

THE BALANCER

Description

The **Balancer** demonstrates a sense of balance and stability with both left and right sides. A strong sense of control with respect to balance is a key aspect of movement, rhythm and playful exploration.

The Test

Left foot	15 seconds
Right foot	15 seconds
Total Time	30 seconds

Equipment

- Balance Beam
- Stopwatch



Stand along the centre of the Balance Beam with one foot.

How long can you stand like a statue on the beam? Are left and right equal?

Format

- a Judge offers a forearm for stable start
- the Balancer adopts a stable, one footed position along the beam (not across)
- timing starts when child releases support
- timing stops when child touches the floor, or at 15 seconds (maximum)
- time is recorded for left and right balance, total time is scored

TIP

- allow a 'warm-up' trial prior to timing

Safety Guidelines



SITUATION: allow the Balancer time to stabilize; other Balancers remain behind the no-walk zone.

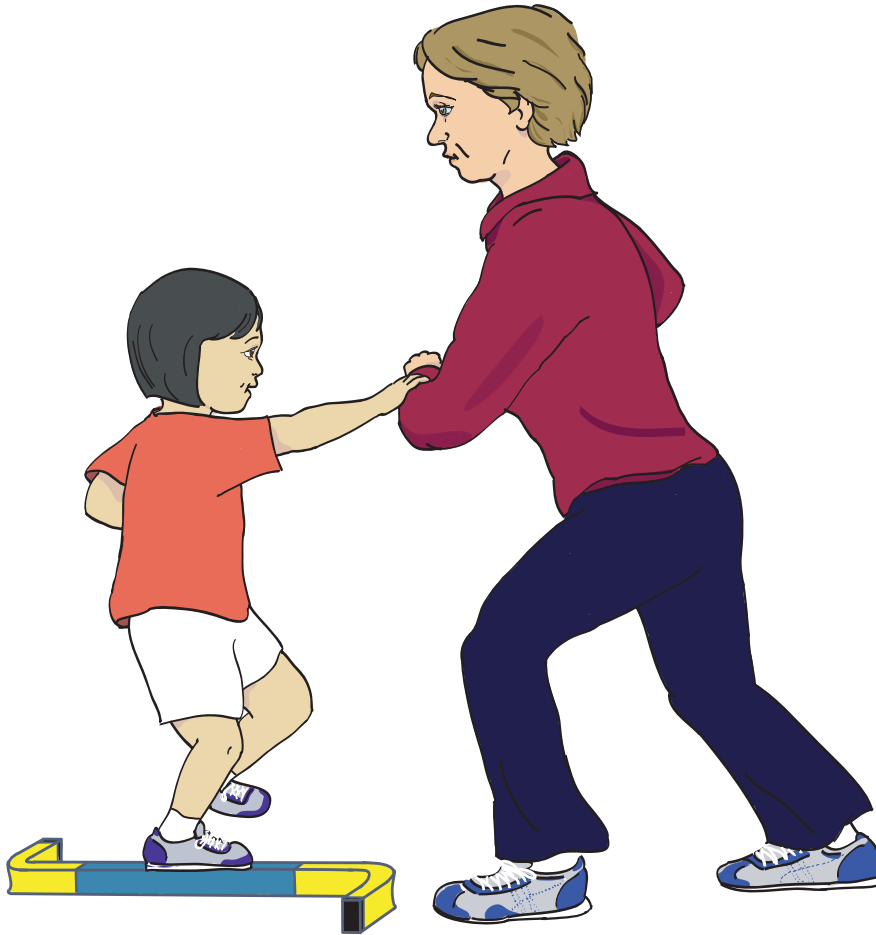
ACTIVITY: use a 1.5 metre no-walk zone around the beam.

FACILITY: ensure a non-slip floor, away from all walls.

EQUIPMENT: ensure stable footwear; clean/dry equipment.

THE BALANCER - TIPS AND TEACHING

The **Balancer** is trying to attain a comfortable sense of stability that is equal between left and right sides.

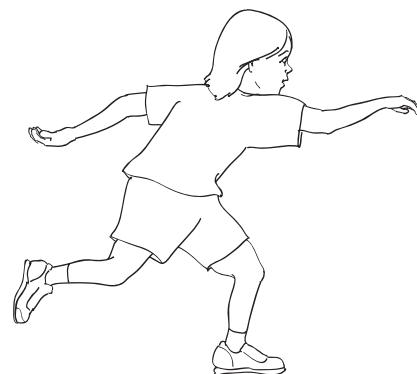


Body Language

- the child is relaxed and stable
- the arms and hips assist balance
- focus is forwards (not down)

Encouragements

- 'nice and relaxed'
- 'hold the position'
- 'use your 'wings' to balance'



Programming Suggestions

Use lines, free-form figures (alphabets, animals...), partner balance (mirroring) and slow-motion moves to enhance an automatic sense of stability and posture. Stability activities combine well with appropriate music.

THE JUMPER

Description

The Jumper leaps outwards as far as possible from behind a start line onto the cushioned measuring mat using a two-footed stance.

Benefits

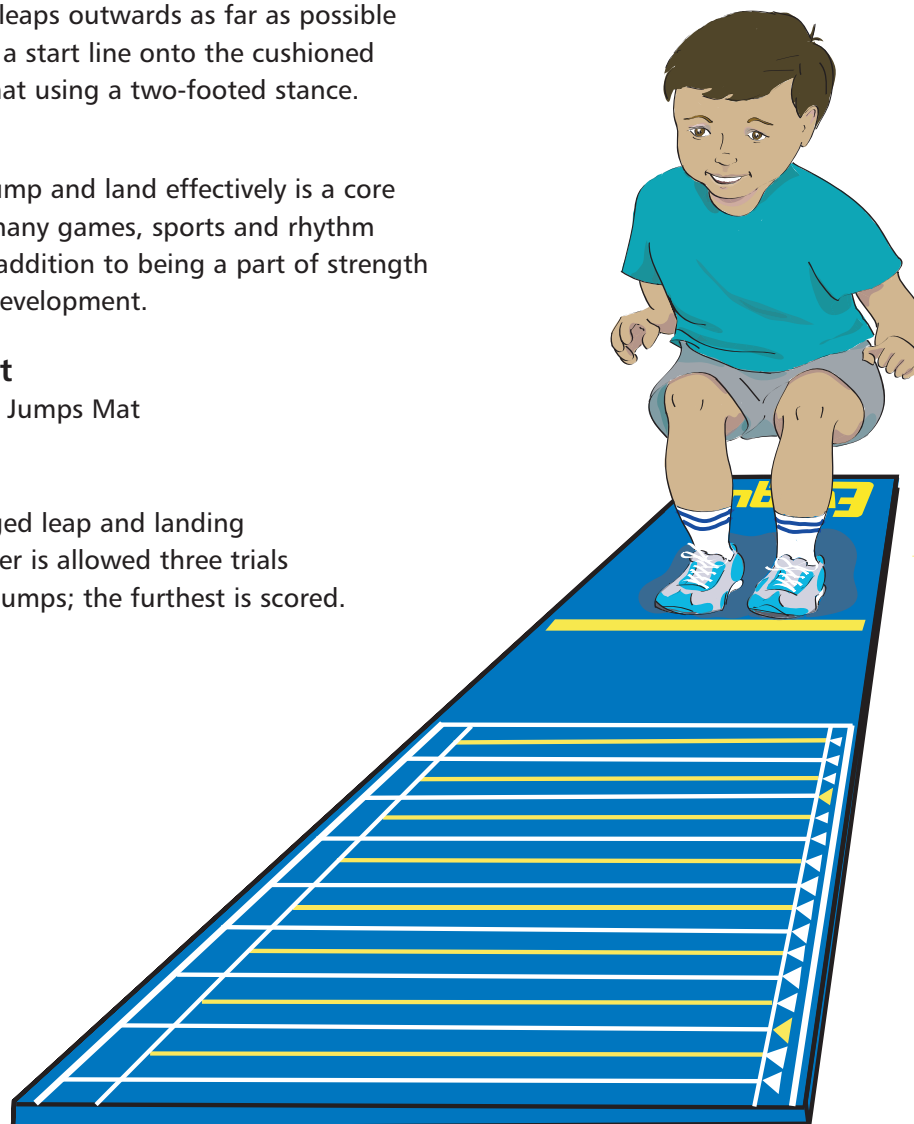
Learning to jump and land effectively is a core element of many games, sports and rhythm activities, in addition to being a part of strength and power development.

Equipment

- Cushioned Jumps Mat

Challenge

- a two-legged leap and landing
- each jumper is allowed three trials
- record all jumps; the furthest is scored.



How long can I stay in the air this time?

Format

- the Jumper stands behind the start line facing the landing zone
- using arm swings and body rocking as assists, the Jumper leaps outwards as far as possible.
- both take-off and landing are from two feet.
- the landing is measured to the nearest cm. from the heel mark closest to the start line.
- the Jumper is given three trials (fall-backs and hand touches are not recorded)

TIP

- encourage Jumpers to exit forwards from the mat and walk around to the start

Safety Guidelines



SITUATION: other Jumpers remain behind the start zone.

