



5.1 PROGRAM DESIGN — LEVEL 1 (5-6) YEAR OLDS

Introduction

This section contains lesson plans that are designed to make it easy for coaches who have little or no experience coaching children to run an exciting and effective softball program for young children. Even experienced coaches will appreciate these well thought out lesson plans and incorporate many of the drills into their practice plans.

A set of 18 lesson plans has been designed to assist you in running a bi-weekly 9 week program. The plans have been designed as a resource. You can use the plans verbatim or as a rough guide. They are adaptable to your skills as a coach and the abilities of your athletes. The extent to which you choose to use the plans will depend on your softball coaching experience and your level of comfort in teaching children.

You have been given 18 lesson plans, but you will realize that some activities may work better than others. We encourage you to be creative — combine some of the plans, create your own name for activities or create your own plan based on the activities that you feel are most effective. Even have the players choose the activities as it's all about their enjoyment.

Some coaches prefer to run the program in stations as opposed to one drill after another. If you have enough volunteers this may work well for your groups. For more information on a station based program please refer to Appendix A, at the back of the manual.

All lesson plans do require some advance preparation. The following check list will prepare you to run a successful session:

- ✓ Review the upcoming Lesson Plan prior to the session.
- ✓ Become comfortable with how to set up and run each activity (visualize).
- ✓ Review the skills of the session.
- ✓ Consult the Softball Skills section to review how to teach the skill.
- ✓ Review the Notes to Coaches section of the manual.
- ✓ Practice the skill at home (in front of a mirror) to be sure you are comfortable teaching it.
- ✓ Check to ensure that you have all the necessary equipment for the activities in the upcoming lesson plan.



- ✓ Arrive at the diamond 15 minutes early to ensure the field is safe and discuss the role each coach or adult helper will play during the session. You may also want to use this time to orientate adult helpers (parents/older siblings).

Note: The following points are guidelines only. Please feel free to modify these guidelines or to develop your own as dictated by the needs of your Association

Length of Season

- ☐ Typically the softball season for 5-6 year olds is 8-10 weeks with 2 sessions a week.
- ☐ In areas where diamond time and volunteer commitment is at a premium one session a week over the course of 8-10 weeks is sufficient.

Length of Session

- ☐ 1 hour (maximum) per session.

Number of Players

- ☐ No more than 12 players on each team. It is recommended to have 10 players or less.

Number of Adult Helpers

- ☐ A minimum of 6 adult volunteers per session.
- ☐ Should have one adult for every two players if possible.

Facilities

- ☐ While the use of a softball diamond is suggested, an open field can also be used.
- ☐ The number of diamonds used will depend on the resources of the Association and the number of participants registered.
- ☐ If there are a large number of participants, a softball diamond can be divided into different regions for each team to participate on at the same time (i.e. on an adult sized field, the diamond can be divided into 3 regions in the outfield and two regions on the infield). Using the set-up, 5 teams can safely use one diamond. If more than one team is sharing a diamond, it is suggested to

rotate the teams into the infield so all players get a chance to play on the dirt infield.

Lesson Plans

- The coach is provided with 18 lesson plans to take them through a typical softball season (i.e. a nine week season with 2 seasons per week).
- Each lesson plan involves activities that will teach the player, the basic skills of softball.
- Coaches are offered suggestions on how to modify an activity to suit the player's ability level.
- Each lesson plan ends with a Lead Up Game which simulates aspects of the game of softball.
- The coach has great flexibility in following or changing the lesson plans to ensure the most **FUN** and **ACTIVITY** for their players.
- After Lesson 12, the Lesson Plans change to involve the team being divided into two groups that perform different activities at the same time and then switch and do the activities the other group was performing. The sessions still ends with a Lead Up Game.

Softballs

- Softball Canada strongly recommends the use of the Worth Reduced Injury Factor (RIF) softballs for the Learn to Play Program.
- Fear of being hit by a hard ball is a deterrent for children learning softball skills so a softer ball will increase the child's confidence when engaging in the activities of the program. The Worth RIF softballs come in a variety of hardness as well as sizes, to meet the needs of your association.
- As the child's skills improve, a harder softball can be introduced.
- In the earlier weeks beanbag, foam, balls, stuffed animals, sponges or whiffle balls can also be used to lessen the players' nervousness and chance of getting injured.
- Be creative!

During the Season

- After Lesson 12, there will be two (2) teams on the diamond at once (evenly divide your total number of players by two). One team is placed in the outfield and the other team is placed in the infield. Each team will perform the warm-up activity separately for 5 minutes. Then each team will perform the listed activities for 15 minutes in their designated areas. The two (2) teams will then switch positions (infield group moves to outfield and vice versa) and performs the activities listed for that area.

End of Season

- It is strongly recommended that the Association organize a "FUN DAY" at the end of the season for the participants of the Learn to Play Program. (**Note:** some Associations will also start the season off with a "FUN DAY").

5.2 LEVEL 1 PRACTICE PLANS

Note: Please refer to the section *Softball Skills*, starting on page 219, for teaching progressions for specific skills. Please refer to Appendix C and Appendix D for additional pitching information.

LESSON PLAN #1

WARM-UP

BLOB TAG

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- Mark out boundaries of playing area desired. One player is chosen to be the chaser (beginning Blob) and the rest scatter
- On "GO" the Blob chases, trying to tag others
- Tagged players link arms by hooking together at elbows with the Blob
- When Blob becomes 3, only outside players can tag
- When Blob becomes 4, split to make 2 Mini-Blobs

Key Teaching Points: Running, agility, multidirectional movement, competitive endurance

DIAMOND ORIENTATION

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: Bases in proper field set up

Activity Description:

- Put 1 adult in charge of 2 players. Make sure players know the name of their partner and the adult in charge, as well as the coach's name
- Familiarize players with diamond layout and terms
- Demonstrate as you speak
- Start players at home plate making them familiar with the name (home) and that this is where the batter stands to hit
- Let players pretend to hit and run to 1st base, run to 2nd base, run to 3rd base, and run back to home plate

Key Teaching Points: Diamond layout, softball terms

MAIN ACTIVITIES

PERT GERT OR PERT BERT

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball and glove for every player

Activity Description:

- Each player has a ball and space to work in where they won't bump into others. Objective is to see which "Pert Gert" (girl) or "Pert Bert" (boy) can get under the ball and catch it
- Each player tosses the ball in the air for a self catch
- Coaches emphasize proper use of glove
- See if they can throw it higher each time
- How many consecutive catches can they make
- Throw a little away from you and run to get under

Key Teaching Points: Proper use of glove for catching, how to wear it, how to throw the ball

Note: Depending on skill level coaches may have to throw the ball to the players.

POWERBALL

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- Players line up with one adult assigned to every 2 players, an appropriate distance apart
- Coach teaches Throwing Progressions for learning proper technique (keep it short) as outlined in the Softball Skills Section
- Players start with no ball then progress to throwing a ball to an adult. To help make it FUN emphasis should be on trying to "Blast" the adult with the ball

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching, co-operation

CHAMP

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- 1 adult for every 2 players or players in partners if they are capable of throwing and catching the ball back and forth
- Every time the ball is caught by one of the pair they get a letter of "CHAMP"
- Partners can compete against other partners to see which pair can spell CHAMP first. Letters can be awarded for good throws back to the adult as well
- For variation have players select other words (i.e. superstar, elephant, etc.)

Key Teaching Points: Catching, throwing

GIMME 5

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 4 bases

Activity Description:

- Put bases down 30' - 40' from players. Form 4 groups of 3
- Players, in turn, take a swing at an imaginary ball, drop bat, run as fast as possible past their base, give coach "high 5", return to base as if running to 2nd base, touch base and shout "GREEN LIGHT" to signal next player to leave
- Make sure players are running full speed across the bag, slowing down only after touching it

Key Teaching Points: Running through 1st base and speed development

LEAD UP GAME

SEMI CIRCLE SOFTBALL

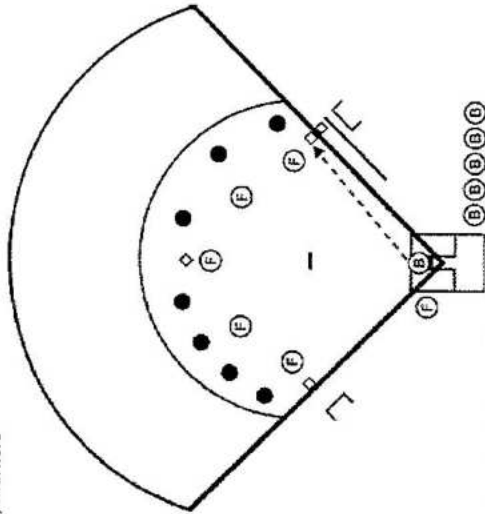
Time: 20 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball, 4 bases, markers

Activity Description:

- 2 teams of 6: 1 team on defense and 1 team on offense
- Place a semi-circle of markers approximately at the edge of the infield
- Defensive team has 1 player at home and the rest position themselves throughout the infield at approximately the same distance. Both markers and players can be adjusted according to skill level
- Offensive team tries to throw the ball over or through the markers and then run through 1st base
- Team gets 1 point if ball goes through the marker or 2 points if ball goes over markers
- No point is awarded if the ball is caught or stopped at the markers
- Defense throws the ball home as quickly as possible
- Change sides after all players on the offensive team throws

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching, co-operation, teamwork



LESSON PLAN #2

WARM-UP

DATE:

