



# Resources for busy teachers

Also see: [Talk About Aquatic Breathing](#)

## Aquatic Breathing – Rhythmic and Controlled. Progressions

**Level : BEGINNERS .**

**Lesson Focus:** Introducing and developing basic Aquatic breathing.

**Outcomes :**

1. Children are comfortable and not afraid of water on their faces
2. Children develop a natural spit / blast (even wipe) response to splashes and water around their mouth and nose.
3. Children are in control of their breathing – spit spray - breath holding and blowing out rhythmically and/or at will.(Trickle or explosive)



With absolute beginners, before going to the pool – some work could be done with letting air out of balloons..opening the end wide and the air rushes out and the balloon deflates quickly and goes floppy again – may even whoosh away quickly..

Show that with various restrictions we can control the amount of air coming out - keeping it in for longer.....and explore some of the sounds we get (!! ) including the tight squeaky almost musical type notes...

**Previously** Beginners will all come to this from different starting points. But they should be relatively comfortable with water on their face, around mouth and nose. See ' *Relaxed about water on head and on face*' Most of the following can be taught and developed while on the move as well.



ACTIVITIES , GAMES, PRACTICES AND PROGRESSIONS	TEACHING POINTS WILF
<b>NOT just 'Forever Blowing Bubbles'...</b>	
<p><b>Reluctant and cautious :</b></p> <p><b>Try Blowing bubbles with straws.</b></p>	<p><i>I have known colleagues successfully use drinking straws as an introduction to aquatic breathing...blowing bubbles in the water etc...I can see why...</i></p>
<p><b>Reluctant and cautious :</b></p> <p><b>Try 'Backs of hands..'</b></p>	<p><i>I have successfully tried this, ask them to blow with wet lips and wet hands on the backs of their hands. 'explosively, tickly-funny like rude 'raspberries' ('trickle'). How are they different ? How hard can you blow? What does it feel like?</i></p>



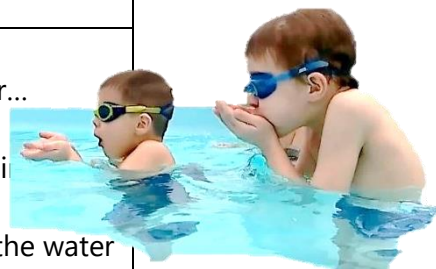
## Non confident to confident – Dependent to Independent

<p><b>Reluctant and cautious :</b></p> <p><b>Try 'Trumpets'</b></p>	<p>Make a fist and leave a hole to blow through; hold it like a trumpet or bugle to their lips/mouths – “blow your trumpet - with a raspberry blow - and gradually allow fists to get as close to the surface as possible as they blow ....tll they see, feel and hear bubbles....You can try two fists for a long trumpet.</p>
<p><b>Blowing egg-flips/corks/ping-pong balls..</b></p>	<p>Blow and flip the flips or blow the corks etc over to the other side or designated area of pool...<i>Egg flips are best as they encourage the 'spit-blast' action which needs breath control and use of the diaphragm. Ask the children to feel abdomen as they blow hard...</i></p>
<p><b>Funny faces (that no one can see under the water ):</b></p> <p><b>Tight lips, Puffed Up Cheeks and squeezed up faces.</b></p>	<p>Forget that it might look funny and understand that it's OK to purse/press lips tightly together , puff out cheeks and when the water gets on their faces – to blow hard, and 'spit'/'blast' the water away from their mouths and your lips. <b>BLOW RASPBERRIES LOUDLY...see below...."</b> (Later, underwater,no one will see you)</p>
<p><b>Wetting, Wiping and washing faces</b></p>	<p>Use palms and cupped hands to scoop up water...like washing faces "on a cold and frosty morning(?)"... Use actions of spit and blast to demonstrate noisy washing of faces...puff out cheeks and squeeze up face and eyes.</p>
<p><b>A Bubble Party / Festival /Fest /Celebration</b></p> <p><b>Play Bubble Tennis</b></p>	<p>Children make up and show off all and every sort Bubble – with sounds as well: loud bubbles, quiet bubbles, noisy bubbles; fast... slow.... funny...'rude'.....??..</p>
<p><b>Motor Boats / motor bikes</b></p>	<p><i>Adults will need to tie a knot in a noodle creating handlebars; swimmers imagine they are riders, drivers – steer and travel anywhere – see traffic lights and gears – but keep sound of motorbike or motorboat going with lips at surface ...</i></p>
<p><b>Explosive (FRIENDLY MONSTER/GIANT) Sneezes... Including "snotties"</b> (I know ! but it's actually what a lot of us do to keep our airways clear and to avoid taking water up/in...ask around if you don't believe it..)</p>	<p>Demonstrate Ah Choo...!!!! Then..Ah - Ah - ah (eyes raised to sky) – <b>CHOOOOOOO !!!!</b> <b>BIG SNEEZE OUT</b> through mouth and nose; start into water cupped in their hands then 'graduate' to sneezing with face dipping into the surface and then a full 'face plant' type sneeze.....maybe submerging the whole face?</p> <p>How many sneezes in a row can you show me?</p>



