PHE Canada
Physical & Health Education Canada

GRADES 4 to 6

softball
in focus

TERRITORY
NET + WALL
RACING
STRIKING + FIELDING
TARGET

MOVE THINK LEARN

PHYSICAL LITERACY THROUGH GAMES AND SPORT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Physical and Health Education Canada (PHE Canada), founded in 1933, is a national not-for-profit organization. PHE Canada's vision is for "all Canadian children and youth living physically active and healthy lives." PHE Canada is committed to improving the quality of life for all children and youth through initiatives that contribute to greater participation in physical activity.

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PART A Introduction

Purpose

The Move Think Learn resource series has been designed to support physical educators in their planning of game-play experiences for children and youth. The series targets educators working with children and youth approximately 9–15 years of age (grades 4–9); its goal is to increase students' knowledge, confidence, and competence so they become further engaged in physical activity and/or sport.

Physical and Health Education Canada (PHE Canada) advocates for **Quality Daily Physical Education** (QDPE) in all Canadian schools. Well-planned opportunities to improve game-play abilities are part of a QDPE program. The Move Think Learn resource series promotes these opportunities through a Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) approach, contributes to the development of physical literacy, and aligns with Canada's Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model.

Physical Literacy

Individuals who continue to develop their ability to move with competence and confidence in a wide variety of physical activities in multiple environments to benefit the healthy development of their whole self are individuals who are developing their physical literacy (PHE Canada).

The concept of physical literacy refers to the ongoing development of our embodied dimension, our disposition, and our ability to move and interact in different environments (Whitehead, 2010). Fundamental to the concept is the interrelated and interdependent nature of the many dimensions of one's self. Developing physical literacy therefore can positively influence and be influenced by the development of other capabilities such as cognition, creativity, and self-confidence.

One of the many aspects of physical literacy is the development of game-play abilities, or the ability to read and respond to different situations. This aspect of physical literacy is supported by the Move Think Learn resource series. The game experiences described in the resources include all learners, are developmentally appropriate, and facilitate the refinement of movement skills. Positive, purposeful, and engaging game-play experiences in childhood can contribute to the individual's motivation and confidence to pursue physical activity opportunities for a lifetime. Provincial physical education curricula across Canada promote the development of physical literacy for children and youth.

Resources to learn more about physical literacy

- Website and videos: **Physical literacy educational strategies**. **PHE Canada (2014).**
- Article: The concept of physical literacy. Whitehead, M. (Ed.) (2006). ***European Journal of Physical Education 6***(2), 127–138.
- Book: ***Physical literacy throughout the lifecourse***. Whitehead, M. (2010). London, UK: Routledge.

PART A

Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU)

The Move Think Learn resource series embraces a Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) approach. Originally outlined by Bunker and Thorpe in the 1980s, TGfU is a student-centred instructional model designed to actively engage learners in problem solving and decision making while gaining an appreciation of game strategies, tactics, and skills.

Through participation in small-sided games, students learn how tactical solutions can be transferred from one game or sport to another. Students develop the ability to make decisions about "what to do," "when to do it," and "how to do it" in response to game situations (Griffin & Patton, 2005). Learning games this way, students develop game literacy and gain competence in a wide range of activities (Mandigo, Butler, & Hopper, 2007).

TGfU focuses on fostering tactical awareness before skill development. Tactics refer to "what to do" during specific game-play situations (Bunker & Thorpe, 1982). Tactical problems (e.g., how to maintain possession of an object) emerge during game play and force participants to make decisions about what to do (e.g., dribble or pass? what kind of pass? to whom?). Tactics differ from game strategies, which refer to the elements of the overall game plan discussed before play begins (Gréhaigne, Godbout, & Bouthier, 1999).

To facilitate learning, games are grouped into broad categories based on common structures, features, and goals (i.e., target games, net and wall games, striking and fielding games, and territorial games). For the purpose of the Move Think Learn resource series, a "racing games" category is added to include those games with the goal of moving efficiently to cover a pre-determined distance in the shortest amount of time. The games categories can be described as follows.

Target Games

The main goal of target games is to send away an object and make contact with a specific target (Mandigo et al., 2007). Examples of unopposed target games include archery, bowling, and golf. Opposed target games include curling and bocce.

Net and Wall Games

The main goal of net and wall games is to send an object to the opponents so they are unable to return it or are forced to make an error (Mandigo et al., 2007). Examples include badminton, jai-alai (played using a scoop-like implement), tennis, volleyball, sepak takraw (also known as kick volleyball), and squash.

Striking and Fielding Games

The main goal of striking and fielding games is to strike an object away from fielders in order to score points and limit the number of points scored by the opponent (Mandigo et al., 2007). Examples include baseball, cricket, kickball, softball, and rounders.

Resources to learn more about TGfU

- Book: ***Teaching games for understanding: Theory, research, and practice.*** Griffin, L., Butler, J. (Eds.) (2005). Champaign, Il: Human Kinetics.
- Website: **Teaching Games for Understanding**
- Website: **Playsport**
- Video: **Teaching Games for Understanding – Lesson Demonstration**. The Physical Educator (2012).
- Articles: Physical and Health Education Journal. (2007). **TGfU feature issue**.

PART A

Invasion/Territorial Games

The main goal of territorial games is to invade the opponent's area to score a goal while simultaneously protecting your own goal (Mandigo et al., 2007). Examples include basketball, team handball, soccer, goal ball, hockey, ringette, water polo, and rugby.

Racing Games

The main goal of racing games is to move efficiently to cover a pre-determined distance in the shortest amount of time. Racing games can also involve set tasks (e.g., going through a gate, staying in bounds). Examples include cycling, speed skating, canoekayak, rowing, swimming, and cross-country skiing.

