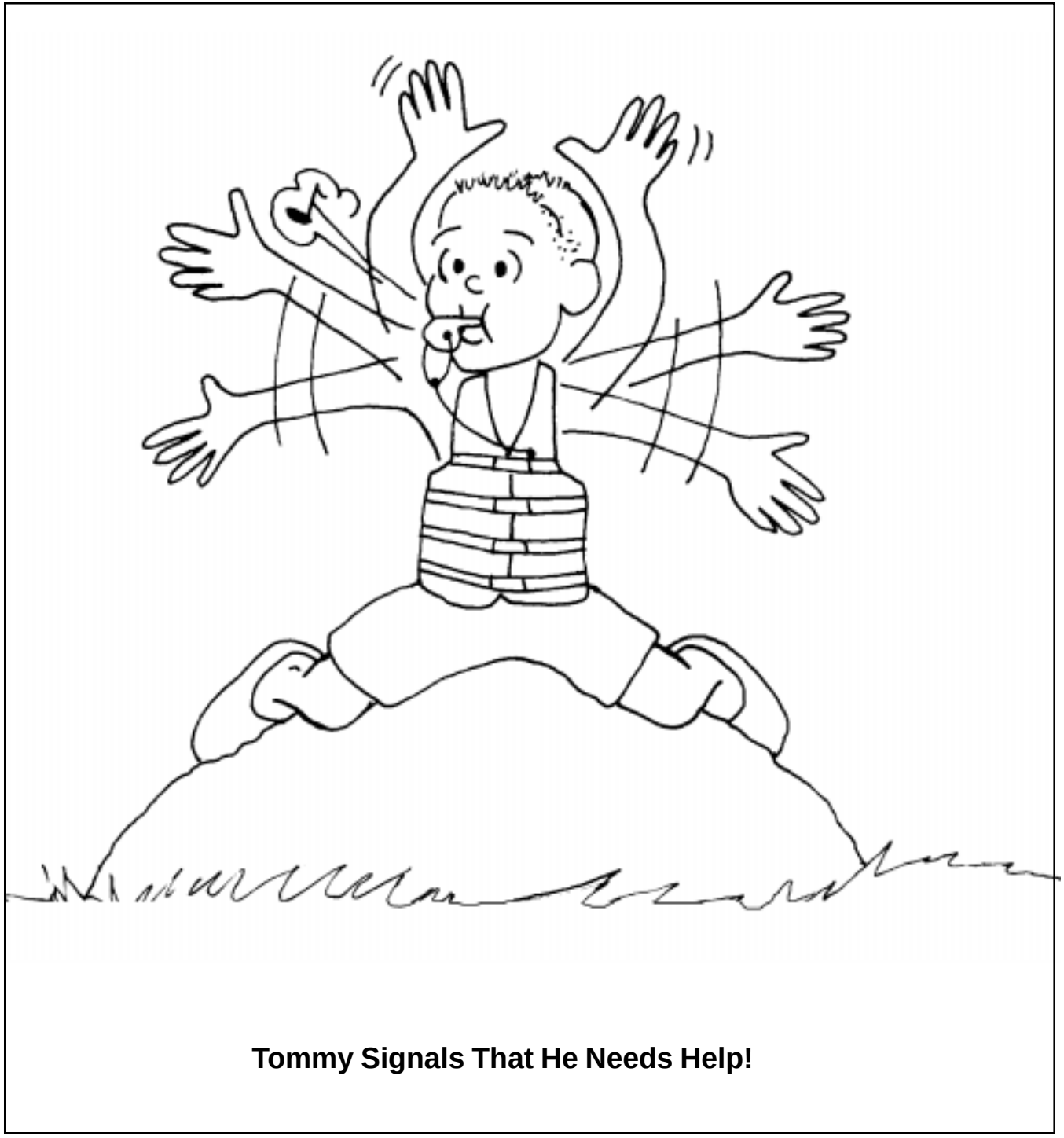
"I get it!" said Tommy, climbing up on a round rock. "I would climb up on the boat and wave my arms like this to get help!"

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Key Messages

- If a boat capsizes, always stay with the boat
- Try to get up on the boat; it helps you to be seen and to prevent hypothermia (a dangerous loss of body heat)
- If you must stay in the water, cross your arms over your chest and bring your knees up in a tuck position
- Wave your arms up and down to signal distress – this is a universal distress signal

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Tommy Signals That He Needs Help!

"What if I couldn't get up on the boat? What if it was cold?" asked Tommy.