AREA: establish a 1 metre no-walk zone around the mat, (judge and jumper are present within the zone).

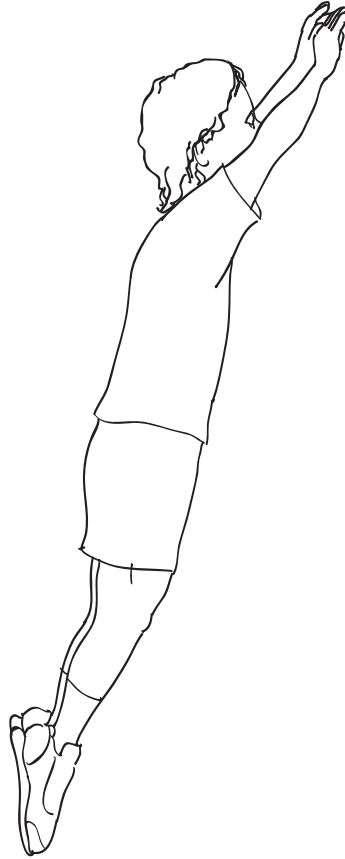
FACILITY: jump away from any walls, and keep the mat away from other activity zones.

EQUIPMENT: ensure that the floor and mat are dry; Jumpers wear stable footwear and remove loose jewellery.

THE JUMPER - TIPS AND TEACHING

Description

The Jumper is learning to use their whole body to leap for distance and land with control.

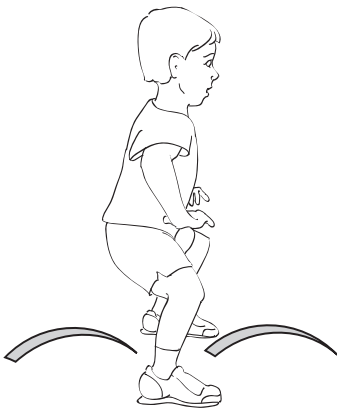


Body Language

- the body motions are smooth and powerful
- arms assist and balance actions
- landings are resilient and controlled

Encouragements

- 'a few arm swings will help'
- 'jump like a grasshopper (kangaroo...)'
- 'try and land softly'



Programming Suggestions

Use little leaps, leaps for height, slow-motion landings, leaping relays (less than 10m) and hopscotch patterns to enhance the leap-landing movements, timing and power.

THE BOUNCER

Description

The **Bouncer** demonstrates their ability to leap from side-to-side over the wedge quickly and rhythmically.

Benefits

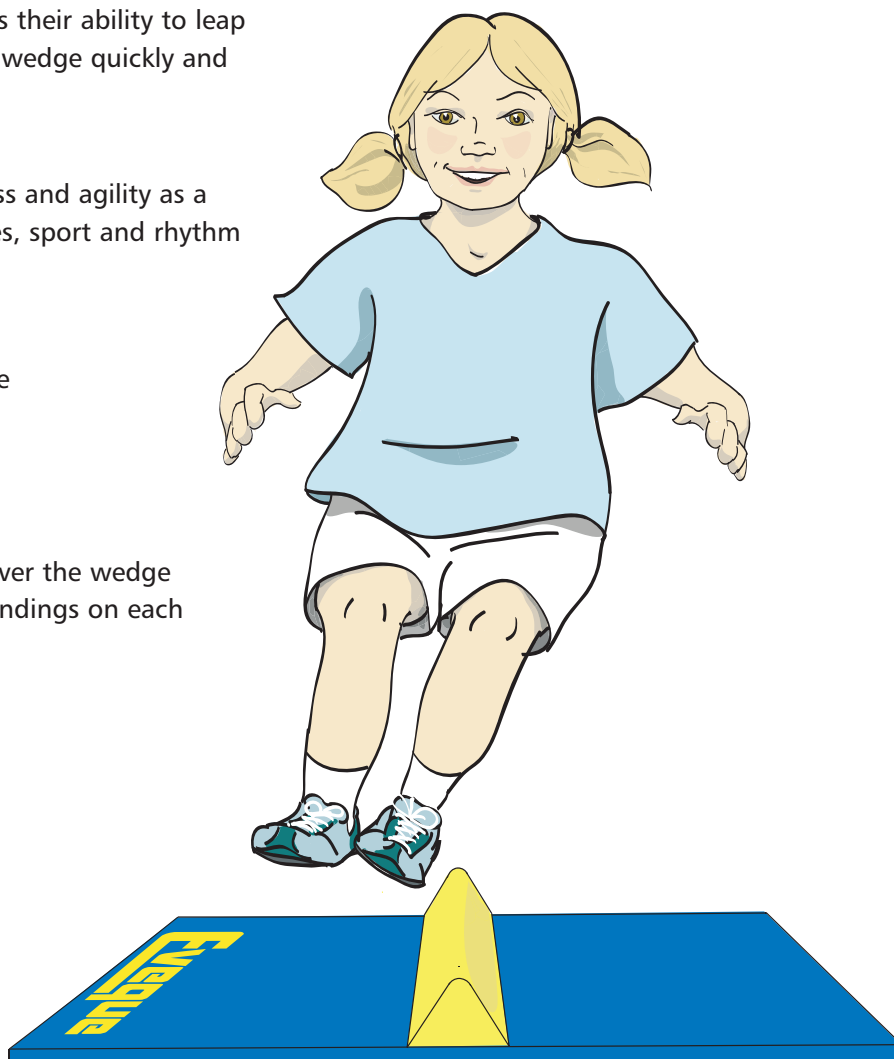
Acquire lower-leg quickness and agility as a component of many games, sport and rhythm activities.

Equipment

- Bouncer Mat and Wedge
- Stopwatch
- Whistle

Challenge

- 20 seconds of leaping over the wedge
- record the number of landings on each side of the wedge



Do you feel like you have springs on your shoes?

Format

- the child stands to one side of the mat facing forwards (they may take a few practice leaps)
- on a whistle signal (watch starts) the Bouncer starts leaping from side-to-side over the wedge using two-foot landings
- the child stops with a 20 second whistle, and takes a relaxed walk
- the judge records each 'clean' landing (straddled or wedge landings are not counted)

TIP

- use two judges - one to time/record and one to count

Safety Guidelines



SITUATION: other Bouncers remain behind the activity zone.

AREA: create a 1.5m no-walk zone around the mat (only the judge and the Bouncer permitted).

FACILITY: ensure a non-slip floor with placement away from all walls.

EQUIPMENT: ensure a dry mat; Bouncers use stable footwear and remove loose neck jewellery.

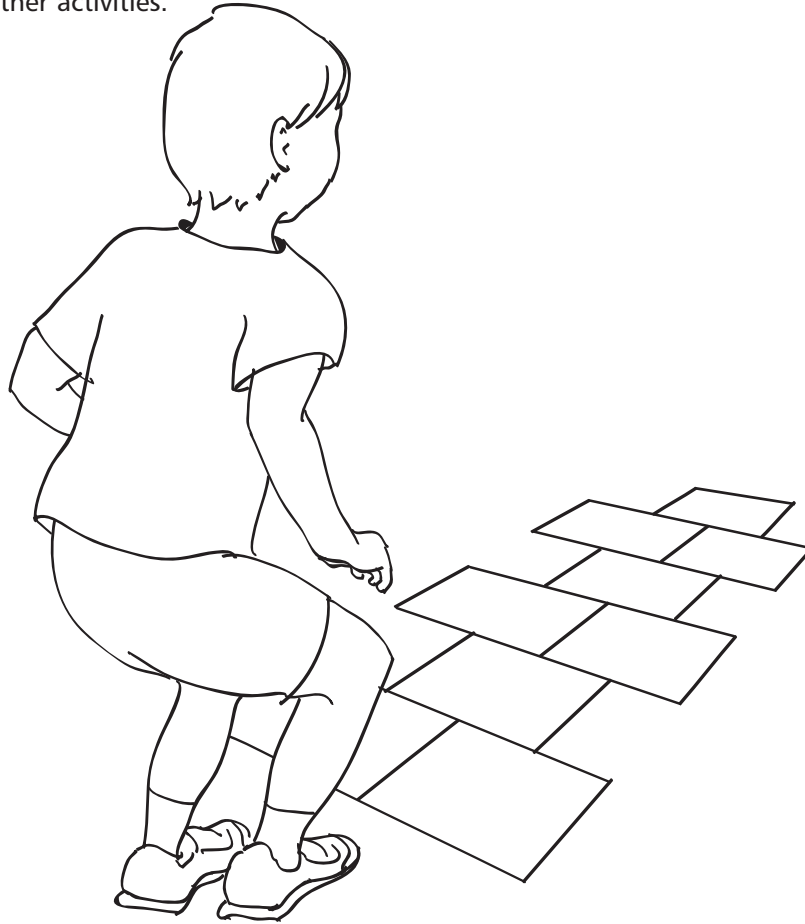
TIP

- a judge can place a foot on the mat corner to prevent slippage

THE BOUNCER - TIPS AND TEACHING

Description

The **Bouncer** is gaining an automatic sense of footwork agility in a controlled situation that will carry over into other activities.