Sport as a Vehicle for Learning

Canada's Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model outlines a framework for athlete development. The seven stages of the model identify the role of play, physical education, school sport, recreational physical activity, and competitive sport in the development of athletes (Balyi, Cardinal, Higgs, Norris, & Way, n.d.). LTAD underlines the importance of opportunities for children and youth to participate in a wide variety of physical activities and sports. Many national sport organizations in Canada have designed a sport-specific LTAD model.

The sport focus of each resource in the Move Think Learn series provides a lens through which to facilitate purposeful game-play experiences. Although each resource focuses on a single sport, it emphasizes the transferability of tactical solutions from one sport to another. The small-sided games described in each resource align with the stages of LTAD by promoting participation in developmentally appropriate games as opposed to mature forms of the sport.

Resources to learn more about Canada's Long-Term Athlete Development Model

- Website: **Canadian Sport for Life**
- Website: **PHE Canada Long Term Athlete Development Curriculum Links**

PART B Planning for Teaching and Learning

Resource Overview

Each resource in the series is organized into three sections: Move, Think, and Learn. The resources support teacher planning, but do not provide complete or sequential lesson plans.

Move

The Move section describes six different games. Each game highlights a different tactical problem relevant to the games category of the sport in focus. These games can serve as an entry point to a lesson and are designed to help students understand "what to do" in the context of the game. The template used to describe each game is outlined below.

TITLE: title of the game

TACTICAL FOCUS: the tactical problem students will experience during game play

OBJECTIVE: what students will learn as a result of the game-play experience

SPORT RATIONALE: the relevance of the tactical problem to the sport in focus

PARTICIPANTS: the organization of students during game play (e.g., partners, 3 v. 3)

EQUIPMENT: a list of equipment needed to play

SET UP: how to organize the activity area for participation in the game, including diagrams

DESCRIPTION: the rules and details for playing the game

MODIFICATIONS: changes that can be made to the game to increase or decrease the level of challenge and complexity to better meet the needs of students

Think

The Think section includes tactical questions teachers can ask students. Each series of questions relates directly to the preceding Move game, and is intended to engage students in critical and creative thinking to identify the tactical problem, solutions to the tactical problem, and the movement skills required to carry out the tactical solutions. Building on student understanding of "what to do" in the context of the game, this section explores "how to do it."

Student answers will inform the next steps in learning that should provide an opportunity to develop the skills needed to carry out tactical solutions. These next steps can include practising motor skills, and/or playing a modified version of the game to address areas for improvement, and/or replaying the game. Students need both tactical awareness and skill proficiency to become skillful game players. Teachers will decide the best way to engage students in skill practice based on developmental level and readiness. Providing opportunities for students to develop skills in a game-like context is an effective way to facilitate the carryover of these skills to a game situation.

Resources to learn more about fundamental movement skills

- Book: **PHE Canada Fundamental Movement Skills Resource Series**
- Videos: **PHE Canada Fundamental Movement Skills Video Collections**
- Website: **Active for Life Lesson Plans and Resources**

PART B

Learn

Each Learn section describes two games. These games are more complex than those in the Move section, and are intended to move participants toward the mature form of the sport in focus. During game play, students apply solutions to tactical problems and decision-making abilities. These games can serve as a culminating game to a lesson or unit.

After the game description, to extend tactical awareness, the resource identifies questions to engage students in critical and creative thinking. It also identifies specific ways the tactical solutions can be transferred to other games or sports in the same category. Emphasizing the transferability of tactical solutions from one game to another in the same games category will deepen student understanding and competence, despite the fact that different movement skills are required to play different games.

BELOW IS A SUMMARY OF WHAT TEACHING AND LEARNING COULD LOOK LIKE IN EACH SECTION OF THE RESOURCE.

Action	*What students will do*	*What teachers will do*
MOVE Game to highlight a tactical problem.	Engage in small-sided, developmentally appropriate play with lots of opportunity for active involvement.	Facilitate game play in a safe environment. Observe student play.
THINK Questions to allow students to identify the tactical problem from the MOVE game and begin to identify solutions and required skills.	Consider and share answers to questions based on game-play experiences and ask new questions. Practise and refine movement skills and tactical solutions.	Ask questions to highlight the tactical problem and relevant solutions. Encourage multiple and varied answers, be open to new ideas, ask probing questions to refine student answers. Use answers to inform next steps in learning. Facilitate an opportunity to practise and refine movement skills needed to carry out tactical solutions.
LEARN More complex game emphasizing the use of tactical solutions during game play.	Engage in small-sided, developmentally appropriate play and make decisions to achieve the goal of the game.	Facilitate game play in a safe environment. Observe student play, pausing games periodically as appropriate to ask questions to support student decision making and use of tactical solutions.

PART B

Pedagogical Considerations

A number of pedagogical considerations are important to help ensure learning experiences are purposeful, engaging, and inclusive for all students. Structuring inclusive game-play opportunities that allow all students to participate in a positive and appropriately challenging way will contribute to student learning and increase confidence and competence.

The games in the Move Think Learn resource series are developmentally appropriate in that they are small-sided (e.g., 3 v. 3), allowing all students to be actively involved in the game experience. However, it is important to note that the games are merely samples. Teachers will need to ensure games are structured in a way that matches the needs and abilities of their students. The description of each game provides modifications to the equipment, space, and rules to give teachers ideas about how to increase or decrease the level of challenge or complexity to better match the abilities of students. In some cases (e.g., archery, squash, cycling, canoekayak), the games do not involve the use of sport-specific equipment or facilities. Teachers with the relevant training and/or access to equipment and facilities can choose to incorporate these elements as appropriate.

