

EARLY YEARS LESSON PLAN: ARCTIC EXPLORERS



Physical adaptations

- Provide physical support for balance.
- Set up a wide floor level course for children who are wheelchairs users or who need to work on the floor.
- Set up the balance course by the wall so children can put a hand on the wall to support themselves.
- Replace the 'drop-bounce-catch' activity with a throw and catch in sitting or rolling the ball across a tabletop to bounce against a wall.
- Provide long handled rackets so children can easily tap a ball forward from a wheelchair.
- Give self-propelling wheelchair users additional time to master self-propelling with one hand whilst using a racket with the other.
- When playing tap-catch use balloons or light beach balls that move more slowly and are easier to catch.

Sensory processing adaptations

- Describe what gently means and describe the mechanics of drop-bounce-catch with demonstration.
- Offer a quieter space for pairs to work if the whole class setting is overwhelming.

Visual and hearing adaptations

- Use a bell ball, remember the bell ball will only make noise on the bounce, not when in flight, children will need additional time to practise if they have visual impairment.
- Use a light up ball to make it easier to see.
- Support instructions with a storyboard showing drop-bounce-catch.
- Use large bright balloons that move more slowly and are easier to see and track when playing bounce-tap-catch.

Cognition and learning adaptations

- Give concrete pointers on how to improve technique for all activities in this them. Children may find using trial and error to improve, difficult.

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EQUIPMENT

- Balls
- Spots
- Rackets or hitting hands
- Lines

WARM UP: PENGUIN EXPLORERS

SET THE SCENE

"Let's take our penguin egg for a walk!"

HOW TO PLAY

- Set up cones as "icebergs" around the outside of the space. Place throw down lines together or court lines as the "ice bridge."
- Each child has a ball which they hold against their tummy while walking.
- Select one child as the leader. The other children follow the leader around the ice bridge, then jump on the icebergs (spots). Change the leader throughout the activity giving each child the opportunity to help increase their confidence. For a large group, you may want to assign different leaders who start at different points on the ice bridge.
- Call "freeze" and the children balance on one foot (like standing on ice rock).
- Include walking backwards.

TEACHING POINTS

- Head up and eyes forward following leader.
- Small steps, feet close together.
- Hold ball while balancing.
- Arms out for balance.



BRAIN FOCUS ACTIVITIES

SKILL UP

- Change the speed of movement.

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BODY & BALL: SNOWBALL BOUNCE

SET THE SCENE

"Let's bounce our snowballs."

HOW TO PLAY

- Each child sits on a spot and has a ball (snowball).
- Children drop the ball and catch it after one bounce i.e. drop, bounce, catch.
- Repeat several times.
- Progress to standing and repeating the drop and catch.

TEACHING POINTS

- Hold ball out in front at shoulder height when sat down or waist height when stood up.
- Drop / let go of the ball.
- Watch the ball.
- Catch with two hands cupping together under the ball.
- Children can say the cues to help with timing: drop, bounce, catch.



SKILL UP

- Progress to continuous bouncing / using the palm of the hand to tap the ball down. Tap the snowball down 2 times before then catching. Keep the ball in front of the body and control the rhythm using cues if helpful.

RACKET & BALL: SNOWBALL PUSH

SET THE SCENE

"Let's push our snowballs around the ice."

HOW TO PLAY

- Place a channel of lines around the space creating an "ice path."
- Each child has a racket and a ball which is placed on the ground.
- Children use the racket to gently roll the ball forwards along the ice path, they walk after the ball and then tap again continuing along the path, repeating several times.

TEACHING POINTS

- Walk (don't run).
- Watch the ball.
- Stay behind the ball.
- Keep the ball on the ground.
- Slow short tap to control the ball.



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- Progress to a continuous roll with the racket and moving alongside with the ball.

SKILL UP

- At the end of the path or at certain points along the path set up “ice towers” which can be any form of target. Children control the tap aiming for the ice tower.

GAME: SNOWBALL RALLY

SET THE SCENE

“We are going to send our snowball to our friends.”

HOW TO PLAY

- Children work in pairs standing approximately 1 metre apart.
- One child is the hitter and has a racket a ball. The other child is the catcher.
- The hitter rolls the ball to the catcher.
- The catcher catches it and rolls it back.
- Repeat several times.
- Swap roles.

TEACHING POINTS

- Place the ball on the floor.
- Tap the ball in front and to the side of the body.
- Gentle low to high arm swing.
- Point the palm and strings towards the target.
- Watch the ball.
- Move to the ball.
- Say cue words to help with timing.



BRAIN FOCUS ACTIVITIES

SKILL UP

- Both children are hitters and can either use rackets or their hands to roll the ball continuously. Or to progress further, one child drops the ball, lets it bounce, then taps it to their partner, the partner lets the ball bounce then taps it straight back, and continue the sequence i.e. bounce, tap, bounce, tap.
- Count the number performed in a row.

COOL DOWN

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Set the scene "The snow is falling."

- Children lie on backs and concentrate on their breathing.
- "Inhale slowly..."
- "Exhale like soft snow falling."
- 3–5 slow breathes.
- Hug knees and stretch out to a star position.