WHAT TIME IS IT MR. WOLF

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- One player is MR. WOLF, who starts at one end of the designated area. Other players start at the other end
- Players call out to Mr. Wolf "What time is it Mr. Wolf?"
- Mr. Wolf responds by calling out various times (i.e. 2:00 o'clock; 6:00 o'clock; sleep time)
- Players can then advance as many steps as the time that Mr. Wolf called out (i.e. 6 o'clock=6 steps)
- When Mr. Wolf calls "Dinner Time" (s)he runs after other players who try to get back across the safe line before getting caught
- You may have to use an adult or coach as Mr. Wolf to get them started
- Any player(s) caught by Mr. Wolf becomes a wolf as well. The wolves return to their designated area and continue the game until no one is left to catch

Key Teaching Points: Running, chasing, dodging, multi-directional speed

Note: Add fundamental movement skills by having players skip or jump

MAIN ACTIVITIES

SKY BALL

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball and glove for each players

Activity Description:

- 1 adult for every 2 players
- Coach will demonstrate Receiving Fly Balls Progression as in Softball Skills section
- Players will then practice catching high tosses from an adult
- Self-competition can be included by:
 - Seeing if they can catch a higher one each time
 - How many consecutive catches can they make?
- Throw a little away from the player so they have to move to get underneath

Key Teaching Points: Proper use of glove and positioning when catching fly balls

SPACE SHUTTLE

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- 1 adult and 1 ball (space shuttle) for every 2 players. 1 marker for each player. Try to assign partners as close in ability as possible
- Partners stand behind a line and see how far they can throw (send the ball into space)
- Their adult leader can be in the area of the throw to mark the spot
- Competition can be introduced by seeing if they can throw farther each time and by competing against each other

Key Teaching Points: Throwing for distance

FOUR CORNERS

Time: 15 minutes

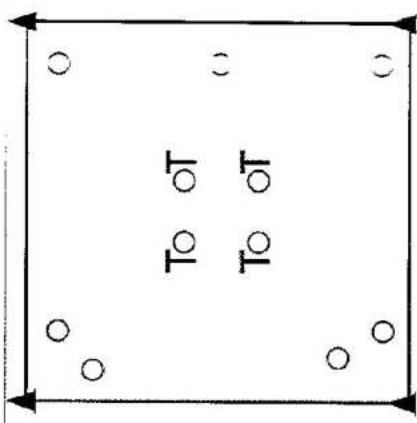
Equipment: Whiffle balls, 4 pylons, 4 batting tees

Activity Description:

- Set up 4 batting tees in a small inner square
- Set up an outer square with four pylons
- 4 players bat and the rest field
- Once the batter hits the ball they run to the closest outside pylon and run around the pylons
- The fielders collect the balls and return them to the batting tees
- For each pylon touched the batters get a point, if a batter is in between pylons when all the balls are returned to the tees the pylons they touch do not count towards the batter's total points.
- Switch batters and fielders after batters have hit twice

Key Teaching Points: Sprinting, hitting, fielding

Note: You may want to review hitting progressions before



OVER THE RAINBOW

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: Balls, helmets

Activity Description:

- Line players up in with at least two BIG steps distance in between them facing the coach
- Have the players start facing the instructor with the ball in hand and their arm stretched out in front of them parallel to the ground
- Have them spin the ball to themselves out in front of them, trying to get it at least three feet high
- Beginners can have a parent catch the ball for them or they may let it drop to the ground. A more advanced variation is to have players catch the ball themselves
- Once the player is able to catch their own ball – proceed to full "Over the Rainbow" and have the player start with their arms outstretched to the side (ball and glove in hand). Have them toss the ball over their head and catch it with their other outstretched hand. Consider helmets for inexperienced players.

Key Teaching Points: Grip and wrist/finger coordination

LEAD UP GAME

ROADRUNNER

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball, 4 bases, helmet, batting T, 1 bat

Activity Description:

- 2 teams of 6: 1 on offense (Roadrunners) and 1 on defense (Coyotes)
- Coyotes have a catcher at home plate and the others at appropriate locations in the infield
- Roadrunners have 1 player to hit the ball off of a T from home plate and others waiting their turn from a safe distance (while waiting players can take practice swings, standing a safe distance apart)
- The Roadrunner hits the ball off the T at home plate and runs around the bases trying to make it home before the Coyotes get the ball back to the catcher at home plate
- If the ball is caught, the "batter" is out
- Fielders may NOT run with the ball – it must be thrown home
- The adult may have to help at home
- Count how many bases each Coyote touches before the ball gets home
- After each player on the offensive team has hit, switch defense to offense

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, hitting, base running, catching

LESSON PLAN #3

WARM-UP

SHADOWS

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- 2 players designated as chasers, others scatter
- On "GO" players scatter, while chasers try to step on their shadows
- Count how many shadows are stepped on
- Change chasers often

Key Teaching Points: Chasing, dodging, co-operation, running, flexibility, power/endurance, multi-directional speed

Note: A sunny day is necessary for this activity. Counting may be difficult for kids who have the kids count

MAIN ACTIVITIES

REACH THE COACH

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- 1 adult for every 2 players.
- Each group draws a series of parallel lines 5' - 10' apart
- Coach will demonstrate the

Receiving Ground Balls Progressions as shown in the Softball Skills section

- Each pair will start at the line farthest from the coach
- Objective is to get to the coach in the least number of throws
- A grounder is thrown to each player in turn
- If caught, the player advances to the next line

Key Teaching Points: Proper use of glove and positioning for fielding grounders

Note: As a variation the coach can throw fly balls

(H)	(AC)	(M)
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

KILL THE MOSQUITO

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 4 bases, 4 markers, 4 bats

Activity Description:

- Put bases down in proper locations on diamond, with 3 players at each one
- Pretend there is a mosquito on the INSIDE corner of each base
- One player at each base concurrently takes a swing at an imaginary ball, drops the bat, runs as fast as possible to the next base, stepping on the

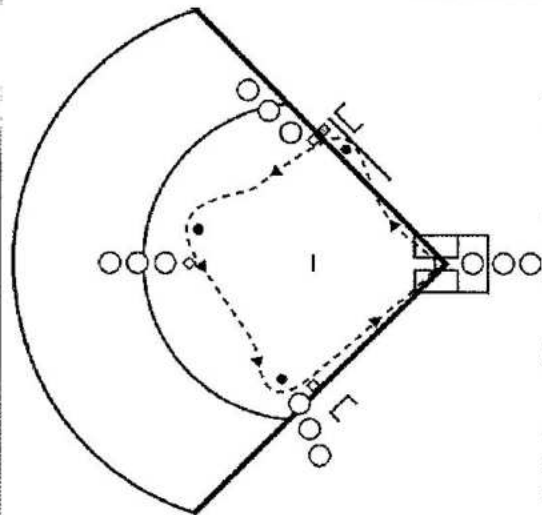
"Mosquito" as they round it (4 players will be running at the same time)

○ They then wait their turn at the base they just rounded

○ Remind players it will be easier to step on the "Mosquito" if they run a little to the outside of the base line as they approach the base.

○ It would be helpful to put some marks down for them to go around as shown in the diagram

Key Teaching Points: Rounding 1st base



OVER THE RAINBOW

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Balls, helmets

Activity Description:

- Line players up in with at least two BIG steps distance in between them facing the coach
- Have the players start facing the instructor with the ball in hand and their arm stretched out in front of them parallel to the ground
- Have them spin the ball to themselves out in front of them, trying to get it at least three feet high
- Beginners can have a parent catch the ball for them or they may let it drop to the ground. A more advanced variation is to have players catch the ball themselves
- Once the player is able to catch their own ball – proceed to full "Over the Rainbow" and have the player start with their arms outstretched to the side (ball and glove in hand). Have them toss the ball over their head and catch it with their other outstretched hand. Consider helmets for inexperienced players.

Key Teaching Points: Grip and wrist/finger coordination

LEAD UP GAME

SEMI CIRCLE SOFTBALL

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball, 4 bases, markers

Activity Description:

- 2 teams of 6: 1 team on defense and 1 team on offense

- Place a semi-circle of markers approximately at the edge of the infield

- Defensive team has 1 player at home and the rest position themselves throughout the infield at approximately the same distance. Both markers and players can be adjusted according to skill level

- Offensive team tries to throw the ball over or through the markers and then into...