In a student-centred model such as Teaching Games for Understanding, it is critical that teachers be able to ask questions after a game in a way that facilitates learning and empowers students to make good tactical decisions. It is important to ask questions that help students understand what they need to do to solve a tactical problem and why, followed by questions that identify how to carry out the solution (Mitchell, Oslin, & Griffin, 2013). The type and number of questions asked by the teacher is based on the readiness of students.

Resources to learn more about effective questioning

- Book: **Instructional models for physical education** (3rd ed.). Metzler, M. W. (2011). Scottsdale, AZ: Holcomb Hathaway.
- Book: **Teaching sport concepts and skills: A tactical approach for ages 7–18.** Mitchell, S. J., Oslin, J. L., & Griffin, L. L. (2013). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

PART B

*The **Move Think Learn** resource series is intended to inform teacher planning, and is not a sequential or complete series of lessons. As a result, teachers will use the resource in different ways. Here are two examples of how teachers could use the Move Think Learn Team Handball resource to plan a unit using a TGfU approach.*

Example 1: Team Handball Unit

Mr. Smith plans a two-week team handball unit. The single-sport focus will provide an in-depth experience with the tactical problems associated with team handball before highlighting the transferability of tactical solutions to other invasion/territorial games (Mitchell et al., 2013).

Mr. Smith uses the Move Think Learn Team Handball resource to identify tactical problems that will provide the focus for his unit and matches these to provincial/territorial learning outcomes. Curricular learning outcomes inform the assessment criteria and strategies. When designing the sequence of learning, Mr. Smith uses the games in the Move section and the modification ideas to identify a game that will start each of his lessons. Then he adjusts the Think questions to match the needs of the students in his class. He is unsure of the performance cues for the overhand throw, so refers to the **PHE Canada Fundamental Movement Skills Video Collection** before designing game-like opportunities for skill practice. Finally, Mr. Smith chooses a culminating Learn game for each lesson that will allow students to apply the tactical solutions and decision-making abilities. Sometimes, the Learn game is a modified version of the initial Move game. Mr. Smith is ready to begin and adjust his plan as necessary to support student learning.

1
Example

2
Example

Invasion/Territorial Games Unit

Ms. Bahn plans a two-week invasion/territorial games unit. She adopts a game sampling focus to provide a variety of game-play experiences that help students transfer learning from one territorial game to another (Mitchell et al., 2013).

Ms. Bahn also uses the Move Think Learn Team Handball resource to identify tactical problems that will provide the focus for her unit, matches these to provincial/territorial learning outcomes, and articulates assessment criteria. When designing the sequence of learning, Ms. Bahn incorporates the transferability ideas from the games in the Learn section into each of her lessons. Sometimes she plans for games with the same tactical focus to be played at the beginning of two consecutive lessons, or within the same lesson with different movement skills. For example, students could play Boundary Ball, throwing and catching with hands (Team Handball), then play again, kicking and trapping with feet (Soccer). Ms. Bahn also adjusts the Think questions to match the needs of the students in her class and designs game-like opportunities for skill practice. Finally, Ms. Bahn chooses a culminating Learn game for each lesson that will allow students to apply their tactical solutions and decision-making abilities. Ms. Bahn is ready to begin and adjust her plan as necessary to support student learning.

In both examples, teachers plan to facilitate a sequence of learning that will encourage students to become more skillful game players, having developed both tactical awareness and movement skills. Students gain an understanding of what to do in game situations, when to do it, and how to do it to achieve the goal of the game.

PART B

Safety

An inherent level of risk exists in all physical activities. A safe physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual learning environment is essential if students are to learn while participating in movement activities. Teachers must facilitate well-planned and developmentally appropriate game-play experiences to minimize the risk of accident and injury. In addition to knowing the developmental level of students and acting with common sense and foresight, teachers should have an in-depth understanding of up-to-date safety guidelines in their province/territory and jurisdiction.

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PART C Setting the Context

Sport in Focus

The information below about the sport in focus can generate student interest and engagement prior to the first learning experience. For example, teachers can share information about softball and

- have small groups complete a T-P-E chart (Nosich, 2009), identifying what they think (T) they know about softball, what puzzles (P) them about softball, and how they want to explore (E) the things that puzzle them;
- make connections with local, provincial, national, or international events.

Sport in Context

DID YOU KNOW?

- A softball diamond is 9.1 m shorter than a baseball diamond.
- A softball pitcher throwing at 113 km per hour from 11 metres reaches the plate in .35 hundreds of a second whereas a Major League Baseball (MLB) pitcher throwing at 161 km per hour from 18 metres reaches the plate in .38 hundreds of a second.
- The ball used in softball is larger than the ball used in baseball.
- The original softball was a rolled-up boxing glove.
- There are two types of softball: slo-pitch and fast-pitch softball.

HISTORY

- Softball was created in 1887 when a group of men gathered in Chicago at Farragut's Boating Club to listen to the Harvard–Yale football game.
- The details behind the story are that in celebration of the Yale win, a Yale fan picked up a boxing glove and threw it at a Harvard fan who hit the glove with a swinging stick.
- A bystander and the inventor, George Hancock was said to have yelled "play ball" and they did!
- The game was referred to as "Kitten Ball" and "Diamond Ball" and many other names until Walter Hakason, a member of the YMCA coined the term "softball" in 1926.
- The Amateur Softball Association was founded in 1933, bringing standardized rules to the game.
- Softball became an official Olympic sport in 1996; the IOC decided it would no longer remain an Olympic sport after the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

RULES

- Softball is a striking and fielding game played by two teams on a diamond with a batting (offensive) and a fielding (defensive) team.
- The object of the game is to score more runs than the opposing team.