If you can't get out of the water, get into this position." Wendy crossed her arms over her chest and brought her knees up.

"If somebody fell out of the boat," said Sarah, "I would jump in and save that person!"

"No, no, no," exclaimed Wendy again, "Never go into the water to help someone who is in trouble unless you are a trained lifeguard. You could both drown! Push Coastie's green running light, Tommy," said Wendy.

"If someone falls in and they can't swim, reach or throw but *never* go in!" sang Coastie.

"He's right!" laughed Wendy. "Reach, with your hand or the boat paddle. If you can't reach, throw something that floats – like a life jacket or a PFD-cushion with a rope tied to it."

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Key Messages

- Do not swim to rescue people in trouble in the water unless you are a trained lifeguard; instead, reach to them or throw something to them that floats.

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Pick the things you could reach with or toss on a line to someone in trouble in the water.

Answers: A, E, F and G (an empty jug with a tight lid)

Wendy carefully stepped into the boat. Tommy and Sarah stepped in so that the boat stayed balanced. "Good job!" said Wendy. "Now look over there! Do you know what that green can and that funny shaped red thing are for?"

"Nope," said Tommy. "I don't."

"Me neither," said Sarah.

"Those are buoys that mark the channel. I keep the boat between them so I know that the water is deep enough!" said Wendy. "How about that marker there with the diamond and X on it?"

"Does that mean keep out?" asked Sarah

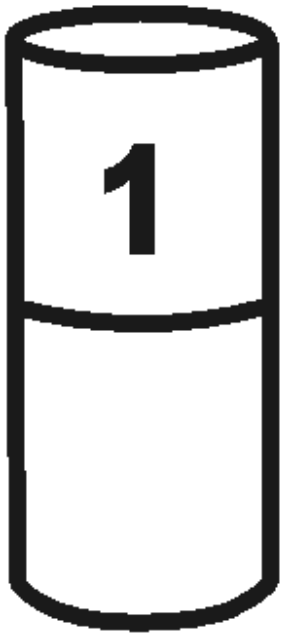
"That's right," said Wendy. "Now that you know that, you two are even better lookouts!"

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Key Messages

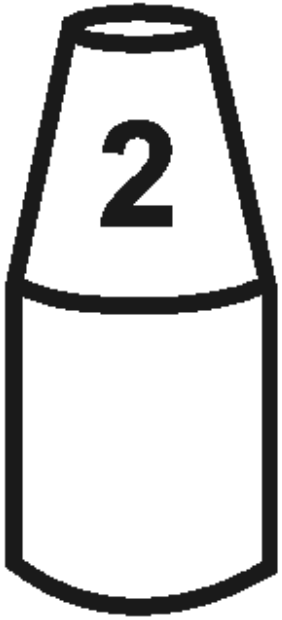
- Red and green buoys mark the edges of the channel where water is deep enough for boats
- Regulatory markers warn of dangers, or tell a boater where NOT to go or give other boating information

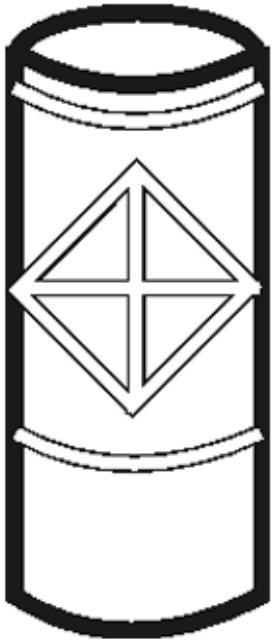
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Can Buoys Have Odd Numbers
Color the Can Buoy Green

Nun Buoys Have Even Numbers
Color the Nun Buoy Red





This marker is white with orange markings.
It tells boats to keep out!

"This lookout just spotted our Marina!" said Tommy.