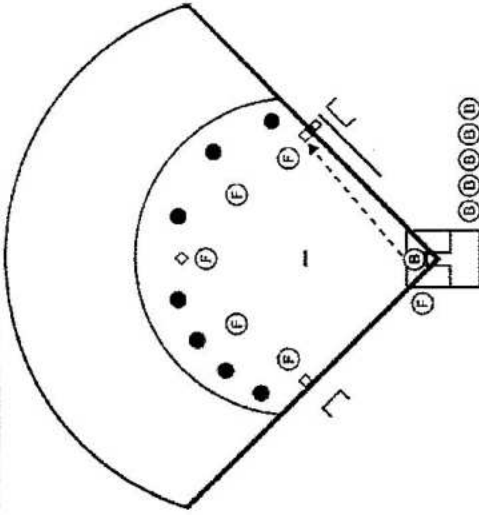
- Team gets 1 point if ball goes through the marker or 2 points if ball goes over markers

- No point is awarded if the ball is caught or stopped at the markers

- Defense throws the ball home as quickly as possible

- Change sides after all players on the offensive team throws

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching, co-operation, teamwork



LESSON PLAN #4

DATE:

WARM-UP

BLOB TAG

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- Mark out boundaries of playing area desired. One player is chosen to be the chaser (beginning Blob) and the rest scatter
- On "GO" the blob chases and tries to tag others
- Tagged players link arms by hooking together at elbows with the Blob
- When blob becomes 3, only outside players can tag
- When blob becomes 4, split to make 2 mini-blobs

Key Teaching Points: Running, agility, multidirectional movement, cooperation, endurance

MAIN ACTIVITIES

SPELL YOUR NAME

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- Partners should be selected by ability and spaced accordingly
- Line the players up, facing their partner
- Remind everyone of the proper way to throw and to catch a ball
- Tell them that the name of the partnership is a combination of both players' names. Coach designates which line of partners gets to be the first name (i.e. players on the north side or south side)
- Have the players call out the name of their team (i.e. Jane Bobby)
- Partners throw the ball back and forth overhand
- They get a letter in their team name every time they make a catch
- When they complete their name, they move back 2 giant steps
- Continue the process to time limit

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching

Note: Adult may have to be the thrower if skill level is not advanced enough

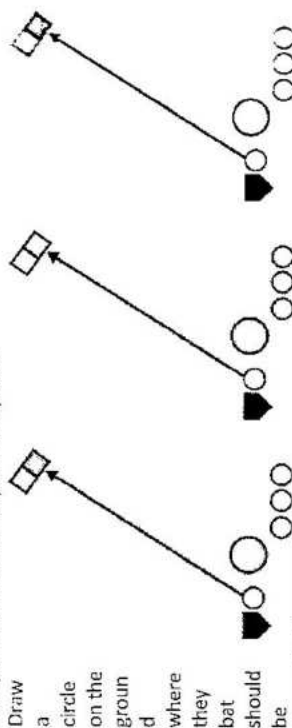
HIT AND RUN

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: 3 batting T's, at least 2 balls per T, 3 bases

Activity Description:

- 3 groups of 4 (1 batter, 1 on deck, 2 fielders) and at least 1 adult per group
- Set up 3 T's in front of carpet home plates
- Draw



- Place 1" base 30' - 40' from where the T is set up
- First player hits off a T, drops the bat in marked circle, runs to 1" base
- Player then returns to be an on deck batter
- Two fielders retrieve the ball and throw it to the adult, who is in charge of replacing the ball on the T
- While ball is being retrieved, the on deck batter prepares to hit
- Divide the total amount of time you have left after set up by 2, then give each pair that amount of time to hit – they will be the fielders while the other pair hit

Key Teaching Points: Hitting and dropping bat rather than throwing it

OVER THE RAINBOW

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Balls, helmets

Activity Description:

- Line players up in with at least two BIG steps distance in between them facing the coach
- Have the players start facing the instructor with the ball in hand and their arm stretched out in front of them parallel to the ground
- Have them spin the ball to themselves out in front of them, trying to get it at least three feet high
- Beginners can have a parent catch the ball for them or they may let it drop to the ground. A more advanced variation is to have players catch the ball themselves
- Once the player is able to catch their own ball – proceed to full "Over the Rainbow" and have the player start with their arms outstretched to the side (ball and glove in hand). Have them toss the ball over their head and catch it with their other outstretched hand. Consider helmets for inexperienced players.

Key Teaching Points: Grip and wrist/finger coordination

LEAD UP GAME

FREEZE THE RUNNER THROWING

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment: 2 ball, 4 bases, 4 helmets

Activity Description:

- 2 teams of 6: 1 team on offense and 1 team on defense
- Offensive "batter" THROWS the ball into the playing area and runs around the bases until "FREEZE" is shouted – "FREEZE" may have to be shouted more than once at this age
- Ball is fielded, then thrown, so EVERY fielder catches the ball – the last fielder to catch the ball shouts "FREEZE"
- You score points by counting the number of bases touched – if caught between bases, the last base touched counts
- After everyone has had a turn, switch defense and offense
- Keep total bases touched for each team
- Emphasize proper rounding of bases by using markers such as in the "Kill the Mosquito" drill (Refer to Lesson # 3 Main Activities)

Key Teaching Points:

Throwing, catching, base running, co-operation, teamwork
 Note: Players on defense will likely need help from adults to keep them from all running after the ball at once and in knowing where to throw it next. Lack of catching ability will likely mean there is little actual catching going on but at least each player will get to touch and throw the ball

LESSON PLAN #5

DATE:

WARM-UP

SIMILES AND MAKING BRIDGES

Time: 5-10 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- ☐ Wobble like Jell-O on a plate
- ☐ Skip like a giant with big boots
- ☐ Pop like a bursting bubble
- ☐ Float like a balloon - POP!
- ☐ Walk like a giant with a stiff neck
- ☐ Fly like superman
- ☐ Wiggle like a worm on a hot ground
- ☐ Melt like an ice cube in the sun
- ☐ Move your legs like a pair of scissors
- ☐ Shake like a wet dog
- ☐ Hop like a hammer has been dropped on your toe
- ☐ Stretch like a puppy awakening from a nap
- ☐ Jump like cheerleaders who have won a game
- ☐ Walk as if you have gum stuck to the bottom of your shoe
- ☐ Walk like an elephant that has eaten too many peanuts

MAKING BRIDGES:

- ☐ Can you make a bridge with your body keeping 2 hands and 2 feet on the ground?
- ☐ Can you make it high?
- ☐ Can you make it low? Wide? Narrow?
- ☐ Can you make a bridge keeping 2 hands and 1 foot on the ground? Same variations as done with the first bridge

Key Teaching Points: Basic fundamental movements

Note: SIMILES: choose SIMILES, which are within the range of experience of the players and try not to demonstrate unless there is no response from the players

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Big Foot

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- ☐ Partners start on lines, facing each other, approximately 10' apart. One adult per pair
- ☐ Players throw to each other (or adult throws if skill level is too low for accurate throws)
- ☐ Every time they make a catch, they move back one giant step
- ☐ See which team can get the farthest apart and still catch the ball

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching

SMASH

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Ball gloves, 6 carpet home plates

Activity Description:

- ☐ Players should be divided into partners
- ☐ Ball gloves are placed on the ground across from where players are standing along the 3rd base line, this simulates where 1st base would be for each batter.
- ☐ Draw a home plate (or use carpet plates) on the ground along the 3rd base line for each pair of players
- ☐ On the verbal signal "HIT", all players swing at an imaginary ball, then pivots on lead foot and runs toward their glove (1st base).

- ☐ Coaches should emphasize getting out of box quickly, with power and driving the arms rather than the correct pivot
- ☐ They then return to behind their plate while their partner takes their turn

Key Teaching Points: Getting out of the batter's box

OVER THE RAINBOW

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: Balls, helmets

Activity Description:

- ☐ Line players up in with at least two BIG steps distance in between them facing the coach
- ☐ Have the players start facing the instructor with the ball in hand and their arm stretched out in front of them parallel to the ground
- ☐ Have them spin the ball to themselves out in front of them, trying to get it at least three feet high
- ☐ Beginners can have a parent catch the ball for them or they may let it drop to the ground. A more advanced variation is to have players catch the ball themselves
- ☐ Once the player is able to catch their own ball - proceed to full "Over the Rainbow" and have the player start with their arms outstretched to the side (ball and glove in hand). Have them toss the ball over their head and catch it with their other outstretched hand. Consider helmets for inexperienced players.

Key Teaching Points: Grip and wrist/finger coordination

LEAD UP GAME

BUCKET BALL

Time: 25 minutes

Equipment: 2 balls, 4 bases, helmet, pail or bag

Activity Description:

- 2 teams of 6: 1 team on offense and 1 team on defense
- Defensive team has a catcher at home plate with the pail while other players position themselves at appropriate locations.
- Offensive team has 1 player to throw from home plate and others waiting their turn from a safe distance
- If the ball is caught the "batter" is out
- Offensive "batter" throws out 2 balls in quick succession and runs around the bases trying to make it home before the fielding teams gets both balls in the pail
- Fielders may NOT run with the ball, it must be thrown home
- Relay the ball if necessary

Key Teaching Points:

Throwing, fielding, base running, co-operation, teamwork
 Note: Remind players to make sure the catcher is looking, an adult may have to help at home

LESSON PLAN #6

WARMUP

DATE:

WHAT TIME IS IT MR. WOLF?

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- One player is MR. WOLF, who starts at one end of the designated area. Other players start at the other end
- Players call out to Mr. Wolf "What time is it Mr. Wolf?"
- Mr. Wolf responds by calling out various times (i.e. 2 o'clock; 6 o'clock; sleep time)
- Players can then advance as many steps as the time that Mr. Wolf called out (i.e. 6 o'clock=6 steps)
- When Mr. Wolf calls "Dinner Time" (s)he runs after other players who try to get back across the safe line before getting caught
- You may have to use an adult or coach as Mr. Wolf to get them started
- Any player(s) caught by Mr. Wolf becomes a wolf as well. The wolves return to their designated area and continue the game until no one is left to catch

Key Teaching Points:

Running, chasing, dodging, multi-directional speed

Note: Add fundamental movement skills by having players skip or jump

MAIN ACTIVITIES

HOME RUN

Time: 10 minutes

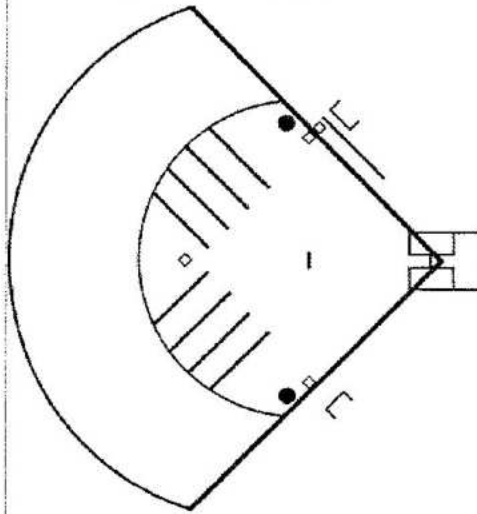
Equipment: 2 targets, 4 balls

Activity Description:

- 2 groups of 6, with 1 group at each target, which is hung on the backstop.
- Mark out lines at various distances from the target. Distances can be according to ability of the group. A high success rate is wanted.

