

# Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket



## KEY TERMS

- **Buoyant** – Tending to float; capable of keeping an object afloat.
- **Device** – Something made, usually for a particular working purpose.
- **Drown** – To be suffocated by immersion in water.
- **Float** – To rest or remain on the surface.
- **Flotation** – Material that aids in floating.
- **Life jacket** – A type of personal flotation device (PFD) approved by the U.S. Coast Guard for use during activities in, on or around water.
- **PFD** – Personal flotation device.
- **Personal** – Pertaining to one's self, individual.
- **Restricted-use device** – Any device that hinders your abilities.
- **Seat cushion** – Another name for a Type IV PFD.
- **Sink** – To fall, drop or descend gradually to a lower level.
- **Throwable device** – Any object that can be thrown to a drowning victim to aid the victim in floating.

## OBJECTIVES

After completing the following activities, students will be able to–

### **Topic 1: Always Wear a Life Jacket**

- Explain the importance of wearing a life jacket.

### **Topic 2: The Five Types of PFDs**

- List five different types of personal flotation devices (PFDs).

### **Topic 3: Properly Selecting and Wearing a Life Jacket**

- Demonstrate how to properly select and wear a life jacket.

### **Topic 4: Life Jacket Relay**

- Demonstrate how to put on a life jacket properly and quickly.

## MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

### **All Topics**

- Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket poster
- *Longfellow's WHALE Tales* DVD
- DVD player and monitor
- Optional:
  - Wear Your Jacket stickers (one for each student)

# Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket



## **Topic 1: Always Wear a Life Jacket**

- One life jacket (Type II PFD)
- [Activity Sheet 6-1: PFDs](#) (one for each student)

## **Topic 2: The Five Types of PFDs**

- One each of the five types of PFDs
- [Fact Sheet: Longfellow's Guidelines on Personal Flotation Devices](#) (PFDs)
- [Activity Sheet 6-2: What Type Is It?](#) (one for each student)

## **Topic 3: Properly Selecting and Wearing a Life Jacket**

- Various sizes of life jackets
- [Activity Sheet 6-3: How to Take Care of Your Life Jacket](#) (one for each student)

## **Topic 4: Life Jacket Relay**

- Two life jackets



### **LEADER'S NOTES**

- *Display the Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket poster at the front of the class. To begin a discussion about the poster, ask students questions, such as "What are the people in this picture doing to stay safe while boating? When should you put on your life jacket? When should you take it off?" Refer to the poster throughout the activities on this topic. As an option, you may use an LCD projector to display the electronic version of the poster from the CD-ROM.*
- *The Longfellow's WHALE Tales DVD segment, "Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket," can be shown to support this topic.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Key Points:**

- **A life jacket is a personal flotation device (PFD) approved by the U.S. Coast Guard for use during activities in, on or around water.**
- **A life jacket should always be worn while boating.**
- **Certain types of U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets are designed to keep your head above water and help you remain in a position that permits proper breathing.**
- **You should always wear the type that is recommended for the activity you will be doing and the place you will be swimming or boating.**

# Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket



## LEADER'S NOTE

Hold a life jacket up for the students to see.

## TOPIC 1: ALWAYS WEAR A LIFE JACKET

Recommended Grade Levels: K–5

### Key Points and Discussion:

#### ■ What does PFD stand for?

*Answer:*

- **PERSONAL** – It means this jacket is mine and I should personalize the jacket for me. My name should be on the jacket and it should be sized to fit me.
- **FLOTATION** – This jacket will help me stay on top of the water instead of sinking.
- **DEVICE** – Something to help me complete a task.

#### ■ A PFD is often called a life jacket.

#### ■ Are we able to breathe under water?

*Answer: No*

#### ■ What would happen if you remained under water without air?

*Answer: You would drown.*

#### ■ Who has a life jacket?

*Answer: Allow time for students to respond by raising their hands. Count the number of hands.*

#### ■ Who has worn a life jacket before?

*Answer: Allow time for students to respond by raising their hands. Count the number of hands.*

#### ■ When should you wear a life jacket?

*Answers: Responses should include the following:*

- Boating
- Swimming
- Anytime a person is in, on or around water

### Activity:

Have students complete Activity Sheet 6-1: PFDs.

# Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket



## TOPIC 2: THE FIVE TYPES OF PFDs

Recommended Grade Levels: 2–6

### Activity:

- Using Fact Sheet: Longfellow's Guidelines on Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs), explain the five different types of PFDs to the students.
- Have students complete Activity Sheet 6-2: What Type Is It? After you describe each type of PFD, ask students to identify on their activity sheet the type of PFD you described. Have the students fill in the blanks with the correct PFD type and a short description of the PFD and its use.

## TOPIC 3: PROPERLY SELECTING AND WEARING A LIFE JACKET

Recommended Grade Levels: 2–6



### LEADER'S NOTE

*Have various sizes of life jackets available.*

### Activity:

- Explain to the class that if a life jacket does not fit properly, it will not save your life.
- Demonstrate wearing a small and very large life jacket or use a participant to demonstrate.
- Have each student properly put on a life jacket. Make sure students check that all straps and snaps are secured.

### Activity:

- Hold up a life jacket that is ripped or worn out for all to see.
- Ask students, **“Would you wear this life jacket?”**  
*Answer: No*
- Ask students, **“Why?”**  
*Answer: It may not be buoyant enough to support a person because it is not in good condition.*
- Have students complete Activity Sheet 6-3: How to Take Care of Your Life Jacket.

## TOPIC 4: LIFE JACKET RELAY

Recommended Grade Levels: 2–6

### Activity:

- Divide the class equally into two teams.
- Have each team form a line, and place a life jacket by the first student in front of each line.

# Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket



- At the signal, the first student in each line should pick up the life jacket, put it on properly, run to a designated place, return to the starting point, take off the life jacket and give it to the next team member.
- The relay continues until each person on each team has a turn.
- The first team to finish wins.
- After the relay, discuss the difficulties encountered in putting on the life jacket correctly.
- If there is time, repeat the relay and see if the students' skills have improved.

## WRAP-UP



### LEADER'S NOTES

- Refer back to the *Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket* poster as you review the lesson.
- Hold up each type of PFD.

### Key Points and Discussion:

- **When would you wear this and how?**  
*Answer: Refer back to Activity Sheet 6-2: What Type Is It? to ensure that correct responses are being given.*
- **Always make sure you choose a life jacket that is approved by the U.S. Coast Guard, that is the right type for the right activity and that fits the intended user.**
- **How can a life jacket be used most effectively?**  
*Answer: A life jacket is most effective when it is worn.*
- **A life jacket is for putting on, not for sitting on.**

# Longfellow's Guidelines on Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)



## Type I—Off Shore Life Jackets

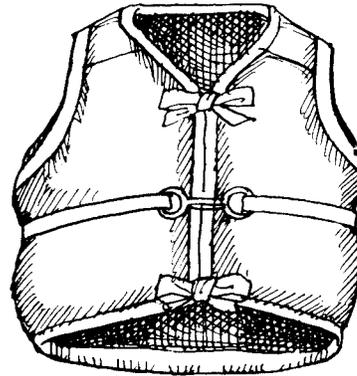
Designed for boating or sailing on the open ocean, rough seas or on remote waters where a rescue could be delayed. Off shore life jackets turn most unconscious wearers in the water from a face-down position to a vertical or slightly tipped-back position.

### Advantages

- Provides most reliable flotation
- Comes in highly visible colors
- Has reflective material for search and rescue

### Disadvantages

- Bulky in and out of water



Type I

## Type II—Near Shore Buoyant Vest

Designed for recreational canoeing or sailing in inland waters where a rescue would likely occur quickly.