PART C

AN OVERVIEW OF SIMPLIFIED RULES FOR SOFTBALL

- There are 9 players on a softball team (excluding the pitcher).
- A regulation game consists of 7 innings
  - o An inning means both teams have had their turn to bat.
- The team consists of the following positions while fielding: 3 outfielders, rover (in slo-pitch only), first baseman, second baseman, third baseman, short stop, pitcher, catcher.
- There is not a set time for each inning; the team on defense (i.e., the fielding team) needs to accumulate 3 outs, then the teams switch places. The fielding team becomes the offensive team (i.e., batting team) and the new fielding team also needs to accumulate 3 outs to conclude the inning.
- The pitcher must throw the ball underhand.
- A batter is out if one of the following occurs:
  - o three strikes have been called, or
  - o a fly ball is caught.
- A base runner is out if one of the following occurs:
  - o the runner is tagged with the ball before reaching a base, or
  - o the ball gets to the base before the runner.
- A run (point) is scored when a player safely crosses home plate.
- Base runners cannot leave a base until the pitcher releases the ball.
- The team with the most runs at the end of the 7th inning is the winner.

For more information on rules visit:
www.isfsoftball.org

EXAMPLES OF HOW TO MODIFY RULES FOR DIFFERENT TEACHING ENVIRONMENTS AND ABILITIES

- Include the use of a batting tee for beginning players or individuals with mobility limitations. This will increase the chance of success at striking the ball from a stationary position.
- Eliminate the three-strike rule and allow each player to bat until contact is made, or after three strikes, the runner is placed at first base. This focuses on skill development and reduces competition.
- Modify the size of the ball to be larger and lighter or modify the bat to be a badminton or tennis racquet. A larger surface makes contact less difficult.
- To emphasize maximum participation, create smaller groups.
  - o Groups of 6–8 individuals with the batter always rotating into the field after his or her turn batting.
  - o To structure this in a gymnasium, have the teams hit the ball towards the corners.

CANADIAN ATHLETE HIGHLIGHTS
Lori Sippel

- Born: May 16, 1965
- Birthplace: Stratford, Ontario
- Was inducted into the Softball Canada Hall of Fame in 1993
- Was a participant for Canada in the Atlanta Olympics in 1996
- Was inducted into the International Softball Federation (ISF) Hall of Fame in 2006
- Was the Canadian National Team Head Coach for the Beijing Olympics in 2008

CANADIAN ATHLETE HIGHLIGHTS
Darren Zack

- Born: August 9, 1960
- Birthplace: Garden River, Ontario
- Won 3 consecutive gold medals as a player on the Canadian National team at the Pan American Games in 1991, 1995 and 1999
- Was named Sports Person of the Year for Canadian National Aboriginal Achievement Award in 1997
- Was named Most Valuable Pitcher (MVP) at the World's Senior Fastball Championship in 2000
- Was inducted into the Softball Canada Hall of Fame in 2009

PART C

CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

The resource is student-centred, providing students opportunities to MOVE, THINK, and LEARN and supporting the tactical understanding for striking and fielding games. Adding cross-curricular connections is a great way to support student learning in other subject areas.

CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS FOR SOFTBALL:

- Math: Mean, Median, Mode (looking at statistics of individual players and/or teams, pitching, batting)
- Math: Geometry (Pythagorean Theorem– e.g., calculating the distance from home plate to second base by using the sides of the diamond)
- Language: understanding terms used in softball, or focus on spelling of new terms (see the following website for a glossary of terms used in softball: **http://www.isfsoftball.org/english/development/softball_terms.asp)**

Supplementary Reading

RESOURCES

- LTPD (Long-term Player Development) Resource - **Softball Canada**
- **Softball in Schools**

WEBSITES

- **Softball Canada**
- **International Softball Federation**

PROVINCIAL ASSOCIATIONS

- **Softball British Columbia**
- **Softball Alberta**
- **Softball Saskatchewan**
- **Softball Manitoba**
- **Softball Yukon**
- **Softball Northwest Territories**
- **Softball Ontario**
- **Softball Québec**
- **Softball New Brunswick**
- **Softball Nova Scotia**
- **Softball Prince Edward Island**
- **Softball Newfoundland and Labrador**

BIG EVENTS

- ISF World Championships
- Pan American Games
- Canadian Championships
- Canada Summer Games

PART C

Softball Canada:

MISSION: Softball Canada in partnership with Provincial/Territorial and local Associations leads, promotes, invests and builds the sport. Collectively we provide opportunities for athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers by developing, delivering and promoting innovative, quality programs and services at the Community, Provincial/Territorial and International levels.

VALUES: Fundamental beliefs of Softball Canada and our members include: Softball is athlete/participant centered, coach driven, and supported by officials, volunteers, staff and financial partners; that the game should provide a fun experience for all participants; the value of sport in developing life skills, healthy active living and achieving excellence; fair and inclusive access; ethical, respectful and moral behaviour; and safe and supportive environments free from harassment and abuse.

Tim Hortons Learn to Play Program

WWW.SOFTBALL.CA//ENGLISH/PROGRAMS/LEARN-TO-PLAY.HTML

The Tim Hortons LEARN TO PLAY PROGRAM is a revolutionary way of introducing the sport of Softball to children. Activities are included which foster the involvement of ALL players, including players with high and low skill levels. The child will experience excitement, enjoyment and success. Activities and lead-up games are patterned after informal playground games that promise an hour of FUN and LOTS OF ACTION. Participants will go home at the end of the day happy and tired, while improving their fitness level.

CANpitch Program

WWW.SOFTBALL.CA//ENGLISH/PROGRAMS/CANPITCH.HTML

CANpitch was created to introduce and develop the fundamental skills of windmill pitching to Canada's children and youth. CANpitch instructors in each province teach a nationally standardized curriculum founded in Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) principles that reflects an athlete-centered approach to learning.