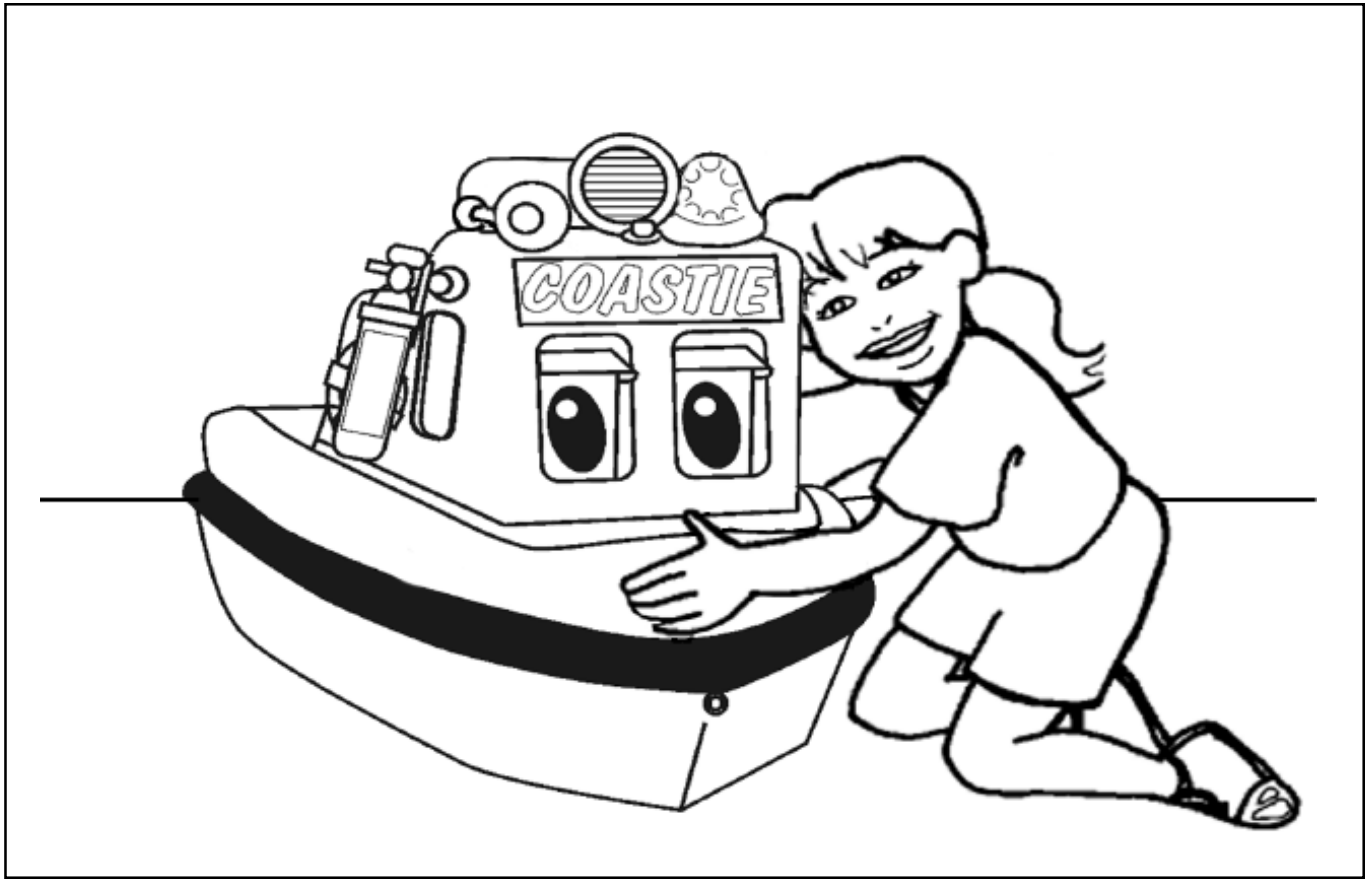
Tommy, Sarah and Wendy docked the boat.

"Along with having fun today, you learned something about safe boating," said Wendy. "By the way, Sarah, my friend Coastie the Safety Boat has something for you."

Coastie rolled over to Sarah. On top of his cabin was a little toy Coastie boat for Sarah.

"This is just what I wanted!" Sarah laughed. "Thanks, Coastie. I'll always remember what I learned today!"

THE END



The PARTNERS who participated in the preparation and distribution of this booklet offer a variety of boating courses for children and adults. Call The Boat/U.S. Foundation at 1-800-336-BOAT (2628) to learn more about such courses.

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For fun and additional information, visit the following Internet web sites:

http://www.uscg.mil/d8/diraux/8er/Coastie.html
http://watersafety.usace.army.mil/safepassage
http://www.uscgboating.org
http://www.cgaux.org
http://www.boatus.com/foundation
http://www.usps.org
http://www.dbw.ca.gov
http://www.boatsafe.com/kids/index.htm

Produced Under a Grant From The Aquatic Resources
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US Army Corps of Engineers®
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Who is Coastie? Is Coastie Real?