Each team is lined up in front of a target.

- Remind everyone of the proper way to throw the ball. Tell the players that they will throw at the target, trying to get closest to the centre.
- Players choose which distance they throw from in order to hit the target, with the coach's encouragement and advice to help them choose the greatest distance at which they can be successful.



- Adjustments may be made to move the player forward or back during the throw, but in case the line they chose was too difficult or too easy.
- When players realize that they get points for being closer to the center, they may wish to stand as close as possible to better their chances. Encourage them for challenging themselves to greater distances may overcome this tendency.
- Each player gets 2 throws and the points are recorded for the first throw.
- After each player on the team has thrown once, go through the order again as many times as time allows.
- Points are awarded as follows: single – 1 pt; double – 2 pts; triple – 3 pts; homerun – 4 pts.
- Hitting the centre of the target is considered a homerun. Each subsequent concentric area away from the centre is termed a triple, double and single.
- Objective can be to see if each player can get more points on each consecutive throw or it can be made competitive with other groups by totaling each group's points.

Key Teaching Points: Throwing accuracy

Note: Having more targets is advisable as you may then have smaller teams, and each player would spend less time standing around.

HITTING STATIONS

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: 1 bat per player, 3 T's, 3 whiffle balls on a rope, 6 carpet home plates

Activity Description:

- 1 adult in charge of every 2 players
- 3 T stations and 3 whiffle ball stations, with 2 players at each station
- Set T's up in front of carpet home plates
- 6 players will practice hitting off a T
- 6 players practice hitting a hanging whiffle ball which an adult can hold in front of a carpet home plate
- The partner awaiting their turn can be taking practice swings
- Groups can switch stations after 5 min. That will give each player approximately 2 min. of hitting at each activity

Key Teaching Points: Proper hitting form

Note: Refer to your Softball Skills section for proper Hitting Progressions

SUPER SHOES

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: Bases set up on diamond, 2 stopwatches

Activity Description:

- 2 groups of 6, 1 group between home and 1st base and the other between 2nd base and 3rd base
- Each of the groups is broken into 2 groups of 3
- Each player takes a swing with a bat at an imaginary ball and runs to the next base as fast as possible
- Total the times of each team of 3
- Keep a record of the lowest scores for future trials

Key Teaching Points: Base running, speed development

KNEE CLAPS

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- Line players up in a line with at least two BIG steps distance in between them facing the instructor
- Have players start facing the instructor with their hands clasped behind their backs standing on one foot on the line
- Taking a big step sideways, have players step and slide their knees together finishing standing on their other leg
- Once players have mastered the lower body step-slide motion, add the upper body by having the pitcher clap as their legs come together. Say "step-clap, step-clap" as they go through the movement 10 times

Key Teaching Points: Bringing the knees together at the end of a pitch

LEAD UP GAME

FREEZE THE RUNNER: THROWING

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment: 2 balls, 4 bases, 4 helmets

Activity Description:

- 2 teams of 6: 1 team on offense and 1 team on defense
- Offensive "batter" THROWS the ball into the playing area and runs around the bases until "FREEZE" is shouted – "FREEZE" may have to be shouted more than once at this age
- Ball is fielded, then thrown so EVERY fielder catches the ball – the last fielder to catch the ball shouts "FREEZE"
- You score points by counting the number of bases touched – if caught between bases, the last base touched counts
- After everyone has had a turn, switch defense and offense
- Keep total bases touched for each team
- Emphasize proper rounding of bases by using markers as in "Kill the Mosquito" drill (Refer to Lesson # 3 Main Activities)

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching, base running, co-operation, teamwork

Note: Players on defense will likely need help from adults to keep them from all running after the ball at once and in knowing where to throw it next. Lack of catching ability will likely mean there is little actual catching going on but at least each player will get to touch and throw the ball

LESSON PLAN #7

WARM-UP

DATE:

PARTNER TAG

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- Partners face each other from opposite ends of designated playing area
- On "GO", one partner tries to tag the other
- When the partner is tagged, the roles are reversed
- After being tagged, the player performs a task (i.e. 3 jumping jacks) to give the other player time to get away

Key Teaching Points: Running, chasing

MAIN ACTIVITIES

CIRCUS

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every pair, 1 target, 1 bat

Activity Description:

- 4 groups of 3 – each with a Ring Master (adult leader).
- 4 separate stations (Circus Rings) will be going at once. Groups will rotate through the stations, spending 3 min. at each one (time can vary)
- RING 1 (Performing Seal): the Ring Master throws the ball up in the air to one "seal" at a time, who catches it. See how many balls the seal can catch in the time allotted
- RING 2 (Hungry Lions): the Ring Master throws grounders to one "lion" at a time, who gobbles it up. See how many "lions" can eat without dropping the "food"
- RING 3 (Practicing Ponies): "ponies" take turns taking a swing at an imaginary ball, dropping bat, and rounding bases as fast as they can
- RING 4 (Throwing Elephants): "Elephants" use their trunks (arms) to throw balls at targets. Use the target made for other target drills. It would be great if a clown face was drawn on it

Key Teaching Points: Catching, throwing, fielding, running

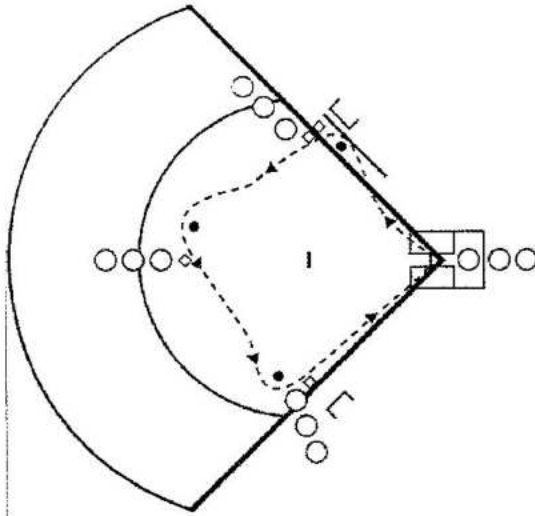
KILL THE MOSQUITO

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 4 bases, 4 marker s, 4 bats

Activity Description:

- Put bases down in proper locations on diamond, with 3 players at each one
- Pretend there is a mosquito on the INSIDE corner of each base
- One player at each base concurrently takes a swing at an imaginary ball, drops the bat, runs as fast as possible to the next base, stepping on the "Mosquito" as they round it (4 players will be running at the same time)
- They then wait their turn at the base they just rounded
- Remind players it will be easier to step on the "Mosquito" if they run a little to the outside of the base line as they approach the base.
- It would be helpful to put some marks down for them to go around as shown in the diagram



Key Teaching Points: Rounding 1st base

KNEE CLAPS

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- Line players up in a line with at least two BIG steps distance in between them facing the instructor
- Have players start facing the instructor with their hands clasped behind their backs standing on one foot on the line
- Taking a big step sideways, have players step and slide their knees together finishing standing on their other leg
- Once players have mastered the lower body step-slide motion, add the upper body by having the pitcher clap as their legs come together. Say "step-clap, step-clap" as they go through the movement 10 times

Key Teaching Points: Bringing the knees together at the end of a pitch

LEAD UP GAME

FREEZE THE RUNNER-HITTING OFF OF A BATTING TEE

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment: 2 ball, 4 bases, 4 helmets, bat, batting tee

- 2 teams of 6: 1 team on offense and 1 team on defense
- Offensive "batter" THROWS the ball into the playing area and runs around the bases until "FREEZE" is shouted – "FREEZE" may have to be shouted more than once at this age
- Ball is fielded, then thrown so EVERY fielder catches the ball – the last fielder to catch the ball shouts "FREEZE"
- You score points by counting the number of bases touched – if caught between bases, the last base touched counts
- After everyone has had a turn, switch defense and offense
- Keep total bases touched for each team
- Emphasize proper rounding of bases by using markers as in "Kill the Mosquito" drill (Refer to Lesson # 3 Main Activities)

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching, base running, co-operation, teamwork, hitting

Note: Players on defense will likely need help from adults to keep them from all running after the ball at once and in knowing where to throw it next. Lack of catching ability will likely mean there is little actual catching going on but at least each player will get to touch and throw the ball

LESSON PLAN #8

WARM-UP

DATE: _____

MONSTERS KEEP AWAY

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 2 whiffle balls

Activity Description:

- 2 teams of 6 with a coach or adult for each team
- Objective is for players to keep the ball away from the monster (coach) as long as possible
- Play stops and starts over when a player is touched by the monster while in possession of the ball OR when the monster gets possession of the ball

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching, co-operation, space awareness, running, agility, balance, coordination

Note: To make the game more challenging break into smaller groups

MAIN ACTIVITIES

15 UP

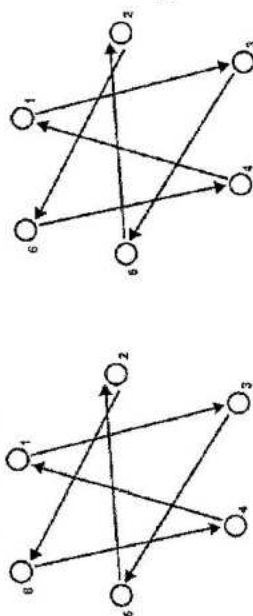
Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 2 Balls

Activity Description:

- 2 teams of 6 each playing separately

- Players stand in large circle. Make sure teams are spaced so



- players don't get hit by missed balls from the other team
- Players try to complete 15 consecutive catches by throwing to a teammate across from them

- See which team can complete 15 catches first

- Throw to the same player each time to establish a pattern

Key Teaching Points: Catching, throwing

Note: The number of throws may have to be adjusted. It can be made more challenging by having to start over if a ball is dropped or misplayed.