Triple Play Program:

WWW.TRIPLEPLAYSOFTBALL.CA/

Triple Play is Softball Canada's Player Development Program. Through giving players the opportunity to earn rewards and track achievements, enter exciting contests, and read about Softball's heroes, Triple Play is the online destination to learn about the sport of softball in Canada!

Softball coaches in Canada can also benefit from the Triple Play program. They have access to Softball Canada's Skill Improvement Program, drill ideas, useful resources and a way to track and reward their player's development.

As well, Triple Play gives parents useful team management resources, the opportunity to learn more about post secondary school options for their children, and become more integrated into the nationwide softball community.

To obtain more information about Softball Canada's Learn to Play Manual and other resources, please visit http://www.softball.ca/english/resources/resources.html today!

PART C

Summary of Activities

Softball, a striking and fielding game, is the sport through which this resource will explore the tactical problems related to striking and fielding games. The goal of striking and fielding games is to place an object away from fielders in order to score runs while on offense, and limit the number of runs scored by the opponent while on defense (Mandigo, Butler, & Hopper, 2007).

THE MOVE THINK LEARN ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLFUL STRIKING AND FIELDING GAME PLAYERS ARE SUMMARIZED IN THE TABLE BELOW.

Tactical Focus	Move	Think	Learn
Covering space	Yard Sale	Student answers to the tactical questions after each game will inform the next steps in learning. This process should provide an opportunity to develop the skills needed to carry out tactical solutions. For more information to support development of the movement skills needed to play softball, refer to the resources listed on page 6.	Move Over Rover
Stop runs from being scored	Dizzy Izzy		
Strategic placement on defense	In-Coming		
Scoring Runs	Kickball		Frizzball
Avoiding getting out, staying on offense as long as possible	Sitting Ducks		
Placement away from fielders	Race to the Base		

PART D Move Think Learn Activities

MOVE 1: Yard Sale

TACTICAL FOCUS:
Covering space

OBJECTIVE:
The students will learn to work together as a group to cover as much space as possible.

SPORT RATIONALE:
In softball, it is important to cover the space in the field. Teams are most successful in covering the field when they work together and communicate. Covering space in softball is necessary to stop the opposing team from scoring runs.

PARTICIPANTS:
Groups of 4

EQUIPMENT PER GROUP:
- 10–12 items (i.e., rubber chicken, discs, balls of various sizes, beanbags, etc.)
- 1 pylon/poly spot
- 2 bins (big enough to hold the 10–12 items)

DESCRIPTION:
- Divide students into groups of four; one student throwing and the other three fielding (acting as defense).
- To start, the throwing student stands next to the home base; all other students spread out in the outfield.
- The throwing student yells "YARD SALE!" and throws the items, one at a time, into the outfield.
- Students in the outfield collect each item as quickly as possible and pass it to a group member at first base who places all the items into the bin.
- Once all items are collected at first base, the game is complete.
- Students start the next game by rotating positions and by moving all items back to home base.

THINK

TACTICAL QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS:
- What did you do during this game to cover the space in the field?
- How did your group work together to cover space in the field?
- How did you decide who would receive the group's passes at first base?
- How might you get the items to first base faster (i.e., two short throws versus one long throw)?

NOTE: Student answers will inform next steps in learning. This process should provide an opportunity to develop the skills needed to carry out tactical solutions. This can include practising motor skills in a game-like context, and/or playing a modified version of the game to address areas for improvement, and/or replaying the game.

YARD SALE SET-UP

Place an empty bin in the outfield to represent first base. Place a bin containing 10–12 items to represent home base. Provide sufficient space for the group to throw items toward the outside of the playing space.

O THROWER X DEFENSE HOME PLATE 1ST BASE BALL

MODIFICATIONS:
- Students run the items to the bin at first base.
- Students pass the item to a group member before passing it to the student at first base.

MOVE 2: Sitting Ducks

TACTICAL FOCUS:
Avoid getting out, staying on offense as long as possible

OBJECTIVE:
The students will learn the importance of running to a base before the fielding group is able to field the object.

SPORT RATIONALE:
In softball, it is important to be able to stay on base and advance runners in order to improve scoring opportunities. Successful softball players are effective and skilled baserunners, knowing when to run and when to hesitate or stop in order to remain on base.

PARTICIPANTS:
Groups of 6

EQUIPMENT PER GROUP:
- 1 ball (or object to throw)
- 4 pylons/poly spots

THINK

TACTICAL QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS:
- What did you do to help your group score more runs?
- What did you do as a group to score more runs and avoid getting out?
- What could your group do differently to be more successful at this game?

NOTE: Student answers will inform next steps in learning. This process should provide an opportunity to develop the skills needed to carry out tactical solutions. This can include practising motor skills in a game-like context, and/or playing a modified version of the game to address areas for improvement, and/or replaying the game.

DESCRIPTION:
- Divide groups of six into two groups of three; one group starts on offense and the other group starts on defense.
- The offensive students line up behind the home base.
- One defensive student stands at first base, one at home base and one in the outfield.
- The game starts with the first offensive player throwing an object into the field. The thrower then runs towards the safety base at first base.
- The defensive student in the outfield tracks down the ball and throws it to the group member at first base, attempting to have the throw reach first base before the runner reaches the safety base.
- The student at first base, on receiving the throw, yells "FREEZE." The runner must stop running.
- If the runner makes it to first base before the throw, the runner can
  - o turn and continue running to second base, or
  - o stay at first base.
- If the runner does not make it successfully to first base or second base before the defensive team yells "FREEZE," the runner's group receives an out, and the runner goes to the end of the offensive batting line.
- Only one student can occupy each base.
- Once the play has stopped, the ball is returned to the student at home base.
- Play continues with the second and third offensive students throwing the item and running around the bases.
- A point is scored each time a runner makes it successfully to second base.
- The groups switch positions after the defensive group gets three outs. Ensure that players are switching positions in the outfield.
- The group with the highest cumulative score after five rounds wins the game.

