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On Guard! Junior Lifeguards

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Lifeguarding looks like a great job. Lifeguards sit on the beach all day and swim whenever they want. But think about what lifeguards do. The name of the job says it: They guard lives. They make sure you stay safe when you're swimming or playing in the water. Lifeguarding is a serious job.

Most lifeguards are at least 16 years old. However, junior lifeguard programs are for children as young as nine years old. These programs teach children about water safety. In many places, the programs are offered in local swimming pools. In towns on lakes or oceans, however, junior guard programs teach children how to stay safe in large bodies of water.

Guarding in the ocean requires special skills. That's because swimming in the ocean is more dangerous than swimming in pools. The ocean is huge, and it has strong currents. That means you need more skills to stay safe. For example, the touch of seaweed on a swimmer's body can feel unpleasant. However, seaweed can be dangerous, too. Swimmers can get tangled in seaweed and not know how to get free. Knowing what to do in this situation is a very important skill.

Junior guards learn about other potential dangers, too, including how to recognize and get out of rip currents. Rip currents are ocean currents that can make it hard for swimmers to get to the beach. There are also lessons on life-saving techniques, such as first aid and CPR. Junior guard programs teach swimmers how protect themselves and others.

The junior guard program is not only about saving lives, though. Some junior guard programs include lessons on kayaking, sailing, surfing, and other ocean sports. Some junior guards enjoy the program so much that they return every summer. Then when they are adults, some get a lifeguarding job. They love being on the beach. They also love guarding people from danger.

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Name _____

On Guard! Junior Lifeguards

Imagine that you have the chance to be a junior lifeguard. Write a letter to your mom or dad that will persuade them to let you join the program. Tell them all the valuable things you would learn. Here are some words you might use to persuade them.

water	safety	swimming	rip currents	ocean
pool	lake	seaweed	life-saving	first aid
CPR	kayaking	sailing	surfing	lifeguard job

Comprehension Response Activities
FYI for Kids — Level 3

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Review

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Write keywords or phrases that will help you remember what you learned.

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