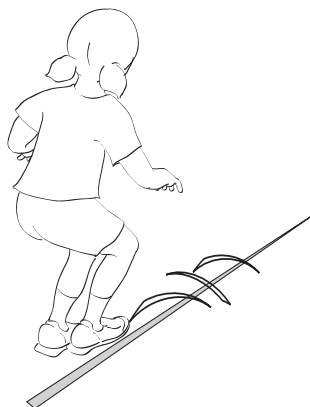


Body Language

- bounce moves are smooth and automatic
- hips stay level; legs move
- focus is forwards
- arms balance and assist leg moves

Encouragements

- 'be quick and light on your feet'
- 'fast feet!'
- 'keep breathing...smooth now'



Programming Suggestions

Use dance footwork, obstacle and zig-zag courses (less than 10m), and hopscotch games to enhance the ability to move quickly in all directions. Music is often a good complement to rhythm activities.

THE THROWER

Description

The Mini Bull-Nosed Javelin is thrown from a standing position for maximum distance along a measuring strip.

Benefits

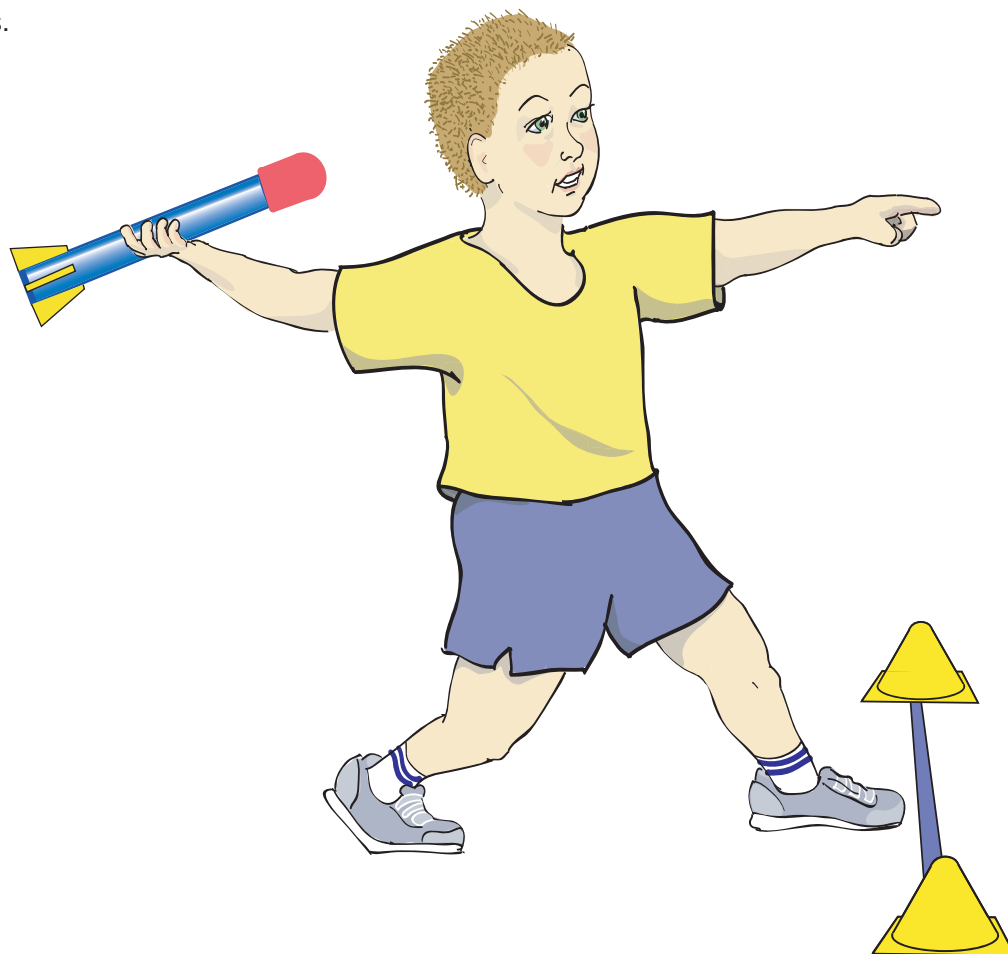
Acquire lower-leg quickness and agility as a component of many games, sport and rhythm activities.

Equipment

- Mini Bull-Nosed Javelins
- two Graduated Measuring Strips

Challenge

- one-armed throw with a Javelin for distance
- three trials are recorded



If you throw this with your whole body it will really fly!

Format

- allow each thrower a practice throw
- the Thrower stands behind the start line facing the measuring zone
- the throw for distance is measured (to nearest 25cm) at first landing contact
- javelins are walked back to the start zone (not thrown)
- three trials are recorded, the furthest throw is scored

TIP

- use two to three Judges to record, measure and retrieve javelins

Safety Guidelines



SITUATION: all Throwers remain behind the start zone. Javelins are walked back to the start.

AREA: establish a no-walk zone beyond the start line (only Judges present).

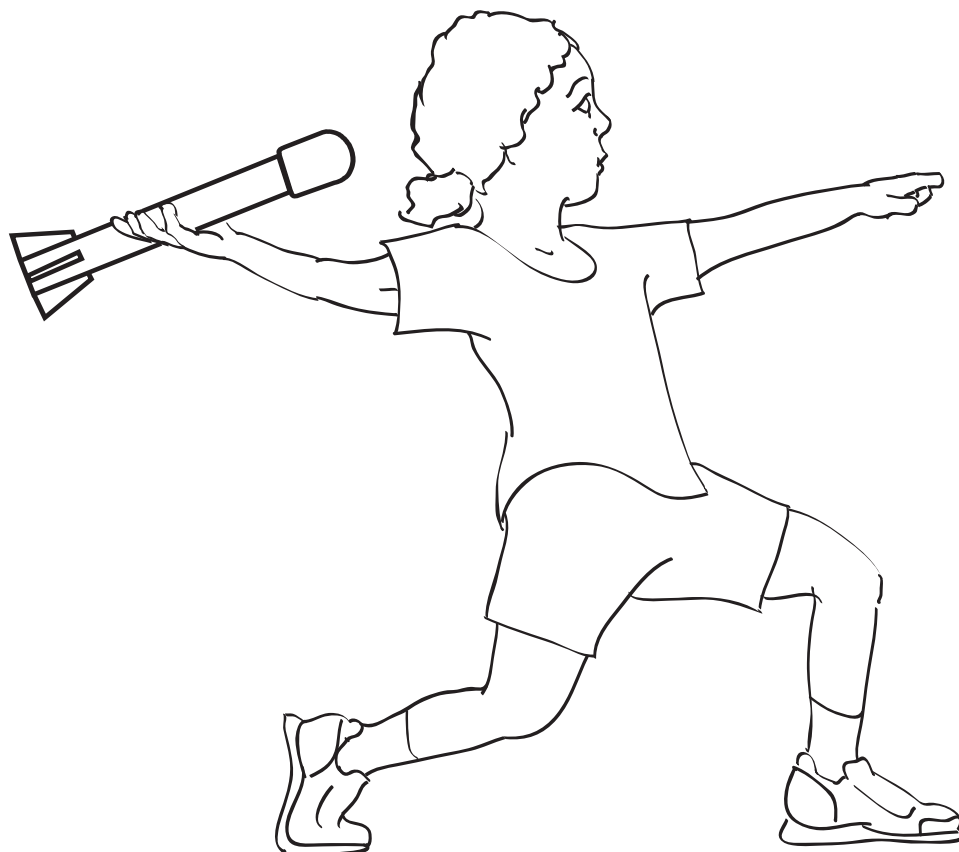
FACILITY: throw into an open space; establish a large throwing zone.

EQUIPMENT: ensure that the javelins are clean and that the floor is dry.

THE THROWER - TIPS AND TEACHING

Description

The **Thrower** is learning to use their whole body, from the ground up, to throw an implement with force and accuracy.

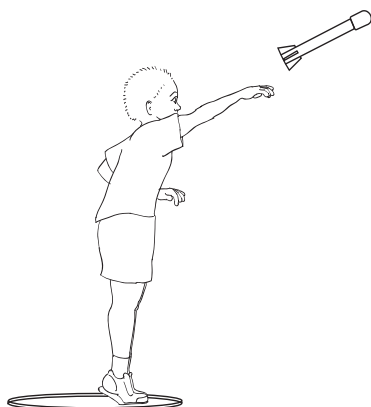


Body Language

- the whole-body action ends with the arm
- the focus is forwards-out (point in the direction)
- the body shifts from back leg to front

Encouragements

- 'point to where you want it to go!'
- 'use a 'long arm' to throw'
- 'start with your legs'



Programming Suggestions

Keeping safety in mind, use target throws, throws for height and ball-passing games as part of the development of throwing skills. Accuracy and power create a balanced program.

NOTE: throwing and passing activities are a good opportunity for introducing safety and fair play principles.

THE RUNNER

Description

Using a 10 metre corridor, the **Runner** sprints down and back four times, touching a cone at the turn-around points.