SITTING DUCKS SET-UP

Place a pylon/poly spot to represent home base, first base and second base. Add a pylon/poly spot as the safety base. Set up bases as in the diagram, given your available space.

Note: A safety base is attached to first base. It is an extra base—usually orange—attached to the right side of the baseline. The runner runs through this base instead of the regular white first base to avoid collision with the first baseman.

O BATTER X FIELDER HOME PLATE BASE SAFETY BASE

MODIFICATIONS:
- The batters kick soccer balls into the playing area.
- The batters throw discs into the playing area.
- Adjust the size of the diamond according to the students' throwing/catching/running ability.

MOVE 3: In-Coming

TACTICAL FOCUS:
Strategic placement on defense

OBJECTIVE:
Students will learn to use receiving and sending skills to strategically pass the object to group members.

SPORT RATIONALE:
In softball, it is important to successfully throw and catch to stop the opposing team from advancing runners and scoring runs.

PARTICIPANTS:
Groups of 3

EQUIPMENT PER GROUP:
- 5 objects for throwing (e.g., bean bags, tennis balls, rubber rings, discs, rubber chickens)
- 2 bins
- 3 pylons/poly spots

DESCRIPTION:
- Divide students into groups of three.
- The group (of three students) lines up at the home plate.
- On the go signal, student 1 runs to second base and obtains an item from the bin. Student 2 runs to first base and gets ready to receive the pass.
- Student 1 throws the item to student 2 (when the student is ready to receive it).
- Student 3 stands on the home base and gets ready to receive the pass from student 2.
- Student 2 throws the item to student 3, who places it in the bin.
- If a group member drops an item, the group must attempt the sequence again.
- If successful, all students return to home base and rotate positions. Continue playing until all students have completed the sequence two times.

THINK

TACTICAL QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS:
- What did you need to consider before throwing the ball to your group member?
- What did you do to let your group member know you were ready to receive the pass?
- What might you do differently to improve working together?

NOTE: Student answers will inform next steps in learning. This process should provide an opportunity to develop the skills needed to carry out tactical solutions. This can include practising motor skills in a game-like context, and/or playing a modified version of the game to address areas for improvement, and/or replaying the game.

IN-COMING SET-UP

A large playing area (e.g., entire gym, outside soccer field, softball diamond) is needed to accommodate a class. Place the three pylons/poly spots to represent home base, first base and second base. Place a bin containing the five objects for throwing next to second base and an empty bin at home base.

1. 2. 3. PLAYER HOME PLATE BASE BIN

MODIFICATIONS:
- The batters kick soccer balls into the playing area.
- The batters throw discs into the playing area.
- Adjust the size of the diamond according to the students' throwing/catching/running ability.

MOVE 4: Dizzy Izzy

TACTICAL FOCUS:
Stop runs from being scored

OBJECTIVE:
The students will learn to work together as a defending group to prevent scoring by the batting group.

SPORT RATIONALE:
In softball, it is important to work together as a team to stop the batting group from advancing runners and scoring runs.

PARTICIPANTS:
Groups of 4

EQUIPMENT PER GROUP:
- 3 scoops
- 1 wiffle ball (a perforated, plastic ball)
- 4 pylons/poly spots

DESCRIPTION:
- Divide the groups of four into two pairs; two students throwing (offense) and two students fielding (defense).
- The offensive pair starts with
  - one student on first base, and
  - one student at home base, with a scoop.
- The defensive pair starts with
  - one student on second base, with a scoop, and
  - one student in the outfield with a scoop.
- The student at home base uses a scoop to throw the ball into the outfield and begins to run towards first base, making sure to drop/place the scoop on the ground before running.
- Once the throw has been made, the student at first base will run to second base.
- The fielding student uses a scoop to catch and throw the ball to the other fielding student at second base, attempting to complete the throw before the runner lands on second.
- The defensive pair (fielders) scores a point each time it catches the ball at second base before the runner arrives there.
- Each time a point is scored, partners switch roles (i.e., second base student and outfielder switch; thrower and runner switch).
- Once the fielding (defensive) pair accumulates three points, the two groups switch positions.
- Groups play for 5 minutes; then pairs play different pairs in a new game.

THINK

TACTICAL QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS:
- What did you think about when you had possession of the ball?
- What did you do to get open for a pass when your group member had possession of the ball?
- How can you anticipate where the offensive group will throw the ball?

NOTE: Student answers will inform next steps in learning. This process should provide an opportunity to develop the skills needed to carry out tactical solutions. This can include practising motor skills in a game-like context, and/or playing a modified version of the game to address areas for improvement, and/or replaying the game.

DIZZY IZZY SET-UP

Use a sufficiently large play area to accommodate a class (e.g., entire gym, outdoor soccer field or softball diamond). Place the three pylons/poly spots to represent home base, first base, and second base. Include a safety base.

Note: A safety base is attached to first base. It is an extra base—usually orange—attached to the right side of the baseline. The runner runs through this base instead of the regular white first base to avoid collision with the first baseman.

O BATTER X FIELDER HOME PLATE BASE SAFETY BASE

MODIFICATIONS:
- The batter hits the ball off a batting tee.
- The batter throws or kicks a ball into the playing area.
- The batter moves around the bases in a different manner (e.g., gallops, skips, hops).

MOVE 5: Kickball

TACTICAL FOCUS:

Scoring runs

OBJECTIVE:

The students will learn the importance of ball placement in order to score runs.

SPORT RATIONALE:

In softball, it is important to be able to advance runners around the bases to score runs and win the game. The bases your teammates occupy impact your ball placement decisions when batting. Successful batters will hit the ball into the field so that their teammates can advance to the next base or home plate in order to score runs.