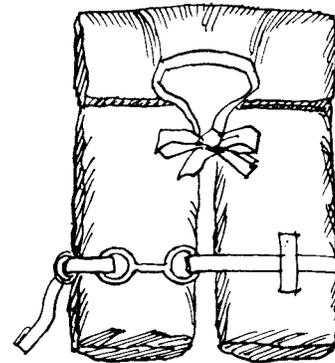
Near shore buoyant vests may help turn an unconscious person in the water from a face-down position to a vertical or slightly tipped-back position. Type II life jackets have less buoyancy than Type I life jackets but are more comfortable to wear.

### Advantage

- Approved for multiple sizes from infant through adult

### Disadvantage

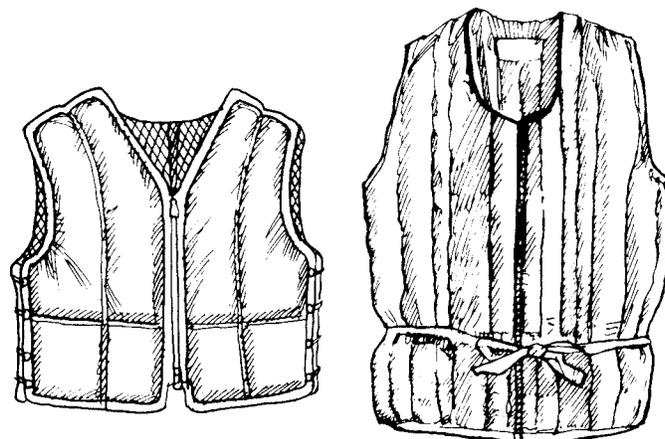
- Not recommended for long hours on rough water



Type II

## Type III—Flotation Aid

Often used for general boating in calm inland waters or for the specialized activity that is marked on the device, such as skiing, hunting, fishing, canoeing or kayaking. These “float coats” or vests may keep a conscious person in a vertical or slightly tipped-back position. Type III is more comfortable for active water sports than Types I and II.



Type III

# Longfellow's Guidelines on Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)



## Advantages

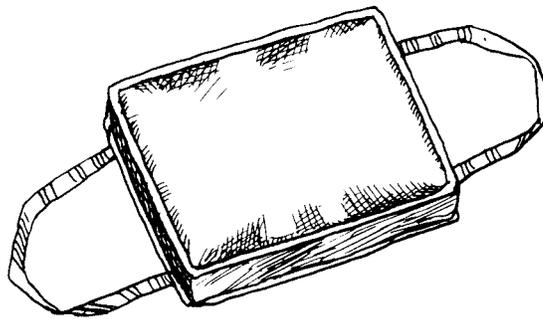
- Designed for general boating and designated activities marked on the device
- Available in many styles, including vests and flotation coats

## Disadvantages

- Wearer may have to tilt head back to avoid being submerged face-down
- Not recommended for extended survival in rough water; a wearer's face may often be covered by waves
- Must be water-tested by inexperienced swimmers before boating activity

## Type IV—Throwable Devices

Flotation devices, such as a buoyant cushion or the ring buoy, are not worn but can be thrown to a victim in an emergency. A buoyant cushion may be used as a seat cushion. These devices do not take the place of wearing a life jacket.



Type IV

## Advantages

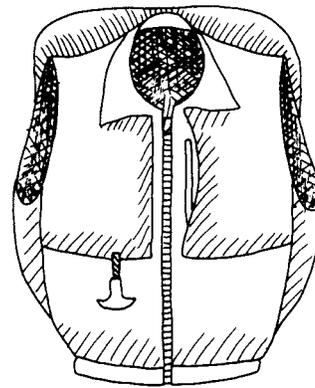
- May be thrown from boat or land
- Provide backup to wearable PFDs
- Some styles may be used as seat cushions

## Disadvantages

- Not for unconscious persons
- Not suitable for inexperienced swimmers or children
- Not safe for long hours of rough water

## Type V—Restricted-Use Life Jacket

A special purpose device approved for specific activities, such as commercial whitewater rafting and riding personal watercraft, where other types of personal flotation devices would be too constrictive or when more protection is needed. Restricted-use life jackets include boardsailing vests, deck suits, pullover vests and work vests.