Coastie is very real! Coastie is a robotic boat 44 inches long, 30 inches wide and 45 inches tall. He weighs about 120 lbs. His bright blue hull has decals promoting water safety and boating safety from many organizations. He has navigation lights, searchlights, a rotating beacon, a siren, and an air horn. His eyes and eyelids move. He even has a bilge pump that pumps water!

Coastie talks with children at boat shows and at other special gatherings. He talks, plays music and helps the instructor during safety presentations. He teaches children what to do to be safe around water through sayings such as: "If someone falls in and they can't swim: reach or throw but never go in." (This is a saying that suggests how children may help other children in distress in the water.) Slogans like: "Don't just pack it, wear your life jacket!" are intended to remind us of safe behavior around water and boats.

The building of the first Coastie was paid for through a grant from the Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), Division of Watercraft in the state of Ohio. Since then, a number of Coastie boats have been built in various areas of the country. If you visit Coastie's web site (http://www.uscg.mil/d8/diraux/8er/Coastie.html), you can learn about the places he's been, see some of the kids he has seen, and find out where to meet him in person.

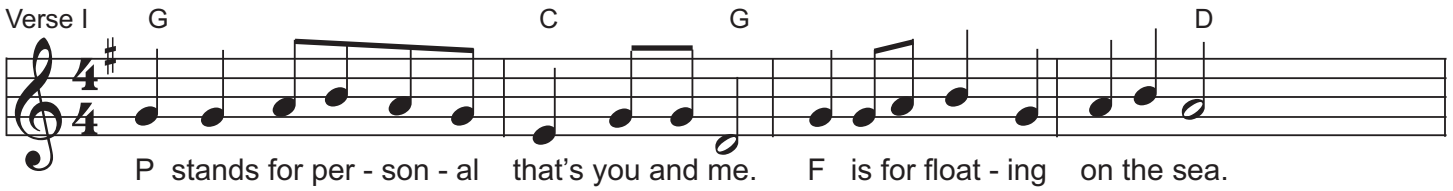
In addition to Boating Safety programs, Coastie makes monthly visits to Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. He visits each floor to see the patients and cheer them up. Children enjoy their visits with Coastie. It always brightens their day!

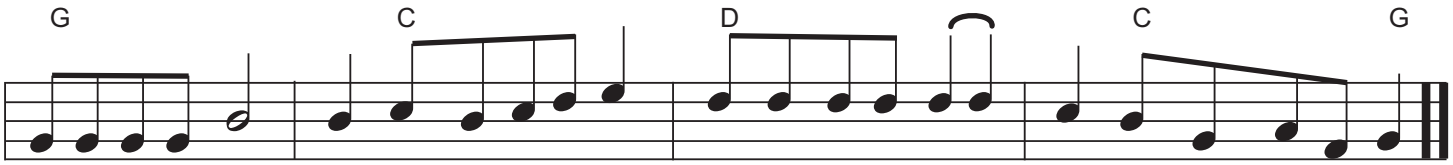
Coastie has received several awards since his "Dad", Mike Robeano, arranged for him to be built. His first award was the "Award of Merit" from the National Water Safety Congress, presented at the International Boating and Water Safety Summit in Hollywood, Florida in 1998. During the 1999 Summit, Coastie received the National Safe Boating Council's Southern Regional Advancement Award that placed his program in competition for the National Award from that group. Coastie competed with other outstanding Youth Education programs and was unanimously voted the 1999 National Award winner.

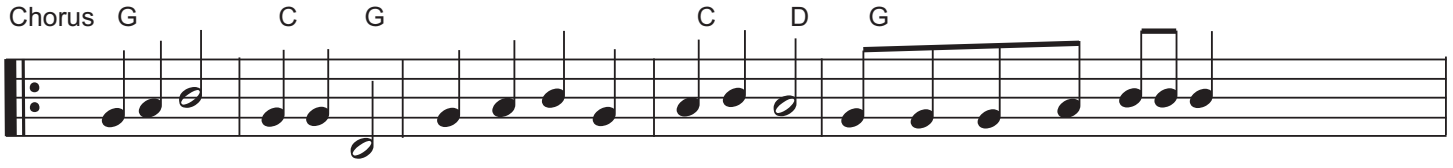
Coastie is an ambassador of good will for the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary and the United States Coast Guard. We hope you'll have the opportunity to see him in person and make friends!