PARTICIPANTS:

Groups of 6

EQUIPMENT PER GROUP:

- 1 soccer ball
- 5 pylons/poly spots

DESCRIPTION:

- Divide students into groups of six.
- Divide the group of six into two groups of three; one batting group (offensive) and one fielding group (defensive).
- The defensive groups starts with one student on first base, one on second base, and one in the outfield.
- The offensive groups starts with one runner on first base, one runner at third base, and one student at home base.
- To start the game, the student at home base kicks the ball in between the first and second base.
  - The ball must be kicked between and past first and second bases to count as a fair ball.
  - The batter has three attempts to kick the ball into fair play.
- Once the ball is kicked, the runners on first and third base attempt to run around the bases to score a run.
  - Each base can have two or more players.
  - One running student must run to home base each play (to ensure there will always be a kicker).
- The student in the outfield tracks down the ball and kicks the ball to the group member at second base, who kicks the ball to the group member at first base.
  - The fielder cannot touch the ball until it passes first and second base after being kicked by the opponent.
- An out occurs if
  - the ball is passed between all defensive group members and the runners have not safely reached a base;
  - a runner does not make it home by the end of the play; or
  - the batter does not hit the ball in between first and second base in three attempts.
- If a batter gets out, the safe runners stay on the base and continue running.
- A point is scored each time a runner successfully touches home base.
- The groups switch positions after all batting group members have had a turn to bat.
- Play continues until both groups have batted; then groups of three rotate diamonds and play a different group of three.

THINK

TACTICAL QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS:

- Why is it important to kick the ball into open space?
- What did you do to place the ball into the target area?
- Did kicking the ball into the target area help your group score runs?
- What would you do differently to be more successful next time?

NOTE: Student answers will inform next steps in learning. This process should provide an opportunity to develop the skills needed to carry out tactical solutions. This can include practising motor skills in a game-like context, and/or playing a modified version of the game to address areas for improvement, and/or replaying the game.

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MOVE 5: Kickball (continued)

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KICKBALL SET-UP

Create a softball diamond of an appropriate size. A large playing area will be required to accommodate a class. Use a pylon/poly spot to represent home base, first base, second base and third base. Include a safety base.

Note: A safety base is attached to first base. It is an extra base—usually orange— attached to the right side of the baseline. The runner runs through this base instead of the regular white first base to avoid collision with the first baseman.

O BATTER X FIELDER HOME PLATE BASE SAFETY BASE

MODIFICATIONS:

- The batting group throws a rubber chicken or disc into the playing area.
- The batting group hits the ball off of a batting tee.
- Adjust the size of the diamond according to the students' kicking/throwing/catching ability.
- A teacher or batting group member can be the "base coach" to help the batting group run the bases.

MOVE 6: Race to the Base

TACTICAL FOCUS:

Placement away from fielders

OBJECTIVE:

The students will learn to place the ball into open space in the field by avoiding the defenders.

SPORT RATIONALE:

In softball, it is important to be able to hit the ball away from fielders into an open space to avoid getting out, to advance runners, and to score runs.

PARTICIPANTS:

Groups of 4

EQUIPMENT:

- 1 short-handled racquet
- 1 ball
- 9 pylon/poly spots

DESCRIPTION:

- Divide students into groups of four.
- Divide the group of four as follows: one batting (offensive) student and three fielding (defensive) students.
- The defensive (fielding) group starts with one student on first, second and third base.
- The batting student strikes the ball with the short-handled racquet into one of the target zones, drops/places the racquet on the ground and runs towards first base.
- The closest student of the fielding group collects the ball and throws it to third base. The student at third base throws the ball to the student at second base; the student at second base throws the ball to the student at first base and then gets back to their base. If third base collects the ball, they must touch third base before throwing the ball.
- Once the ball is received at first base, the first base student yells "OUT" and the runner must stop running.
- The batter scores a point each time they make it to a base.
  - o Students keep track of their own score.
- Once the play has stopped, all students rotate positions in a clockwise manner (i.e., the batter moves to third base, the student on third moves to second, the student on second moves to first and the student on first moves to batter).
- Continue play until all students have had a chance to bat two or three times.

THINK

TACTICAL QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS:

- How did you decide where to place the ball?
- Is it more important to hit the ball as hard as you can or aim for open space?
- What might you do to disguise where you are aiming your ball?

NOTE: Student answers will inform next steps in learning. This process should provide an opportunity to develop the skills needed to carry out tactical solutions. This can include practising motor skills in a game-like context, and/or playing a modified version of the game to address areas for improvement, and/or replaying the game.

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MOVE 6: Race to the Base (continued)

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RACE TO THE BASE SET-UP

Place a pylon/poly spot to represent home base, first base, second base and third base. Include a safety base. Create two target zones: one between first and second base; and one between second and third base.

Note: A safety base is attached to first base. It is an extra base—usually orange— attached to the right side of the baseline. The runner runs through this base instead of the regular white first base to avoid collision with the first baseman.

O BATTER X FIELDER HOME PLATE BASE SAFETY BASE TARGET ZONES

MODIFICATIONS:

- Instead of hitting the ball, the batter throws the ball into an open space.
- Students use different objects to throw into the open space (e.g., rubber chicken, bean bag, playground ball).
- Students change the way they move between home base and the bases (e.g., gallop, skip, march).

LEARN 1: Frizzball

TACTICAL FOCUS:

Avoiding getting out, scoring runs, placement away from fielders

OBJECTIVE:

The students will learn to work together as a group to remain on base, advance the runners and score runs.

SPORT RATIONALE:

In softball, it is important to be able to advance runners around the bases to score runs and win the game. The bases your teammates occupy impact your ball placement decisions when batting. Successful batters will hit the ball into the field so that their teammates can advance to the next base or home plate in order to score runs.