Benefits

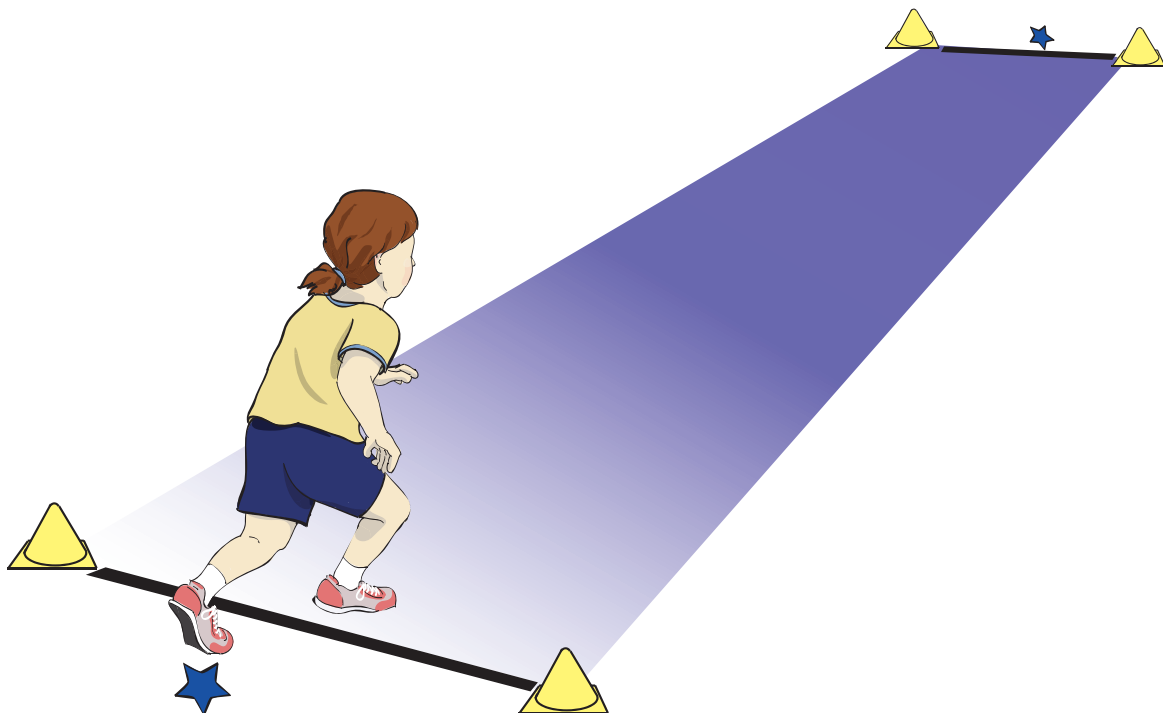
The stop-start nature of this activity adds to the movement and fitness benefits of learning to run effectively.

Equipment

- Cones for area markers
- Stopwatch
- Whistle

Challenge

- a shuttle-run involving four lengths of a 10 metre course
- time is recorded from the start to the last line crossing



It's not just a dash...how quickly can you stop and start again?

Format

- the Runner stands behind the start line, beside a cone, facing forwards
- with a whistle signal (watch starts) the Runner starts and sprints to the far end
- a cone placed on the 10 metre line is touched for a turn-around
- the Runner sprints four lengths of the course
- on the last length the Runner runs past the line (no cone touch) and the watch is stopped
- time is recorded to the nearest tenth of a second

Safety Guidelines

SITUATION: other Runners remain off to the side of the start zone.

AREA: establish a 3 X 10 metre running zone plus 3 metres of run-off at the ends.

FACILITY: ensure there are no walls near either the start or turn-around zones.

EQUIPMENT: ensure the floor is dry, and runners wear stable footwear.

TIP

- allow the runner to walk around after the challenge to restore relaxed breathing



THE RUNNER - TIPS AND TEACHING

Description

The Runner gains important movement and fitness components as they learn to react, accelerate, and anticipate direction changes.

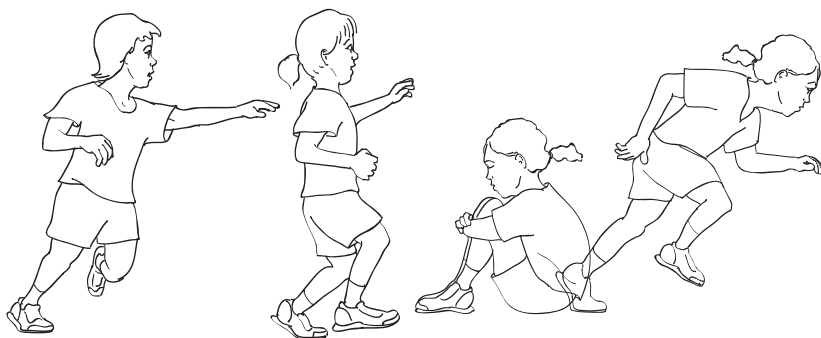


Body Language

- quick driving actions out of the start
- smooth acceleration
- quick, coordinated turn-around
- focus is forwards - next move

Encouragements

- 'Run with your arms (your legs will follow)'
- 'Be quick on the stop and start'
- 'Keep going, that's it!'



Programming Suggestions

With relays (less than 15m) and pursuit games introduce tasks (ball carrying, holding bean-bags), and change body positions (tall, hands on hips...) in patterns that allow some rest between efforts. This will establish both the fitness and movement elements.

THE STRIKER

Description

The **Striker** attempts to knock over six skittles with six placed kicks using a size 3 football.

Benefits

Focus, accuracy, consistency and coordination are all part of the attraction of this activity.

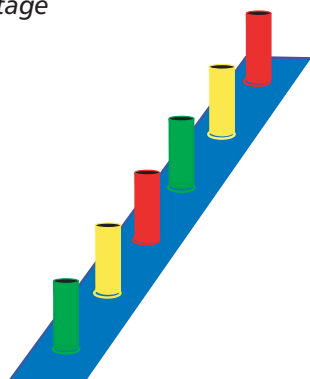
Equipment

- Size 3 football
- Football Tee
- Six Skittles
- Skittle Mat

Challenge

- six kicking attempts
- six skittles as targets
- record one point for each skittle knocked over

NOTE: the distance can be modified for age and stage



Wow! It's a good thing these skittles don't move!

Format

- the ball tee and football are placed just behind the start line
- the Striker stands slightly behind the ball and kicks the ball at the skittles
- each knocked skittle is removed from the area
- the Striker is given six attempts to knock all the skittles
- one point is recorded for each knocked skittle

TIP

- an extra football can speed the process

Safety Guidelines



SITUATION: other Strikers remain behind the start zone.

AREA: establish a 1 metre no-walk zone around both the start and strike areas.

FACILITY: ensure that floor is dry; kick towards a wall.

EQUIPMENT: ensure that equipment is dry and clean, all Strikers wear stable footwear.

TIP

- use a volunteer to remove skittles and return the ball to the start: eliminating walk-throughs

THE STRIKER - TIPS AND TEACHING

Description

With this structured challenge the **Striker** is acquiring important focus, judgement, and coordination skills that will carry over into other activities.



Body Language

- smooth body shift into the strike
- focus is forwards and specific
- demonstrates a relaxed follow-through

Encouragements

- 'face the target area'
- 'keep your eyes on the skittles'
- 'pretend your toes are looking at the skittles'



Programming Suggestions

In addition to using the challenge as a training tool, bring in ball-passing games, ball-dribbling relays (less than 15m), and alternate targets (e.g. hoops) to enhance the coordination and judgement aspects of this challenge. Also try the challenge with both right and left to ensure balanced motor development.

THE PITCHER

Description

The Pitcher demonstrates their ability to accurately throw coloured bean bags into like-coloured target zones.

Benefits

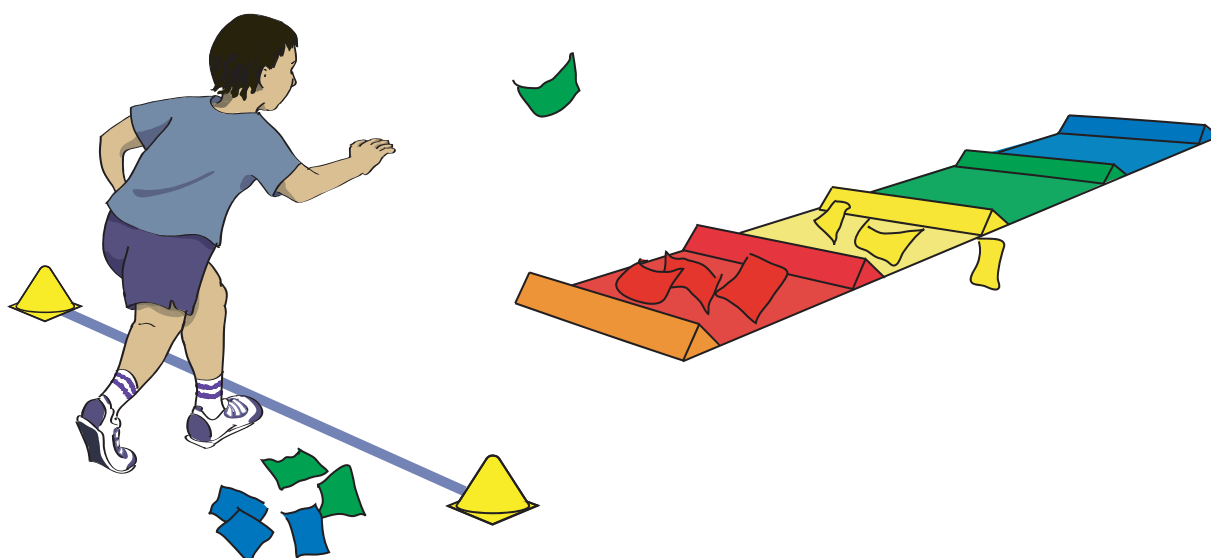
The excitement of the challenge encourages the development of important accuracy, concentration and hand-eye skills.