SPELL YOUR NAME

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- Partners should be selected by ability and spaced accordingly
- Line the players up, facing their partner
- Remind everyone of the proper way to throw and to catch a ball
- Tell them that the name of the partnership is a combination of both players' names. Coach designates which line of partners gets to be the first name (i.e. players on the north side or south side)
- Have the players call out the name of their team (i.e. Jane Bobby)
- Partners throw the ball back and forth overhand
- They get a letter in their team name every time they make a catch
- When they complete their name, they move back 2 giant steps
- Continue the process to time limit

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching

Note: Adult may have to be the thrower if skill level is not advanced enough

GRAND SLAM

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: 3 T's, 3 balls, ball gloves, 3 bats

Activity Description:

- Groups of 4 – each group has a batting T and 1 whiffle ball or another type of ball depending on ability
- One batter hits to 3 fielders
- When a fielder catches 2 fly balls OR 4 grounders, they become the new batter
- Players can't bat a second time until everybody has had a chance to bat

Key Teaching Points: Hitting, fielding

KNEE CLAPS

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- Line players up in a line with at least two BIG steps distance in between them facing the instructor
- Have players start facing the instructor with their hands clasped behind their backs standing on one foot on the line
- Taking a big step sideways, have players step and slide their knees together finishing standing on their other leg
- Once players have mastered the lower body step-slide motion, add the upper body by having the pitcher clap as their legs come together. Say step-clap, step-clap as they go through the movement 10x

Key Teaching Points: Bringing the knees together at the end of a pitch

LEAD-UP GAME

ROTATION

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment: 1 bat, 4 pylons, batting T

Activity Description:

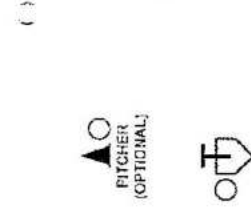
- 2 groups of 6 participants (1 batter and 5 fielders)
- 3 pylons are arranged in a triangle with a pylon in the centre for the pitching mound
- A ball is hit off of a batting T or is pitched to a batter who stands at one of the three outside pylons. The batter tries to hit into open space

To score the batter runs around the triangle and keeps running until the fielders have collected the ball and either touch a base or the player. The player is out if they are between bases when this occurs, or if the ball is caught without a bounce.

- The pylon that the batter stops at becomes the new home base
- After an out or after 5 pitches the players switch and there is a new batter

Key Teaching Points: Fielding a grounder, throwing, batting, base running

Note: To make the activity more challenging do not allow players to move with the ball, they must throw to each other to get the batter out. You can also place hoops in the field as targets for the batter, if the ball ends up in the hoop the batter gets extra runs.



LESSON PLAN #9

WARM-UP

DATE:

CANDLE TAG

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- 2 or 3 players are taggers all other players scatter around the playing area
- The taggers try to catch all the other players
- Once a player is tagged they must stop, place their arms out to the side and slowly melt toward the ground
- If another player runs under their arms before they melt to the ground then they can start running again, if not the player joins the group of taggers

Key Teaching Points: Running, dodging, body awareness, jumping, flexibility, multi-directional speed, agility, coordination

MAIN ACTIVITIES

BULL'S EYE

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 2 targets, 12 balls

Activity Description:

- 2 groups of 6, each group in a file in front of their target, which is placed on the backstop
- An adult will throw either a fly or a grounder to the 1st person in line, who fields it and throws it at the target
- After the throw, the player moves to the back of the line and the next player takes a turn
- Score 1 point for fielding cleanly and 1 point for hitting the target

Key Teaching Points: Throwing accuracy, fielding

Note: Competition can be to see which team reaches 10-15 first OR which team scores the most points in a given time limit

BEEP BEEP

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 4 bases

Activity Description:

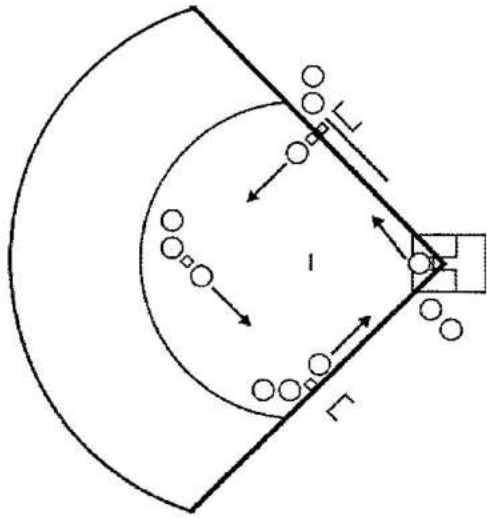
- Put bases down in proper diamond location, with 3 players at each.

One player starts in front of the base and extra players stand behind

- On "GO", the first player in each group runs around all the bases and returns to tag the next player in line and then they run the bases

- Emphasize proper rounding techniques including stepping on the inside corner

Key Teaching Points: Rounding the bases, speed development, conditioning



BEANBAG TO BALL ARM CIRCLES

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Beanbags, softballs, hula-hoops hung on the fence at a low height, mat to kneel on (if available)

Activity Description:

- Start with beanbags instead of balls. Have players kneel on the mat facing sideways to their target wearing a glove on one hand and grasping a beanbag in the other
- Instruct the player to "step" toward the target remaining on their knees making an arm circle at the same time "pitching" the beanbag into the hula-hoop
- Focus on the importance of releasing the beanbag inside the back hip and staying sideways to the target
- Once pitchers are comfortable with their release point, give them a ball to experiment with (be aware of park rules regarding throwing balls into fences)

Key Teaching Points: Releasing the beanbag inside the hip to get it to hit the target

LEAD UP GAME

FREEZE THE RUNNER-HITTING OFF OF A BATTING T

Time: 25 minutes

Equipment: 2 ball, 4 bases, 4 helmets, bat, batting tee

Activity Description:

- 2 teams of 6: 1 team on offense and 1 team on defense
- Offensive "batter" THROWS the ball into the playing area and runs around the bases until "FREEZE" is shouted – "FREEZE" may have to be shouted more than once at this age
- Ball is fielded, then thrown so EVERY fielder catches the ball – the last fielder to catch the ball shouts "FREEZE"
- You score points by counting the number of bases touched – if caught between bases, the last base touched counts
- After everyone has had a turn, switch defense and offense
- Keep total bases touched for each team
- Emphasize proper rounding of bases by using markers as in "Kill the Mosquito" drill (Refer to Lesson # 3 Main Activities)

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching, base running, co-operation, teamwork, hitting

Note: Players on defense will likely need help from adults to keep them from all running after the ball at once and in knowing where to throw it next. Lack of catching ability will likely mean there is little actual catching going on but at least each player will get to touch and throw the ball

LESSON PLAN #10

WARM-UP

DATE:

SHARK IN THE TANK

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- 2 or 3 players are the "sharks", the rest are the "fish". Mark off a infield area to be used as the "tank", so that young children can easily visualize
- "Fish" must stay in the tank
- "Sharks" are timed to see how long it takes them to catch all the "fish". When they do, choose new "sharks"

Key Teaching Points: Running, dodging, body awareness, co-operation, agility, power/endurance, multi-directional speed

MAIN ACTIVITIES

LEONARDO

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- Adult helper for every 2 players, standing an appropriate distance from players
- Coach throws grounders to each player (one at a time)
- Every time a ball is picked up cleanly and thrown back accurately the pair gets a letter in "LEONARDO"

- Partners can compete against each other OR other teams

Key Teaching Points: Grounders, throwing

SLUGGER

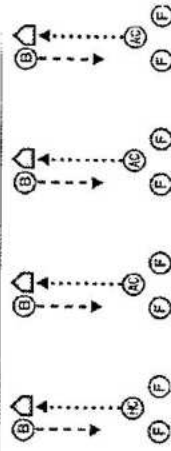
Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: 4 bats, 4 balls, 4 carpet home plates

Activity Description:

- 4 groups of 3, with an adult with each group
- Adult pitches to the 3 players in their group
- Batters hit the ball out to 2 fielders
- Fielders get 2 points for a fly ball and 1 point for a grounder
- Emphasize stride and hip action in batter's swing

Key Teaching Points: Hitting, fielding



BEANBAG TO BALL ARM CIRCLES

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Beanbags, softballs, hula-hoops hung on the fence at a low height, mat to kneel on (if available)

Activity Description:

- Start with beanbags instead of balls. Have players kneel on the mat facing sideways to their target wearing a glove on one hand and grasping a beanbag in the other
- Instruct the player to "step" toward the target remaining on their knees making an arm circle at the same time "pitching" the beanbag into the hula-hoop
- Focus on the importance of releasing the beanbag inside the back hip and staying sideways to the target
- Once pitchers are comfortable with their release point, give them a ball to experiment with (be aware of park rules regarding throwing balls into fences)

Key Teaching Points: Releasing the beanbag inside the hip to get it to hit the target