PARTICIPANTS:

Groups of 8

EQUIPMENT PER GROUP:

- 1 ball
- 5 pylons/poly spots

DESCRIPTION:

- Divide students into groups of eight.
- Divide group of eight into two groups of four; one batting group (offensive) and one fielding group (defensive).
- The defensive group starts with one student at first base, second base, third base and in the outfield.
- The offensive group starts with one runner on first base, second base, third base; and one student (thrower) at home base.
- To start the game the student at home base throws the ball into an open space.
  - The ball must be thrown between the first and third base lines to be considered a fair ball.
- Once the ball is thrown, the runners on first, second, and third base attempt to run around the bases to score a run.
  - Only one running student can be at each base.
  - Running students cannot advance past one of their group members.
  - At least one running student must run to home base each play (to ensure there will always be a batter).
- The student in the outfield tracks down the ball and throws the ball to first, second, third or home base, attempting to have the throw arrive at the chosen base before the runner.
- An out occurs if:
  - the ball reaches a base before the runner,
  - the batter does not throw the ball between the first and third base lines in three attempts.
- If a batter gets out, the other runners stay on the base for the next throw.
- After each batter's turn is completed, the defensive team rotates positions.
- A point is scored each time a runner successfully touches home base.
- The groups switch positions after all batting group members have had a turn to bat.
- Play continues until both groups have batted; then each group of four plays a different group of four.

THINK

TACTICAL QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS:

- When you were kicking, did you try to kick the ball as hard as possible or did you look for open space?
- How did you know when to run to another base and when to stop and stay at a base?
- Why is it important to watch where the ball is while you are running the bases?
- What would you do differently to be more successful next time?

TRANSFERABILITY:

You could play this game again with a focus on:

- cricket – prevent the ball from reaching the wicket by hitting the ball with a flat bat.

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LEARN 1: Frizzball (continued)

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FRIZZBALL SET-UP

Place a pylon/poly spot to represent home base, first base, second base and third base. Include a safety base.

Note: A safety base is attached to first base. It is an extra base—usually orange—attached to the right side of the baseline. The runner runs through this base instead of the regular white first base to avoid collision with the first baseman.

O BATTER X FIELDER HOME PLATE BASE SAFETY BASE

MODIFICATIONS:

- The batter uses a disc to throw into the playing space.
- The batter hits a ball off a batting tee into the playing area.
- Adjust the size of the diamond according to the students' ability.

LEARN 2: Move Over Rover

TACTICAL FOCUS:
Stopping runs from scoring, covering space, strategic placement on defense

OBJECTIVE:
The students will learn to work together as a group to stop the opposing group from scoring runs.

SPORT RATIONALE:
In softball, to win the game, it is important to be able to stop the batting team from advancing runners and scoring runs.

PARTICIPANTS:
Groups of 6

EQUIPMENT PER GROUP:
- 1 bat (or bat-like implement)
- 1 ball (e.g., mush ball, softball, rubber ball)
- 1 batting tee (e.g., large pylon, tee stand)
- 5 pylons/poly spots
- floor tape

DESCRIPTION:
- Divide students into groups of six.
- Create three groups of two, one batting (offensive) group and two fielding (defensive) groups.
- The defensive groups spread out across the field.
- To start play, the first offensive student hits the ball off the tee into the field and begins running towards first base, making sure to drop/place the bat on the ground before running.
  - o The ball must land between the first and third base lines to be considered in fair play.
- The closest fielding player collects the ball and must throw it to first base. The student on first base receives the ball and then throws the ball to the student on second base. The student on second base receives the ball and throws it to the student on third base. On receiving the ball, the student on third base yells "OUT!"
  - o After the hit, students must recognize who is closest to each base and position themselves to be ready to receive and throw the ball.
- The batter-runner and runner continue running until hearing the opposing student yell "OUT." The batter-runner returns to the base last safely reached while their partner takes their turn at bat.
- The second batting student hits the ball off the tee and begins running towards first base, making sure to drop/place the bat on the ground before running.
- Both runners continue running until
  - o they hear the opposing student yell "OUT," or
  - o they make it all the way around the bases and cross the home base safety line before the opposing team yells "OUT."
- If the first batting student does not make it home after the second batting student has batted, they are automatically out and go back to home base to bat again.
- A point is scored each time a runner makes it around all the bases and crosses the home base safety line.
  - o Each group keeps track of their own points.
- Once both batters have hit, rotate the teams as follows:
  - o When Group 1 bats, Group 2 and 3 field
  - o When Group 2 bats, Group 3 and 1 field
  - o When Group 3 bats, Group 1 and 2 field
- Play continues until all students have batted at least twice.

THINK

TACTICAL QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS:
- What did your group do to stop the batter from scoring points?
- How did your group decide who would field the ball?
- What can your group do to make sure the passes are successful? (i.e., communicating, making sure group member is ready, etc.)

TRANSFERABILITY:
You could play this game again with a focus on:
- cricket – prevent the ball from hitting the wicket by hitting it with a flat bat.

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LEARN 2: Move Over Rover (continued)

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MODIFICATIONS:

- A teacher or the fielding group pitches the ball or makes a soft toss to the batter. A soft toss refers to a person standing beside the batter and tossing the ball in front of the bat.
- The batting group throws a rubber chicken or disc into the playing area.
- The batting group kicks a soccer ball into the playing area.
- Adjust the size of the diamond according to the students' batting/throwing/catching ability.

MOVE OVER ROVER SET-UP

Set up area similar to that shown below according to your available space. Use pylons/poly spots to represent the four bases. Include a safety base.

O BATTER X FIELDER HOME PLATE BASE SAFETY BASE SAFE LINE