Equipment

- Target Strip and Wedges
- 12 Bean Bags (four colours)
- cones at start line

Challenge

- Twelve coloured bean bags are thrown towards four zones
- one point is scored for each bag landing in the appropriate zone



Try and pretend that each bean bag is a magnet for the same colour on the mat!

Format

- The Pitcher stands behind the start line facing the target area
- each of three red bean bags is thrown towards the red zone
- if at least one bag lands in the appropriate zone the Pitcher aims for the next zone.
- one point is scored for each bag in the correct coloured zone
- all the bags are collected and returned to the start at the end of the challenge

TIP

- use a volunteer (or next in line) to feed the bags to the Pitcher

Safety Guidelines



SITUATION: other Pitchers stay behind the start zone.

AREA: establish a 1.5 metre no-walk zone around the start line.

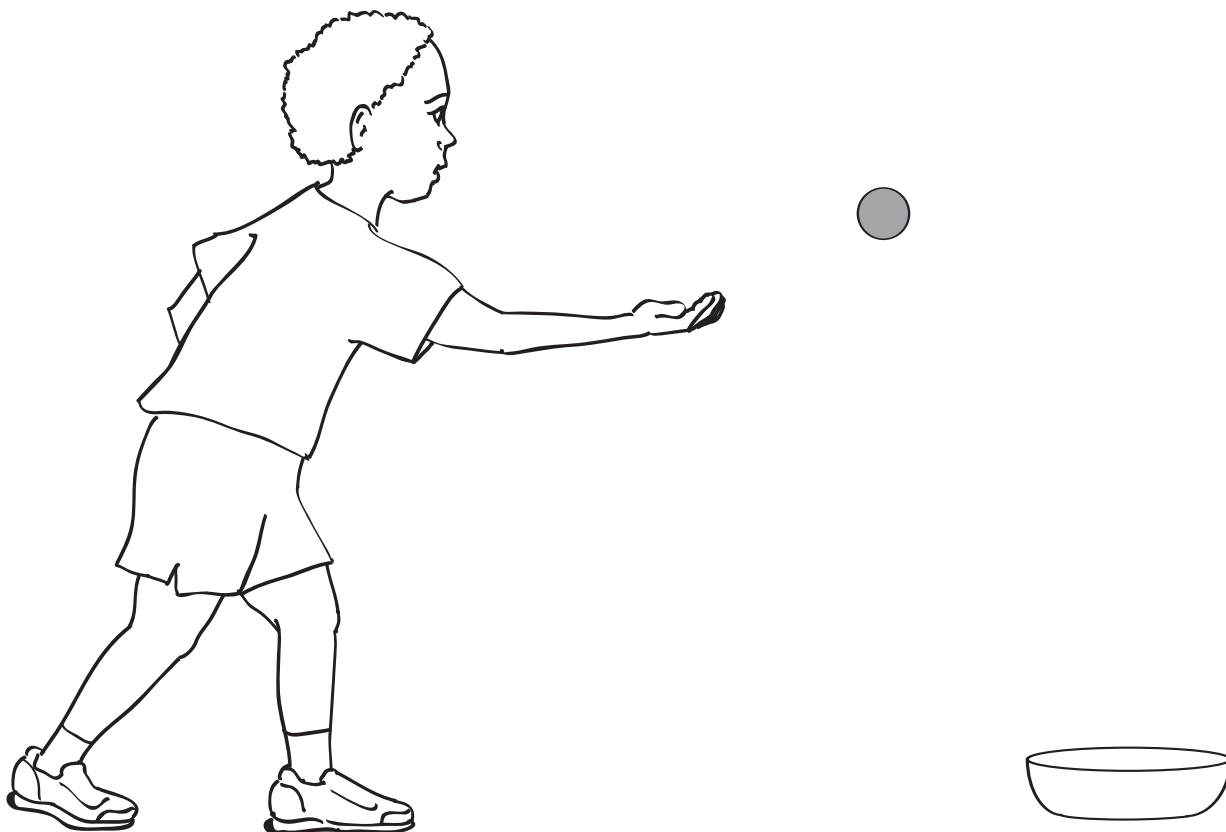
FACILITY: pitch towards a wall.

EQUIPMENT: ensure that the bean bags are clean and that all equipment is dry.

THE PITCHER - TIPS AND TEACHING

Description

The Pitcher is combining rhythm, focus and coordination to consistently produce an accurate throw.



Body Language

- smooth arm action
- balanced, stable body position
- maintains a relaxed focus on the target areas

Encouragements

- 'rock your body with your arm'
- 'point to the coloured zone before you pitch'
- 'nice and smooth now'



Programming Suggestions

Try using different target objects, different start or arm positions, alter distance or height and compare right and left arms (be sure to switch leg positions) to enhance hand-eye skills.

THE CATCHER

Description

A progressive series of Throw-Task-Catch challenges using a size 3 football.

Benefits

Learning to combine tasks with ball handling, throwing and catching is an important component of many games and sports, in addition to being a valuable mental agility challenge.

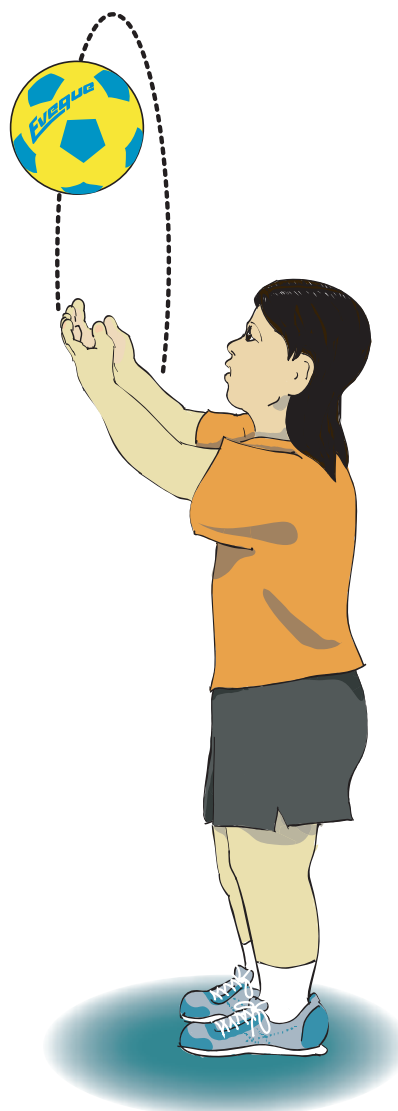
Equipment

- size 3 Football

Challenge

in sequence

1. Throw, Bounce, Catch
 2. Throw, Bounce, Clap, Catch
 3. Throw, Catch
 4. Throw, Clap, Catch
 5. Throw, Clap X 2, Catch
 6. Throw, Clap X 3, Catch
- one point is scored for each completed task



From these challenges you could learn to juggle if you wanted to!

Format

- the Catcher faces forwards holding the football at waist height
- when ready they are given two opportunities to complete each task
- the Catcher must complete a task before moving on to the next in the sequence
- one point is scored for each completed task (max score = 6)

TIP

- demonstrate the tasks before scoring and allow 'warm up' efforts.

Safety Guidelines

SITUATION: other Catchers remain behind the zone.

AREA: establish a 1.5 metre no-walk zone around the Catcher.

FACILITY: the Catcher faces away from walls, ensure that the floor is dry.