LEAD UP GAME

FIELD 3

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment: 2 bats, 2 balls, 2 helmets, 2 sets of bases

Activity Description:

- 2 teams of 6: 1 batter, the rest fielders
- 2 separate activity areas set up a safe distance apart
- 1 adult pitcher in each area for each group of 6
- Set up bases in diamond formation for each group
- One batter at a time bats off an adult pitch as many as needed, with an adult in the catchers position
- When a fielder has successfully fielded 3 grounders or caught 1 fly ball they become the batter

- Players rotate positions
- Make sure all players get an opportunity to bat

Key Teaching Points: Hitting, fielding, catching, throwing

LESSON PLAN #11

WARM-UP

PARTNER SHUTTLE

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- Players form partners and make 2 end lines with partners starting at the same end
- Partners, joined, move back and forth to end line using various combinations of body parts touching the ground (i.e. 3 legs; 2 legs; 4 legs + 2 hands; 2 hands + 2 legs; 1 hand + 3 feet, etc.)
- Can also be done as singles, using various movements (i.e. skip; shuffle step; grape vine; frog hop; duck walk)

Key Teaching Points: Agility, quickness, teamwork, running, jumping, twisting, flexibility, power/endurance, balance, coordination, appropriate equipment, strength training, body weight

MAIN PART

HOT POTATO

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 3 players

Activity Description:

- 4 teams of 3 line up as shown below
- In groups of 3, the ball is relayed from 1 to 2 to 3 and back
- Go slowly at first to concentrate on proper turn in center
- Rotate players in all 3 positions, so each gets experience as a relay player in the center
- It can be made into a relay competition if skill level is high enough

Key Teaching Points: Quick turn when relaying ball from one player to another, catching, throwing

BIG FOOT

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- Partners start on lines, facing each other, approximately 10' apart. One adult per pair
- Players throw to each other (or adult throws if skill level is too low for accurate throws)
- Every time they make a catch, they move back one giant step
- See which team can get the farthest apart and still catch the ball

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching

JAM

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 4 bases, 4 bats

Activity Description:

- 4 groups of 3 with 3 at each base
- Bases are set up in diamond formation
- Each player takes a full swing at an imaginary ball, runs to the next base
- Use proper rounding technique taught earlier in Lesson 3-Kill the Mosquito activity
- After rounding the base, player "jams" to a stop

Key Teaching Points: Rounding base and jamming to stop

BEANBAG TO BALL ARM CIRCLES

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Beanbags, softballs, hula-hoops hung on the fence at a low height, mat to kneel on (if available)

Activity Description:

- Start with beanbags instead of balls. Have players kneel on the mat facing sideways to their target wearing a glove on one hand and grasping a beanbag in the other
- Instruct the player to "step" toward the target remaining on their knees making an arm circle at the same time "pitching" the beanbag into the hula-hoop
- Focus on the importance of releasing the beanbag inside the back hip and staying sideways to the target
- Once pitchers are comfortable with their release point, give them a ball to experiment with (be aware of park rules regarding throwing balls into fences)

Key Teaching Points: Releasing the beanbag inside the hip to get it to hit the target

LEAD UP GAME

MINNIE BALL

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment: Bats, ball, helmets, bases, batting tee

Activity Description:

- Divide players into 3 teams of 4
- 1 team at a time will be on offense, while the other 2 are on defense
- Each team will bat for 7 min. regardless of whether they have 3 outs (time saver)
- Can use adult pitcher or off a T. If T is used make sure it is set up IN FRONT of the plate
- Team 1 on offense – Teams 2 and 3 on defense
- Team 2 on offense – Teams 1 and 3 on defense
- Team 3 on offense – Teams 1 and 2 on defense

Key Teaching Points: All softball skills

LESSON PLAN #12

WARM-UP

DATE: _____

CANDLE TAG

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- 2 or 3 players are taggers all other players scatter around the playing area
- The taggers try to catch all the other players
- Once a player is tagged they must stop, place their arms out to the side and slowly melt toward the ground
- If another player runs under their arms before they "melt" to the ground then they can start running again, if not the player joins the group of taggers

Key Teaching Points: Running, dodging, body awareness, jumping, flexibility, multi-directional speed, agility, coordination

MAIN ACTIVITIES

PARTNER THROWS

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- Partners stand opposite each other at a distance appropriate for the player's ability
- Partners throw ball back and forth
- Various goals can be set (i.e. how many consecutive throws and catches without a miss; how many throws in a specified time (30 sec); throw high balls; grounders; side to side, etc.)

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching

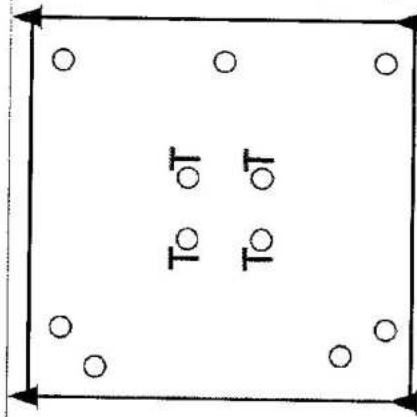
FOUR CORNERS

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: Whiffle balls, 4 pylons, 4 batting tees

Activity Description:

- Set up 4 batting tees in a small inner square
- Set up an outer square with four pylons
- 4 players bat and the rest field
- Once the batter hits the ball they run to the closest outside pylon and run around the pylons
- The fielders collect the balls and return them to the batting tees
- For each pylon touched the batters get a point, if a batter is in between pylons when all the balls are returned to the tees the pylons they touched do not count towards the batters total points.



- Switch batters and fielders after batters have hit twice

Key Teaching Points: Sprinting, hitting, fielding

BEANBAG TO BALL ARM CIRCLES

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Beanbags, softballs, hula-hoops hung on the fence at a low height, mat to kneel on (if available)

Activity Description:

- Start with beanbags instead of balls. Have players kneel on the mat facing sideways to their target wearing a glove on one hand and grasping a beanbag in the other
- Instruct the player to "step" toward the target remaining on their knees making an arm circle at the same time "pitching" the beanbag into the hula-hoop
- Focus on the importance of releasing the beanbag inside the back hip and staying sideways to the target
- Once pitchers are comfortable with their release point, give them a ball to experiment with (be aware of park rules regarding throwing balls into fences)

Key Teaching Points: Releasing the beanbag inside the hip to get it to hit the target

WHIP-IT

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Softballs in tube socks (6 for each player), hula hoop targets hung at strike zone height

Activity Description:

- Start by showing players where to grip their "whip-it". Hands should be placed 8 inches from the ball up the sock so the pitcher feels there is some control over the ball but can still appreciate a whipping motion with the sock
- Start the players facing sideways to their hula hoop target grasping the sock in their pitching hand and their glove on the other
- Instruct the player to step to the target while making an arm circle with their "whip-it"
- Use the key words of whipping the ball from the top of their arm circle to the bottom, letting it go at the bottom to go straight for the hula hoop
- Have them repeat this 6 times before all players collect their "whip-its" at the same time
- **CAUTION:** most inexperienced kids will throw the first couple behind them because they hang on to the sock too long. Encourage them to let go sooner and avoid standing directly behind them during the drill

Key Teaching Points: Whipping the ball from the top of the arm circle to the bottom to release it

Note: LTP instructor required at this station

LEAD UP GAME

FAR BASE

Time: 25 minutes

Equipment: 1 bat, 1 ball, catcher's equipment, helmets, home plate, 1 batting T

Activity Description:

- Place a base at least 60 feet straight out from home plate (i.e. where 2nd base would be or further).
- 2 teams: one team on defense with a catcher and the other team on offense
- The members of the team at bat take turns hitting. A fair ball is any ball hit in front of home plate.
- On a fair hit, the batter runs to the far base. They may either stay there or return home immediately.
- When the next batter hits, the first runner is not required to leave the far base. As many players as desired may occupy the far base and may return home in any order or all at once
- A runner may be put out only when being tagged with a ball.
- (S)he does not need to go in a straight line, but it is permissible to dodge or run anywhere in the field to avoid being tagged.
- Each side bats until all players have had a turn at bat, then the other team bats. Play may go on for as many innings as the coach wishes

Key Teaching Points: All softball skills except base running

Note: Possible progressions for this drill could include hitting off of a batting T, coach soft toss (coach to the side of the hitter but in front of them), coach pitch

LESSON PLAN #14

DATE:

WARM-UP

TAKE IT BACK

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 20 – 25 balls, bean bags or other small objects, 4 markers

Activity Description:

- 4 teams of 3.
- One team at each of the 4 markers, which are placed in a diamond formation (bases could be used instead of markers).
- Objects are placed in center where pitcher's location would be
- On "GO", one player at a time from each team runs out and picks up 1 of the objects and returns
- After tagging the returning player's hand, the next player can leave
- Play continues until all objects are gone
- The team with the most objects wins

Key Teaching Points: Agility, quickness, teamwork, running, multi-directional speed

Note: To keep all players actively engaged allow players to take balls from other groups as well as the centre, so that players have to guard their base. If a player takes a ball and is tagged before they get back to their group, they have to return the ball and return to their base before grabbing another ball.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

BULL'S EYE

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 2 targets, 12 balls

Activity Description:

- 2 groups of 6, each group in a single file line in front of their target, which is placed on the backstop
- An adult will throw either a fly or a grounder to the first person in line, who fields it and throws it at the target
- After the throw, the player moves to the back of the line and the next player takes a turn
- Score 1 point for fielding cleanly and 1 point for hitting the target

Key Teaching Points: Throwing accuracy, fielding

Note: Competition can be to see which team reaches 10-15 first OR which team scores the most points in a given time limit