Type V

## Advantages

- Designed for specific activities
- Continuous wear prevents users from being caught without protection; most accidents occur suddenly

## Disadvantages

- Less safe than other PFD types if used for activities other than those specified on label
- May be better suited for cool climates and seasons

# Longfellow's Guidelines on Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)



## How to Choose a PFD

When choosing a life jacket—

- Make sure it is the right type for the right activity.
- Make sure it is approved by the U.S. Coast Guard.
- Make sure it fits the intended user. Check the stamp on the life jacket for weight limits.
- Make sure it is in good condition. Check buckles and straps for proper function. Discard any life jacket with torn fabric or straps that have pulled loose.
- Practice putting it on in water and swimming with it on. When you practice, have a companion with you who can help you if you have difficulty.

## How to Use Your PFD

- Try on your PFD to see if it fits snugly. Then test it in shallow water to see how it handles. A PFD is designed not to ride up on the body in the water. If a wearer's stomach is larger than the chest, ride-up may occur. Before use, test your PFD to be sure that excessive ride-up does not impair the PFD's performance. Do not use a PFD that rides up excessively.
- To check your PFD's buoyancy, relax your body and tilt your head back. Make sure your PFD keeps your chin above water and you can breathe easily.
- If your mouth is not well above the water, your PFD needs more buoyancy. Older foam PFDs may lose buoyancy and may have to be replaced.

## How to Care for a PFD

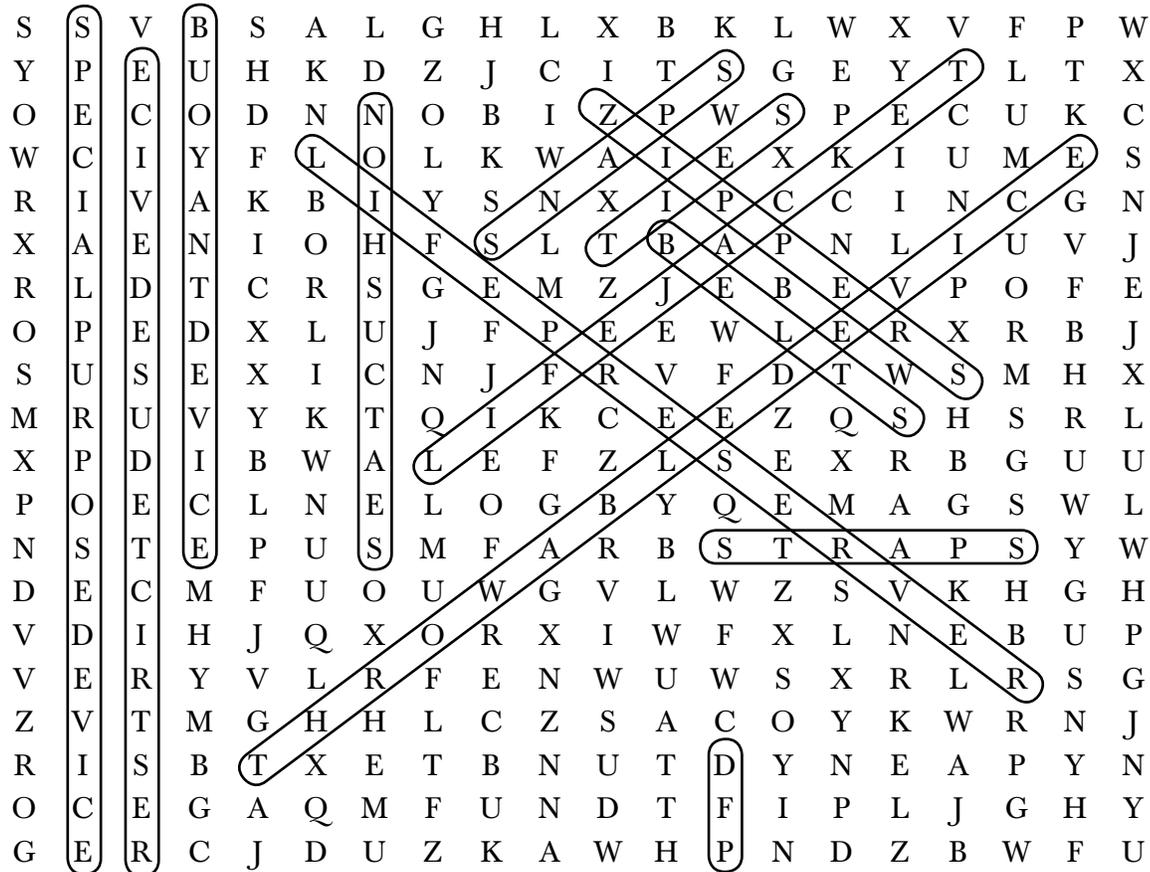
To ensure that your PFD will be in good shape when you need it, you must take care of it.