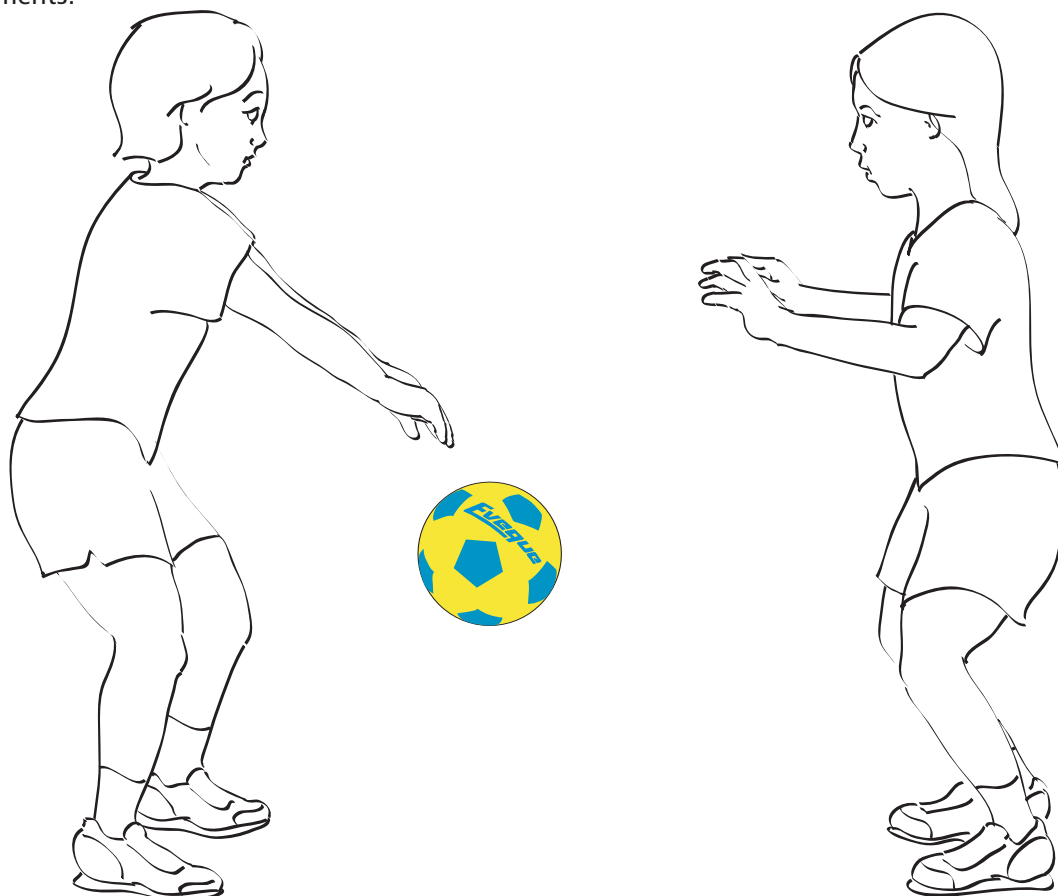
EQUIPMENT: use stable footwear and ensure that the ball is clean and dry.



THE CATCHER - TIPS AND TEACHING

Description

The Catcher is acquiring the ability to combine physical and mental tasks with physical movements.

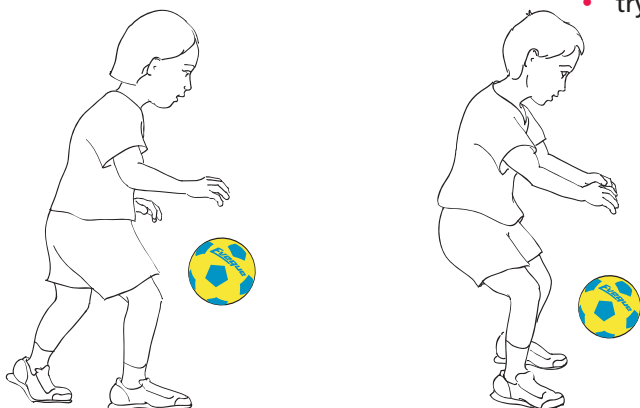


Body Language

- uses a relaxed stable start pose
- movements are smooth; tasks are controlled
- remains focused on the task

Encouragements

- 'see if you can make a picture of what you are doing'
- 'use your whole body to lift the ball'
- 'try not to think too much - just try it!'



Programming Suggestions

Try group activities with bouncing, passing, dribbling and carrying that combine ball handling with movement or different poses. Add different hand clapping and bounce rhythms with solo or partner movements. These tasks combine well with music and rhythm activities.

THE STEPPER

Description

The Runner uses quick high-knee strides to navigate a series of coloured wedges as part of a shuttle run.

Benefits

This whole-body activity adds a measure of anticipation and coordinated judgement - a part of games, sports and rhythm activities that involve direction and pace changes.

Equipment

- Stepper Mat and Wedges
- Stopwatch
- Whistle
- Cones for corridor and turn-around points

Challenge

- set an eight metre course including a Stepper Mat
- the Stepper crosses the course and mat four times
- the total time is recorded



I didn't know my feet could move so quickly!

Format

- the Stepper stands behind the start line, facing forwards
- with a whistle signal (watch starts) they sprint forwards, crossing over the mat and wedges
- the Stepper touches the cone at the turn-around point and repeats the activity for a total of four crossings
- with the last crossing they run through the line (watch is stopped)
- total time is recorded to the nearest tenth of a second

TIP

- allow a 'warm up' trial

Safety Guidelines



SITUATION: other Steppers remain off to the side of the start zone.

AREA: construct a 2 metre wide corridor plus a start and turn no-walk zone.

FACILITY: ensure a clean, dry floor, and set the start-turn lines away from walls.

EQUIPMENT: ensure that equipment is dry, remove loose jewellery, and use stable footwear.

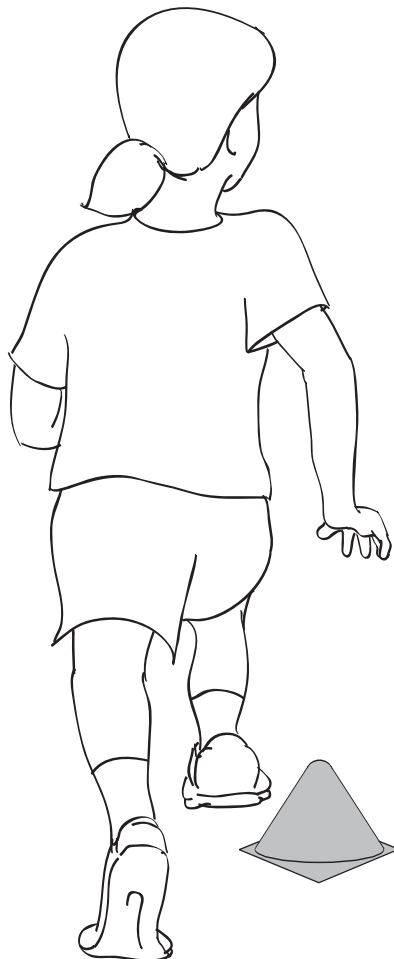
TIP

- encourage the Stepper to 'walk-about' afterwards to restore relaxed breathing

THE STEPPER - TIPS AND TEACHING

Description

The Stepper learns to combine speed activities with footwork agility and timing.



Body Language

- stepper can change tempo to navigate the mat
- arm actions lead and balance leg actions
- footwork is light, quick

Encouragements

- 'keep looking ahead'
- 'use your arms to move'
- 'keep breathing'
- 'fast feet, fast feet'



Programming Suggestions

Individual, partner and group variations involve obstacle courses (weaves, pathways), direction changes and different footwork rhythms to enhance footwork agility and the related fitness components. Ensure that there is adequate rest between efforts to restore relaxed breathing.

THE BOWLER

Description

A target challenge using coloured skittles as the targets and a rolled tennis ball as the implement that knocks them over.

Benefits

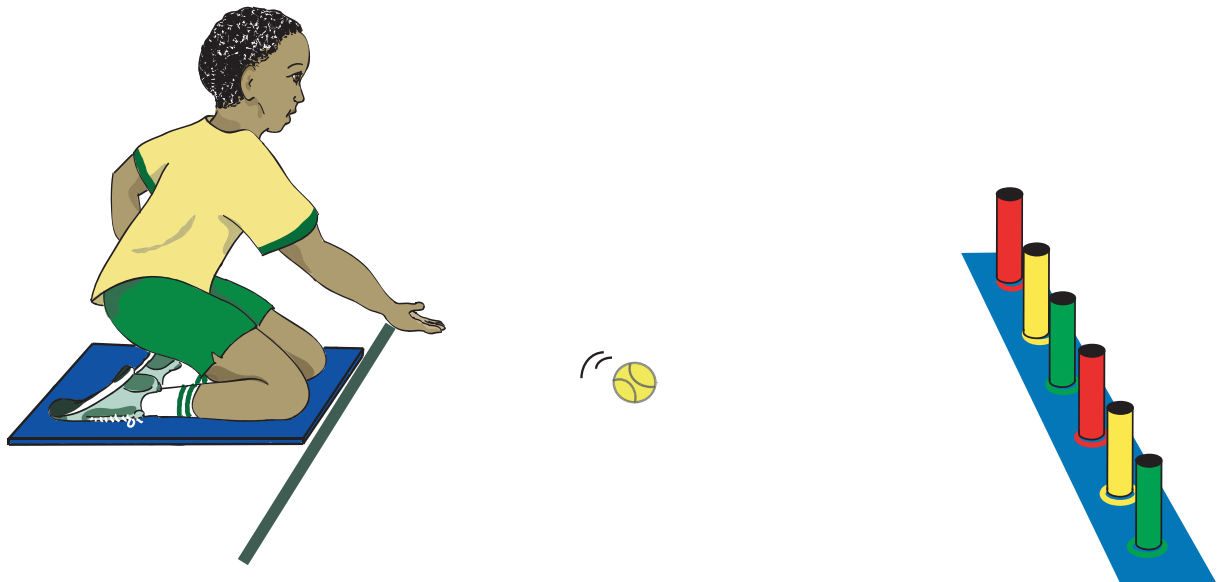
Rhythm, focus, and accuracy make this a fun-filled way to learn valuable hand-eye skills and related concentration abilities.