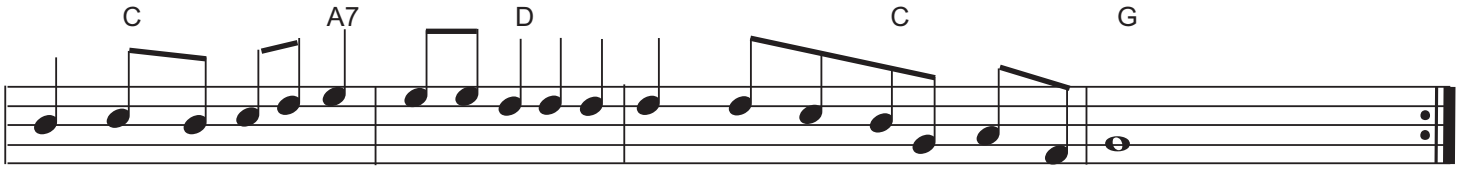
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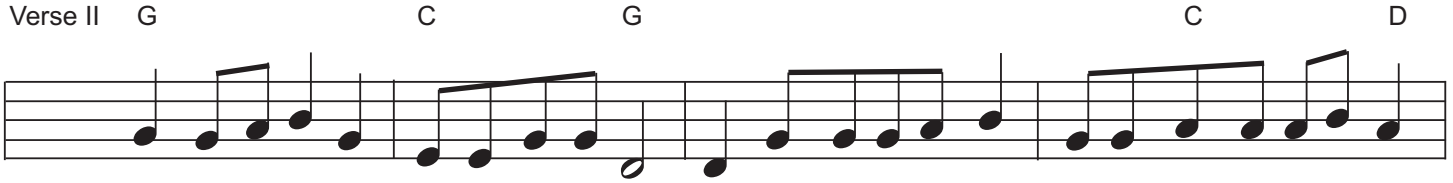
Words and Music by
Ronald and Linda Boice

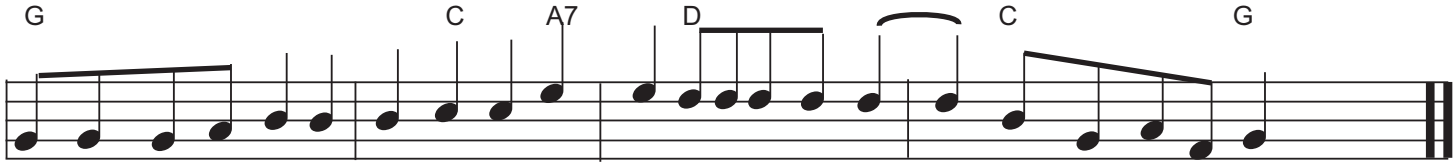


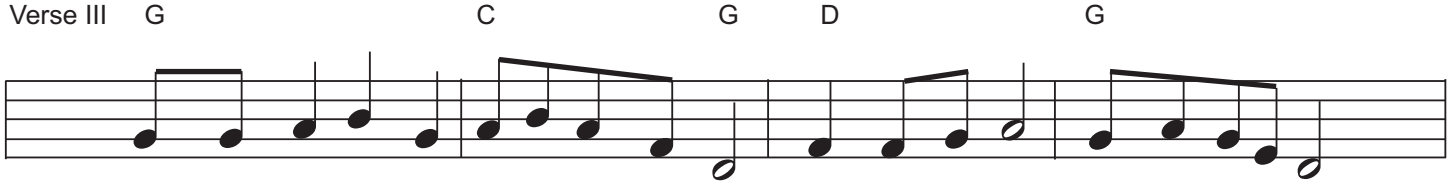


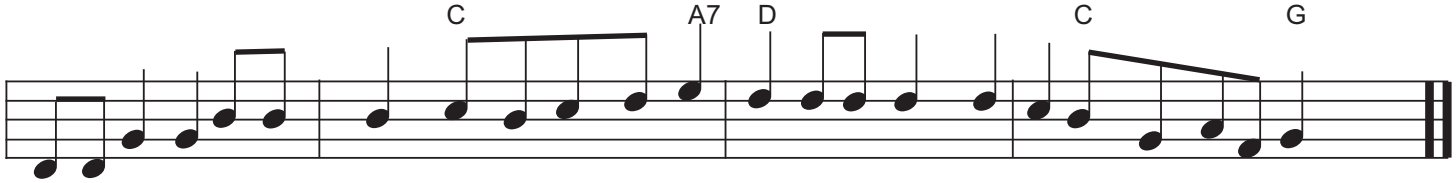












CODA: All we are saying is HEY wear your P F D!