GOTCHA

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 4 bases

Activity Description:

- Form groups of 3 with 3 players at each base.
- Set up bases in diamond formation 20' – 30' apart
- On "GO", one player from each group starts running around the bases
- Objective is to run past the person ahead of you
- Score: 1 point for your team for every player passed
- Run for a set period of time (15-30 seconds)

Key Teaching Points: Base running, determination

CIRCUS

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every pair, 1 target, 1 bat

Activity Description:

- 4 groups of 3 – each with a Ring Master (adult leader).
- 4 separate stations (Circus Rings) will be going at once. Groups will rotate through the stations, spending 3 min. at each one (time can vary)
- RING 1 (Performing Seal): the Ring Master throws the ball up in the air to one "seal" at a time, who catches it. See how many balls the seal can catch in the time allotted
- RING 2 (Hungry Lions): the Ring Master throws grounders to one "lion" at a time, who gobbles it up. See how many "lions" can eat without dropping the "food"
- RING 3 (Practicing Ponies): "ponies" take turns taking a swing at an imaginary ball, dropping bat, and rounding bases as fast as they can
- RING 4 (Throwing Elephants): "Elephants" use their trunks (arms) to throw balls at targets. Use the target made for other target drills. It would be great if a clown face was drawn on it

Key Teaching Points: Catching, throwing, fielding, running

WHIP-IT

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Softballs in tube socks (6 for each player), hula hoop targets hung at strike zone height

Activity Description:

- Start by showing players where to grip their "whip-it". Hands should be placed 6-8 inches from the ball up the sock so the pitcher feels there is some control over the ball but can still appreciate a whipping motion with the sock
- Start the players facing sideways to their hula hoop target grasping the sock in their pitching hand and their glove on the other
- Instruct the player to step to the target while making an arm circle with their "whip-it"
- Use the key words of whipping the ball from the top of their arm circle to the bottom, letting it go at the bottom to go straight for the hula hoop
- Have them repeat this 6 times before all players collect their "whip-its" at the same time
- CAUTION: most inexperienced kids will throw the first couple behind them because they hang on to the sock too long. Encourage them to let go sooner and avoid standing directly behind them during the drill

Key Teaching Points: Whipping the ball from the top of the arm circle to the bottom to release it

Note: LTP Instructor required at this station

LEAD UP GAME

ROTATION

Time: 25 minutes

Equipment: 1 bat, 4 pylons, batting T

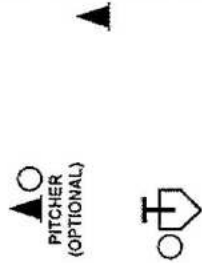
Activity Description:

- 2 groups of 6 participants (1 batter and 5 fielders)
- 3 of the pylons are arranged in a triangle with one pylon in the centre for the pitching mound
- A ball is hit off of a batting T or is pitched to a batter who stands at one of the three outside pylons. The batter tries to hit into open space
- To score the batter runs around the triangle and keeps running until the fielders have collected the ball and either touch a base or the player. The player is out if they are between bases when this occurs, or if the ball is caught without a bounce.

○ The pylon that the batter stops at becomes the new home base

○ After an out or after 5 pitches the players switch and there is a new batter

Key Teaching Points: Fielding a grounder, throwing, batting, base running
Note: To make the activity more challenging do not allow players to move with the ball, they must throw to each other to get the batter out. You can also place hoops in the field as targets for the batter, if the ball ends up in the hoop the batter gets extra runs.



LESSON PLAN #15

DATE:

WARM-UP

UP'N AT'EM

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- Split into partners
- One partner (chaser) stands on the end line with hand out
- The other partner (runner) slaps (softly) the outreached hand and runs in the opposite direction to get safely across the other line without being tagged
- The partner, whose hand was slapped, tries to catch the runner before (s)he gets to the safe line

Key Teaching Points: Quickness, running, power/endurance, multi-directional speed

MAIN ACTIVITIES

HOT POTATO

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 3 players

Activity Description:

- 4 teams of 3 line up as shown below
- In groups of 3, the ball is relayed from 1 to 2 to 3 and back
- Go slowly at first to concentrate on proper turn in center
- Rotate players in all 3 positions, so each gets experience as a relay player in the center
- It can be made into a relay competition if skill level is high enough

Key Teaching Points: Quick turn when relaying ball from one player to another, catching, throwing

BALL RED ROVER

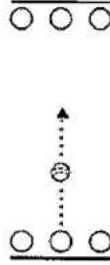
Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 2 balls, ball gloves

Activity Description:

- 2 groups of 6, each playing a separate Red Rover game
- 3 players on each team, line up facing the other 3
- 10–20 feet apart. Place markers or draw lines to show goal area
- A player on one line throws the ball along the ground to try to get it past the players on the other line
- If successful, a player from the side who let the ball get by is picked to join the other line
- Adjust the width of the goal line based on the number of players on the line

Key Teaching Points: Fielding grounders



CHAMP

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- 1 adult for every 2 players or players in partners if they are capable of throwing and catching the ball back and forth
- Every time the ball is caught by one of the pair they get a letter of "CHAMP"
- Partners can compete against other partners to see which pair can spell CHAMP first. Letters can be awarded for good throws back to the adult as well
- For variation have players select other words (i.e. superstar, elephant, etc.)

Key Teaching Points: Catching, throwing

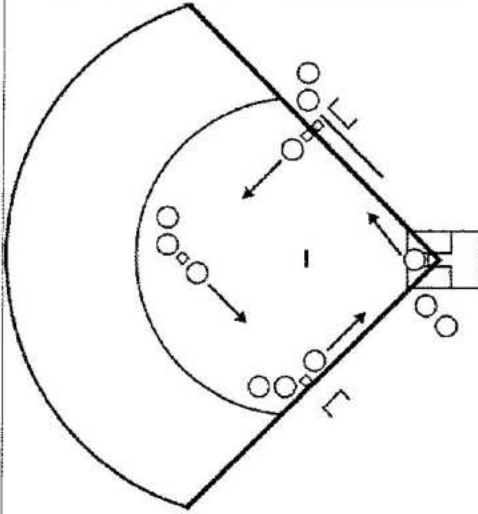
BEEP BEEP

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 4 bases

Activity Description:

- Put bases down in proper diamond location, with 3 players at each.
- One player starts in front of the base and extra players stand behind
- On "GO", the first player in each group runs around all the bases and returns to tag the next player in line and then they run the bases



Key Teaching Points: Rounding the bases, speed development, conditioning

WHIP-IT

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Softballs in tube socks (6 for each player), hula hoop targets hung at strike zone height

Activity Description:

- Start by showing players where to grip their "whip-it". Hands should be placed 10-12 inches from the ball up the sock so the pitcher feels there is some control over the ball but can still appreciate a whipping motion with the sock
- Start the players facing sideways to their hula hoop target grasping the sock in their pitching hand and their glove on the other
- Instruct the player to step to the target while making an arm circle with their "whip-it"
- Use the key words of whipping the ball from the top of their arm circle to the bottom, letting it go at the bottom to go straight for the hula hoop
- Have them repeat this 6 times before all players collect their "whip-its" at the same time
- CAUTION: most inexperienced kids will throw the first couple behind them because they hang on to the sock too long. Encourage them to let go sooner and avoid standing directly behind them during the drill

Key Teaching Points: Whipping the ball from the top of the arm circle to the bottom to release it

Note: LTP instructor required at this station

LEAD UP GAME

Dizzy Izzy

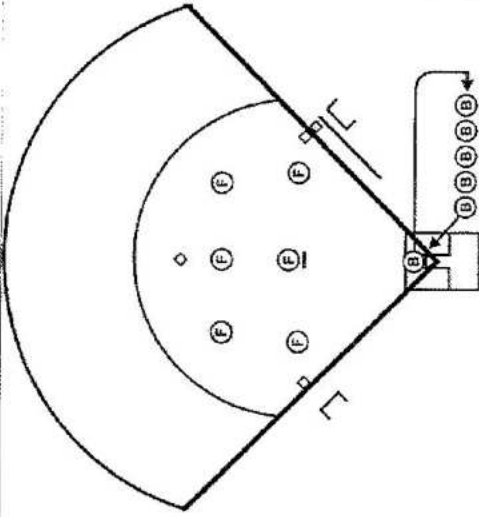
Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball, 1 bat, batting T

Activity Description:

- 2 teams of 6: 1 team on offense and 1 team on defense
- One batter at a time bats off of a T or adult pitch
- After hitting the ball, they run around and around their OWN TEAM, which is lined up a short, but safe distance away
- Every lap they do around their own team, before the ball gets back home, scores 1 run. The count should be loud as the batter circles the teammates
- Fielding team MUST throw to all 6 players before the ball goes home, either by running it or throwing it
- When the ball gets home, "STOP" is yelled. The number of laps around the team at this point will be the number of runs scored
- Switch the offense and defense when all 6 players have had a turn at bat

Key Teaching Points: Hitting, fielding, catching, throwing



LESSON PLAN #16

DATE:

WARM-UP

CATCH THIS

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: Balls

Activity Description:

- Split into partners
- The player with the ball tosses to her partner
- Partner takes a step back and passes ball back
- This player passes the ball back and if caught, the partner who caught the ball takes a step back.
- Process continues until someone drops the ball
- When the ball is dropped, the two players return to the starting position and set up if they can improve on their previous best

Key Teaching Points: Throwing

Note: Use fun equipment like water balloons or sponges, or add a player in the middle who relays the ball to the partners on the ends.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