Equipment

- Coloured Skittles (6)
- Skittle Mat
- Tennis Ball
- [small kneeling mat or carpet]

Challenge

- six coloured skittles and six efforts to knock them over with a tennis ball
 - one point is scored for each successful strike
- NOTE: the bowling distance can be modified for age and stage*



*Not too fast and not too slow; I need to bowl this tennis ball just enough...**

Format

- the Bowler kneels behind the start line on a small mat or carpet facing the skittles
- the tennis ball is rolled/bowled to try and knock each of the skittles over
- any skittles knocked over are removed from the area
- the Bowler is given six efforts to knock the six skittles
- one point is scored for each successful strike

TIP

- a volunteer can remove skittles and return the ball to the start line

Safety Guidelines



SITUATION: other Bowlers remain behind the start zone.

AREA: establish a 1 metre no-walk zone around both the start and target areas.

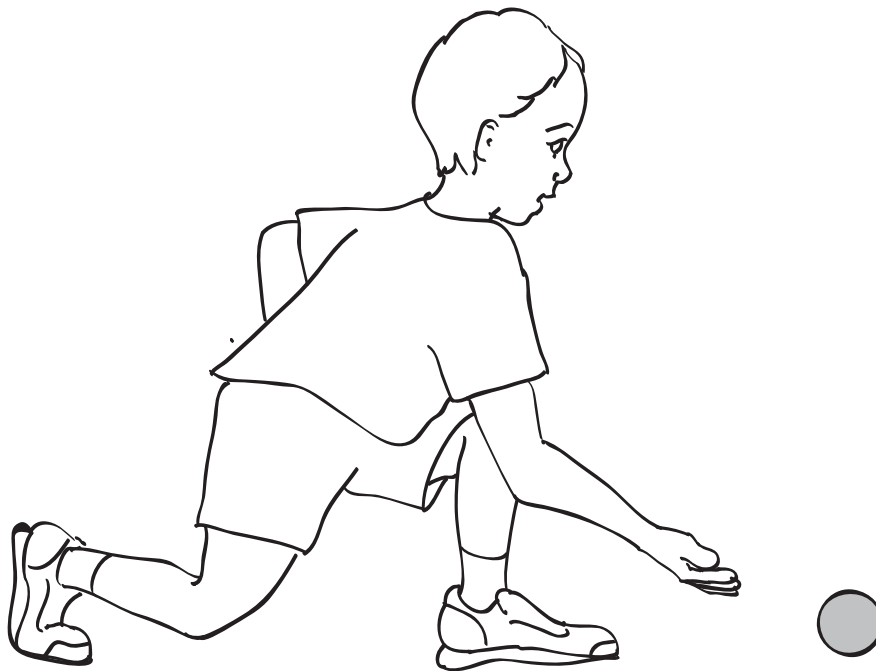
FACILITY: bowl towards a wall; ensure that the floor is dry and clean.

EQUIPMENT: ensure that the equipment and kneeling mat are clean and dry.

THE BOWLER - TIPS AND TEACHING

Description

The Bowler is challenged to combine focus, force and accuracy to achieve a successful target strike.

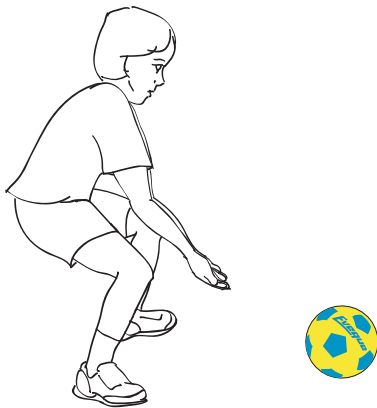


Body Language

- uses a relaxed, balanced start pose
- the bowling action is smooth and uninterrupted
- the Bowler remains focused on the target

Encouragements

- 'keep your eye on the skittle you wish to knock over'
- 'use a nice, smooth arm swing'
- 'point to the skittle as you release the ball'



Programming Suggestions

This activity has many variations including different body poses, variable distances, different sizes, different targets and even partner or team activities that all enhance hand-eye accuracy and consistency.

THE LAUNCHER

Description

The Launcher is challenged to 'chest push' a football outwards for maximum distance from a standing position.



Benefits

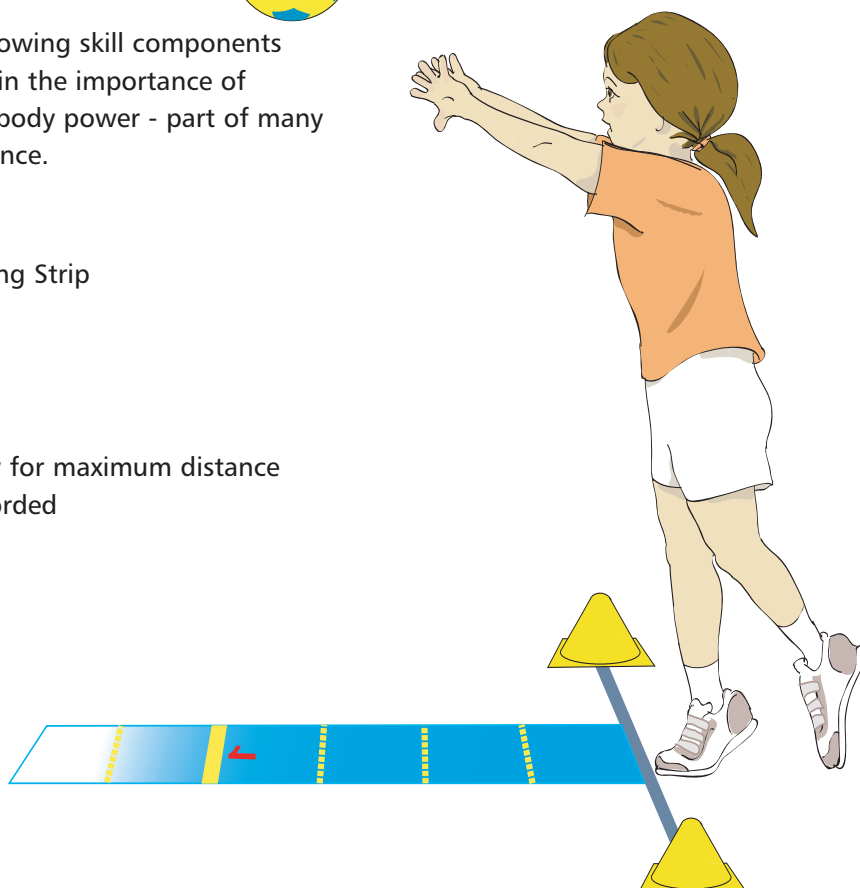
In addition to the throwing skill components this challenge brings in the importance of stability, control and body power - part of many games, sports and dance.

Equipment

- Calibrated Measuring Strip
- Size 3 Football
- [start line cones]

Challenge

- a chest-push throw for maximum distance
- three trials are recorded



If I pretend that my body is like a spring I can really launch the ball!

Format

- the Launcher stands* behind the start line facing the measuring strip
- with the ball held at chest level (elbows high) the ball is launched outwards for a maximum distance
- the Launcher remains behind the line
- the launch distance is measured to the nearest 25cm
- three trials are recorded, the furthest distance is scored.