- Do not alter your PFD. If yours does not fit, get one that does. An altered PFD may not save your life.
- Periodically check to see if your PFD is in good repair and if it provides adequate support. Check it often for rips, tears and holes. Also check to see that seams, fabric straps and hardware are okay. Give your PFD belts, ties and straps a quick, hard pull to make sure they are secure. You should find no signs of water logging, mildew odor or shrinkage of the buoyant materials.
- Make sure that the snaps, belts, ties, straps and zippers are working properly.
- Do not use your PFD as a boat fender or a kneeling pad. PFDs lose buoyancy when crushed.
- Hang your wet PFD to dry in open air or in a well-ventilated area. Do not dry your PFD in front of a radiator or other heat source.
- Do not leave your PFD on board for long periods when the boat is not in use.
- Do not use cleaning fluids or gasoline to clean your PFD, and do not dry clean it.

# PFDs



Find the hidden words listed below. They describe the types of PFDs and their parts. The words can run up, down, backward, forward or diagonally.



## Word List

SPECIAL PURPOSE DEVICE  
 LIFE PRESERVER  
 SNAPS  
 LIFE JACKET  
 THROWABLE DEVICE  
 BELTS  
 BUOYANT DEVICE

RESTRICTED-USE DEVICE  
 SEAT CUSHION  
 ZIPPERS  
 PFD  
 STRAPS  
 TIES



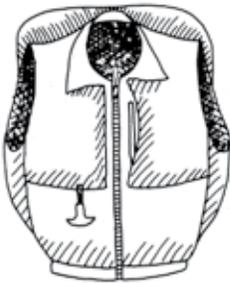
## What Type Is It?

Here are five types of PFDs. Fill in the blanks with the correct number and a short description of each one.



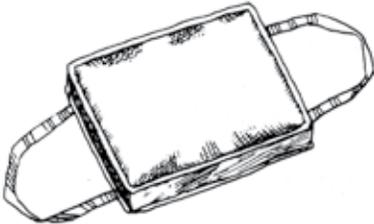
### **Type III**

Often used for general boating in calm inland waters or for specialized activities as marked on the device, such as waterskiing, hunting, fishing, canoeing or kayaking



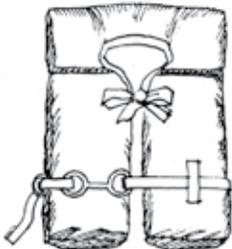
### **Type V**

Intended for specific activities, such as whitewater rafting, and may be worn instead of another PFD only if used according to the approval condition(s) on its label



### **Type IV**

Designed to be thrown to a person in the water and grasped and held by the user until rescued—not designed to be worn



### **Type II**

Designed for calm, inland water or where there is a good chance of quick rescue



### **Type I**

Designed for boating on all waters, especially open, rough or remote waters where rescue may be delayed