GOAL BALL

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- Mark off a "goal" area for each player opposite a partner.
The distance depends on skill level (up to 10' wide)
- Each player tries to score a goal by throwing a grounder by their partner through the marked goal posts
- Score a point for each goal
- Switch partners occasionally

Key Teaching Points: Fielding grounders



HITTING STATIONS

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: 1 bat per player, 3 T's, 3 whiffle balls on a rope, 6 carpet home plates

Activity Description:

- 1 adult in charge of every 2 players
- 3 T stations and 3 whiffle ball stations, with 2 players at each station
- Set T's up in front of carpet home plates
- 6 players will practice hitting off a T
- 6 players practice hitting a hanging whiffle ball which an adult can hold in front of a carpet home plate
- The partner awaiting their turn can be taking practice swings
- Groups can switch stations after 5 min. That will give each player approximately 2 min. of hitting at each activity

Key Teaching Points: Proper batting form

Note: Refer to the Hitting Progressions in the Softball Skills section

TARGET PITCHING

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Softballs, pylons, playground balls (i.e. dodge ball, volleyball, soccer ball, beach ball)

Activity Description:

- Divide players into partners
- Start by reminding players of the proper grip and have them sideways to the target (pylon with a light playground ball on it) placed 20' away with partner ready to retrieve the "big ball"
- At < 8 years old remaining sideways remaining sideways through the entire pitch progression is preferred.
- Have players step to the target while performing an arm circle and throwing the ball with the intent to knock the bigger ball off of the pylon. Have all players do this at the same time and tell them to freeze while their partner retrieves both balls and sets them up for the next pitch. Repeat 5 times, and then switch pitchers. Partner's core one point for each time a ball is knocked off the pylon.

Key Teaching Points: Pitch the ball through the target rather than to it

Note: LTP Instructor required at this station

LEAD UP GAME

PLAYER'S CHOICE

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: n/a

Activity Description:

- Allow players to choose their favourite LEAD UP GAME

Key Teaching Points: n/a

LESSON PLAN #17

DATE:

WARM-UP

PIP, SQUEAK, AND WILBUR

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 4 balls, 4 bases

Activity Description:

- 4 groups of 3, one group at each base.
- Bases are set up in diamond formation.
- Players in each group are named PIP, SQUEAK or WILBUR.
- 4 balls placed at pitcher plate
- When the coach calls out a name (PIP, SQUEAK, or WILBUR), the player with that name runs around the bases.
- When (s)he touches the base they started at, (s)he runs to the centre to pick up a ball and brings it back to the group
- Balls are returned to the centre for the next person
- Score a point for the 1st person back to their starting base

Key Teaching Points: Base running, running, multi-directional speed

MAIN ACTIVITIES

PARTNER THROWS

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- Partners stand opposite each other at a distance commensurate with ability
- Partners throw ball back and forth
- Various goals can be set (i.e. how many consecutive throws and catches without a miss; how many throws in specified time (30 sec.); throw high balls; grounders; side to side; etc.)

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching

ROTATION BALL

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 3 players

Activity Description:

- 4 groups of 3: 1 thrower, 1 fielder, 1 shagger
- Player 1 throws the ball to player 2, who fields it and throws to player 3
- Rotate every 5-10 throws

Key Teaching Points: Fielding grounders, throwing

SPELL YOUR NAME

Time: 12 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity Description:

- Partners should be selected by ability and spaced accordingly
- Line the players up, facing their partner
- Remind everyone of the proper way to throw and to catch a ball
- Tell them that the name of the partnership is a combination of both players' names. Coach designates which line of partners gets to be the first name (i.e. players on the north side or south side)
- Have the players call out the name of their team (i.e. Jane Bobby)
- Partners throw the ball back and forth overhand
- They get a letter in their team name every time they make a catch
- When they complete their name, they move back 2 giant steps
- Continue the process to time limit

Key Teaching Points: Throwing, catching

Note: Adult may have to be the thrower if skill level is not advanced enough

TARGET PITCHING

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Softballs, pylons, playground balls (i.e. dodge ball, volleyball, soccer ball, beach ball)

Activity Description:

- Divide players into partners
- Start by reminding players of the proper grip and have them sideways to the target (pylon with a light playground ball on it) placed 20' away with partner ready to retrieve the "big ball"
- At < 8 years old remaining sideways remaining sideways through the entire pitch progression is preferred.
- Have players step to the target while performing an arm circle and throwing the ball with the intent to knock the bigger ball off of the pylon. Have all players do this at the same time and tell them to freeze while their partner retrieves both balls and sets them up for the next pitch. Repeat 5 times, and then switch pitchers. Partner's core one point for each time a ball is knocked off the pylon.

Key Teaching Points: Pitch the ball through the target rather than to it

Note: LTP instructor required at this station

LEAD UP GAME

SKIP BALL

Time: 25 minutes
Equipment: 1 bat, 1 ball, 1 home plate, 1 base helmet, catcher's equipment
Activity Description:

- 2 teams of 6: one on offence and one on defense
- 1st base placed a distance from home according to ability 30 – 55 feet
- One batter at a time bats off a T or adult pitch
- After hitting the ball, the batter skips to 1st base, then runs home
- The fielding team retrieves the ball and makes 8 throws before either running or throwing the ball home
- Fielding team MUST throw to all 6 players and can't make consecutive throws to the same player
- Runs score if the batter touches home before the ball gets there
- All 6 players bat before switching to defense

Key Teaching Points: Hitting, fielding, catching, throwing, skipping for quick feet development

Note: The number of throws and skips can be adjusted to make the competition close

LESSON PLAN #18

WARM-UP

DATE:

PLAYER'S CHOICE

Time: 5 minutes
Equipment: n/a
Activity Description:

- Allow the players to choose their favourite warm-up game

Key Teaching Points: n/a

MAIN ACTIVITIES

PLAYER'S CHOICE

Time: 10 minutes
Equipment: n/a
Activity Description:

- Allow the players to school their favourite throwing/fielding game

Key Teaching Points: n/a

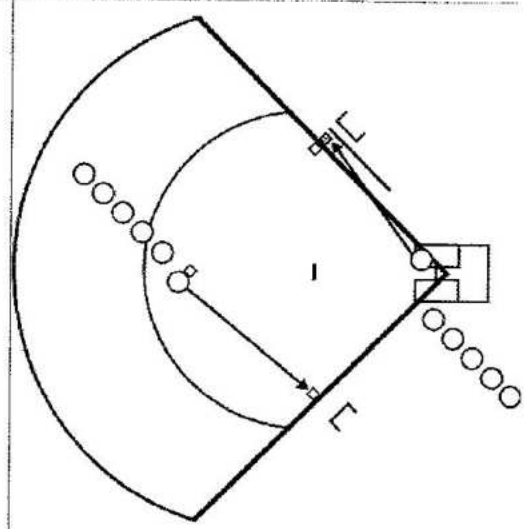
SUPER SHOES

Time: 5 minutes
Equipment: Bases set up on diamond, 2 stopwatches

Activity Description:

- 2 groups of 6, 1 group between home and 1st base and the other between 2nd base and 3rd base
- Each of the groups is broken into 2 groups of 3
- Each player takes a swing with a bat at an imaginary ball and runs to the next base as fast as possible
- Total the times of each team of 3
- Keep a record of the lowest scores for future trials

Key Teaching Points: Base running, speed development



OVER THE LINE

Time: 15 minutes

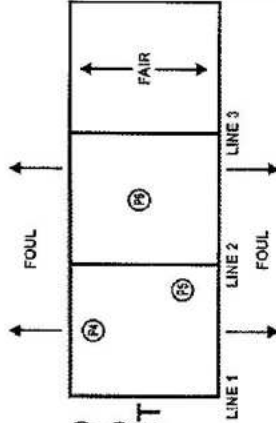
Equipment: 2 balls, 2 bats, helmets, 2 Home plates, 2 marked off playing areas

Activity Description:

- 4 teams of 3. Set up separate playing areas.
- 2 teams of 3 play in one playing area. One team on defense and one team on offence

- Batters hit off T (or adult pitch), trying to get it in the air over line 1.

- If hit between line 1 and 2, it is worth 1 point; between lines 2 and 3 – 2 points; over line 3 – 3 points
- Fielders set up in fair territory. No point is awarded if a fielder catches it before it hits the ground



Key Teaching Points:

Hitting, fielding
Note: A variation could be to count 1 point if ball is grounder past line 2 and 2 points if a grounder past line 3. If keeping score is too complicated, simply set up the lines with markers and challenge the players to hit the ball past them

LEAD UP GAME

HELP

Time: 25 minutes

Equipment: 1 bat, 1 ball, 4 bases, helmet

Activity Description:

- 3 teams of 4. 2 teams are on defense and 1 team is on offence
- Set up bases in diamond formation
- Defensive players take positions in a location most likely to catch a hit ball
- Objective is for the fielding team to HELP the batting team collect 8 runs (which is the equivalent to each batter batting twice). If this takes too long, then reduce to 4 runs

- Each batter hits the ball off a T or adult pitcher as many throws as needed
- Fielding teams make every effort to catch the ball because that will mean they get to bat sooner. Catching the ball HELPS the runner move
- Runners move around the bases as follows:

- Catch an OUTFIELD FLY – batter gets 3 extra bases
- Catch an INFIELD FLY – batter gets 3 extra bases
- Catch a GROUNDER – batter gets 1 extra base
- BASE HIT – batter gets 1 base
- Runs score when a runner reaches home

Key Teaching Points: Hitting, fielding, catching, throwing, base running, co-operation

6 LEARN TO PLAY LEVEL 2