[*Stance may be with feet parallel or stride]

TIP

- have a volunteer retrieve and return the ball to the start zone

Safety Guidelines



SITUATION: other launchers remain behind the start zone

AREA: establish a 3 metre wide throwing plus start zone

FACILITY: ensure that the floor is dry and clean; throw towards a wall

EQUIPMENT: ensure that the ball and mat are dry, all Throwers wear stable footwear

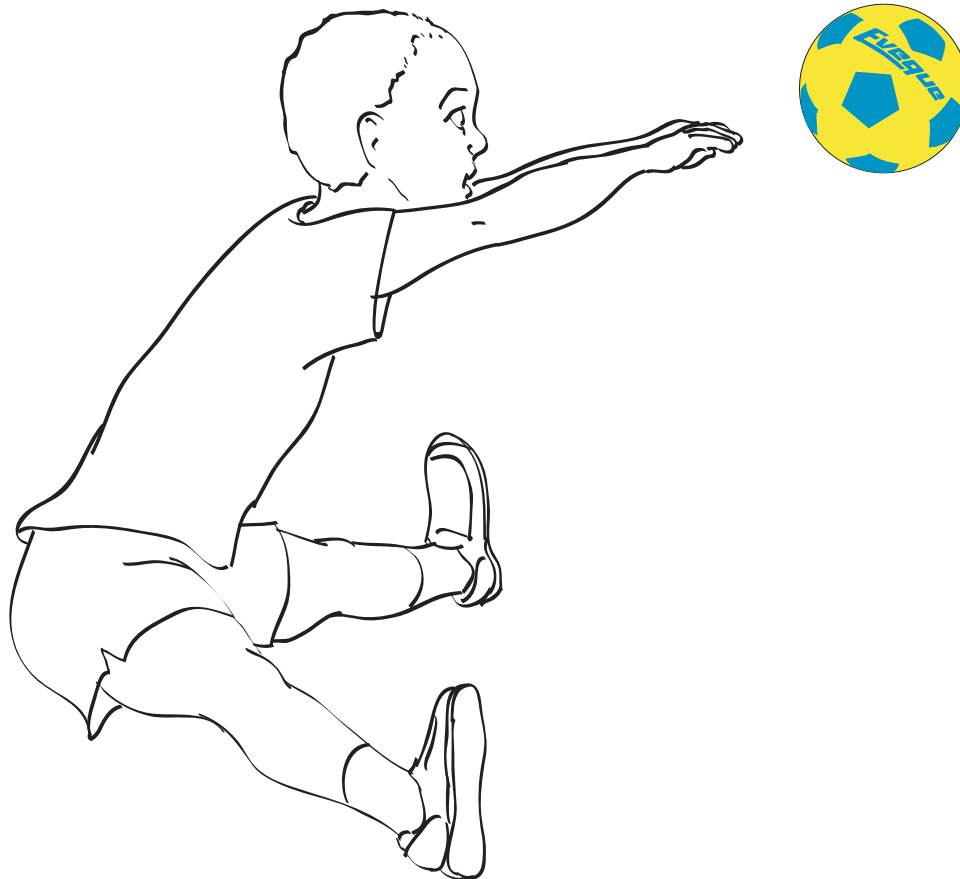
TIP

- the ball is rolled or carried back to the start zone; never thrown

THE LAUNCHER - TIPS AND TEACHING

Description

The **Launcher** learns to use their whole body from the ground up, in a coordinated sequence, to throw and to catch.



Body Language

- look for a stable start position
- the whole action is of lifting and then launching
- the legs and hips are fully extended at release
- recovery is controlled, relaxed

Encouragements

- 'pretend your legs are like springs'
- 'explode the ball up **and** out'
- 'give it a big push!'



Programming Suggestions

With safety in mind, try launch variations towards targets (distance or height), use different objects (towels, foam, balloons), different start positions (seated, kneeling, tip-toe), and combine with passing activities (partner or group) to enhance the body knowledge. *NOTE: throwing and passing or catching activities are an opportunity to introduce safety and fair play principles.*

THE SKIPPER

Description

The Skipper is timed for 20 seconds of skipping (or stepping) through a hula-hoop.

Benefits

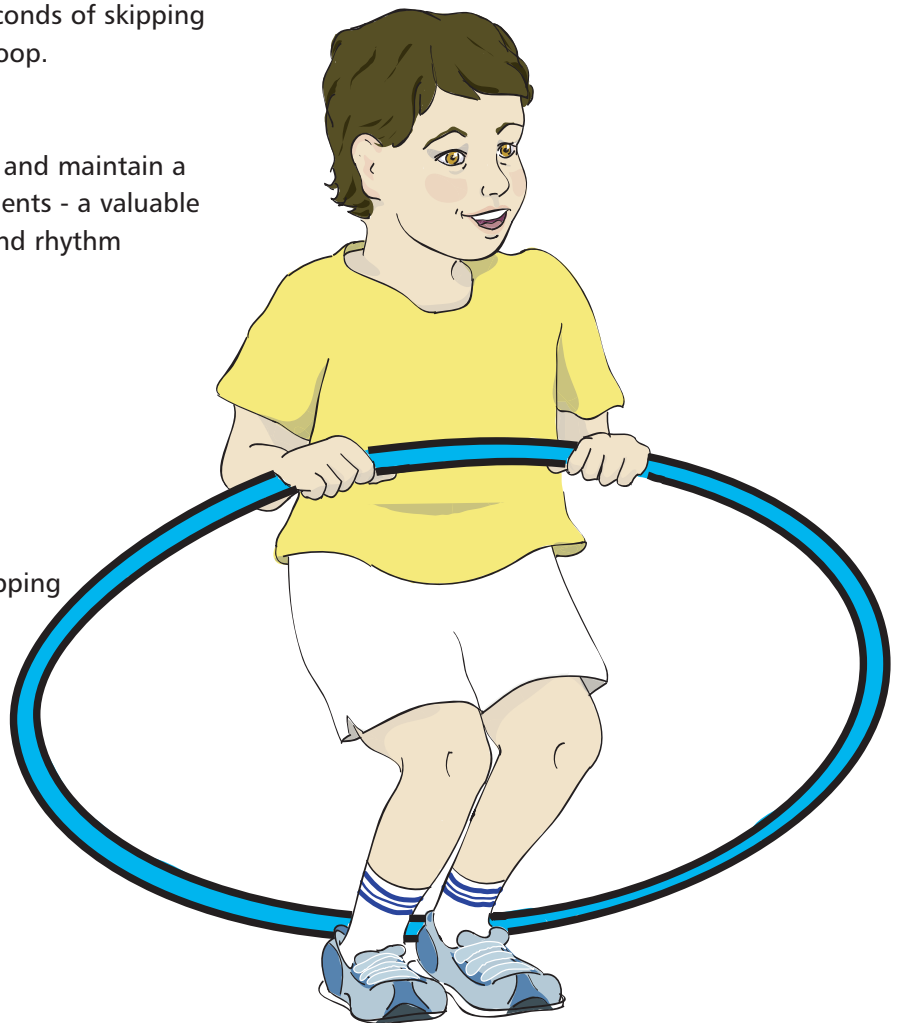
The Skipper strives to establish and maintain a rhythm with controlled movements - a valuable component of games, sports and rhythm activities.

Equipment

- Hula-Hoop
- Stopwatch
- Whistle

Challenge

- twenty seconds of timed skipping
- each successful rotation of the hoop is counted during the time frame



'If I let my feet and hands do the work skipping is a lot easier and more fun!'

Format

- the Skipper stands with the hoop placed behind their heels
- with a whistle signal (watch starts) the Skipper sweeps the hoop over their heads and down under their feet continuously
- each successful revolution of the hoop is counted*

*the skipper is encouraged to start again if they stop

- the total number of successful skips is recorded

TIP

- allow each skipper a 'warm-up' trial before the challenge

Safety Guidelines



SITUATION: other Skippers remain behind the skipping zone.

AREA: establish a 2metre no-walk zone for Skipping.

FACILITY: ensure that the floor is dry; the Skipper faces away from walls.

EQUIPMENT: ensure that the hoop is clean; Skippers wear stable footwear and remove loose jewellery.

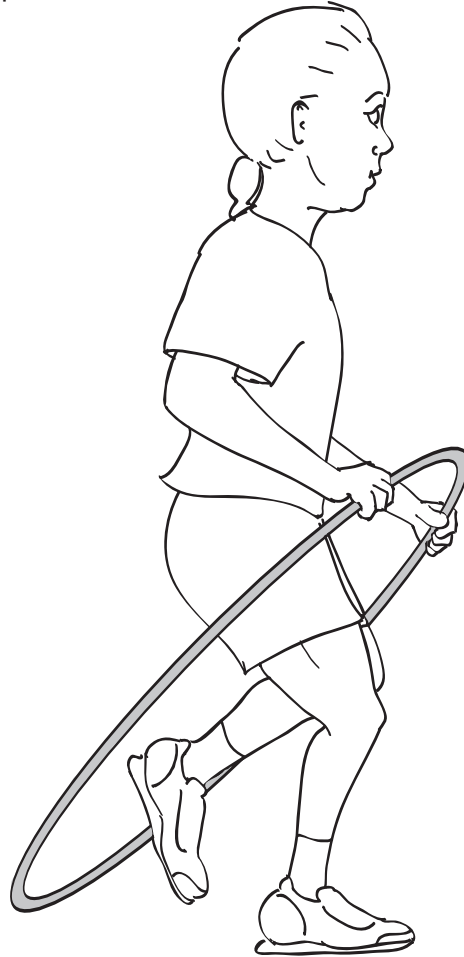
TIP

- after the Skipping Challenge a brief walk-about will restore relaxed breathing

THE SKIPPER- TIPS AND TEACHING

Description

The Skipper acquires valuable rhythm, breathing and agility skills as they develop the movement skill.



Body Language

- the skipper adopts a relaxed start position
- hoop rotations are smooth and rhythmical
- footwork is light, resilient
- the body stays level; legs move



Encouragements

- 'Your feet are light and quick'
- 'The hoop keeps moving'
- 'Nice and smooth now!'
- ['Keep going, that's it!']

Programming Suggestions

With individual, partner and group activities, skipping can use different stride patterns (moving and stationary), be done with and without hoops or ropes, and combine with hopscotch and other footwork agility patterns. Skipping activities combine well with music and rhythm activities.