## Non confident to confident – Dependent to Independent

<p><b>Rewind Sneezes</b></p>	<p>Do it back to front – the other way around...big <b>CHOO</b> (Exhale) <b>AAAhhh</b> (inhale) Start with the face very close to surface or water in the hand ?</p>
<p><b>Explosive Vaporising... ('Aerosol sprays'0</b></p> <p><b>'Spit and Spray'</b></p>	<p>Think about what happens to water when it is <b>SPRAYED</b>...or in a powerful shower... Start with scooped up in cupped hands the idea is to 'blast' the water into as many tiny droplets as possible... vaporise... Spit and spray is what children should do if the water enters their mouths.</p>
<p><b>Water in the mouth.</b> <b>What do swimmers actually do?</b> Ship it? Hold it in ? Swallow it ? Spit it out ?</p>	
<p><b>Danger: Blasting In Progress - Explosions</b></p>	<p>As above but choose a distance eg at the edge of the pool and not at each other...and see if they can spray...and send the tiny droplets over the side? Or at the wall?...like a spray can...</p>
<p><i>There are endless games and 'ploys' – many waiting to be thought up... Remember – the outcome is <b>rhythmic, explosive-and-trickle</b> control of air out of the <b>mouth and nose</b>, initially in order to <b>expel</b> the water away from the airways</i></p>	



### Progression : See Going Under (**Whole Body Submersion**)

Once pupils are happy to get their heads under the water then the **rhythmic and timed** aspects can be explored further:

**Bobbing at the side** ; individually or in pairs; set a count or even a musical beat

**See- Saws** in pairs (one goes down the other comes up for air; self regulated/agreed)

**Head shoulders Knees and Toes - H/S/Kn and blow-your-nose** ,

Repeated **Rockets** or Eruptions – jumping up out of the water a chosen target number of times

In and out of **hoops flat on surface** -like a an 'assault' course



<https://goinghorizontal.org/the-resource/>

**Steps to Success**

*Aquatic breathing can be thought of as different, in the sense that it is usually easier if the nose and mouth have been 'cleared' BEFORE a breath is taken – especially an urgent breath. We tend to 'spit' and blow out forcefully while we do this - share the habit.*

- ▶ Review confident and positive responses when water is splashed on the face or 'poured' on the head, 'shipping' water in and out of the mouth.
- ▶ Blow objects across the surface with different sorts of breaths, long, short, soft, explosive.
- ▶ 'Cup' water in both hands and blow or 'blast' it away explosively.
- ▶ Experiment with different sorts of breathing out when mouth and nose are under the water: soft, long, short, quiet, noisy, explosive - through nose, mouth and both together. Talk about 'trickle' and 'explosive'.
- ▶ Stand in the water with feet at least hip width apart, knees slightly flexed - a balanced stance - chin close to the surface, eyes and nose facing down. Take a breath and in low smooth, quick continuous sequence - begin blowing out forcefully **before** submerging face and head fully, **continue** to blow out bubbles, then lift face clear of surface - **while still blowing out** inhale when 'ready'.
- ▶ After single attempts, repeat several times in a timed sequence - rhythmically and controlled; try 'tucking' head under ropes, low wobble 'bridges' or hoops at surface.
- ▶ **Extensions:** Complete rhythmic patterns/sequences, timing breaths and at a pace to match improving levels of self confidence and competence; repeat with a partner, alternating; play 'Bubble Tennis'; share different ways to 'hear' and 'see' under the water; pretend to swim across the pool using swimming arms and with your face in the water; 'I can turn my head to the side or lift it up at the front to breathe - just like a swimmer!'

*Around this and other stages, success is measured when children are not distracted or interrupted in their practices and play if their face or head is splashed or submerged. They are ready for their next big adventure.*

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PLAY  
**BE SAFE, EXPLORE,  
DISCOVER & ENJOY**

**Aquatic Breathing**  
Rhythmic and Controlled

**LOOKING FOR**  
Timed breath holding before blowing out forcefully and spontaneously through mouth and nose - on and under the surface. Every sort of bubble: trickle and explosive, rhythmic, timed and controlled. Confidence and eagerness, building on previous experience, readiness to progress to submersion.

*Exploring: Breath Control; taking and holding a BIG breath, quickly/ slowly. WHEN and WHERE best to blow out; under just as before you break the surface? HOW to blow out - forceful, trickle or explosive; mouth, nose or both? Noisy? Quiet? Funny? Taking and timing several breaths in a row: bobbing, moving, or 'Like a swimmer', breathe to the side - breathe to the front. Talk about expected and unexpected 'situations'.*

*Aquatics: Bubble 'progressions' at and under the surface. Options: forceful, trickle and/or explosive, timed pattern of inhalations and exhalations, rhythmic and controlled; involving lips/mouth and nose.*

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