

Race to the Base

Activity

Resource: PlaySport

Division(s): Primary Junior

TGFU Category: Striking/Fielding Games

Locations: gymnasium, outdoor space (e.g., field, tarmac)

Game/Sport Connections

Striking/Fielding games are activities in which players score points by striking an object and move to designated playing areas or prevent opponents from scoring by retrieving the object and returning it to stop the play. By playing these games, participants develop skills and tactics to play other striking/fielding games or games that require the application of similar skills, concepts, and strategies (e.g., baseball, cricket, rounders, softball).

Activity Overview

Participants learn about and practise striking a ball to score runs and fielding a ball to prevent the batter from scoring points.

Key Movement Skills, Concepts, and Strategies

Throughout the activity, consider highlighting the following skills, concepts, and strategies to strike and field a ball. Note that this is not an exhaustive list and further learning opportunities may arise during the task.

Movement Skills and Concepts

- Manipulation skills and effort awareness: applying a controlled force to strike the ball with an implement; applying manipulation skills to successfully field the ball (e.g., standing in a ready position with feet shoulder width apart and arms out ready to catch the ball).
- Applying appropriate skills to be proficient at sending the ball with an implement for striking (e.g., making sure feet are slightly wider than shoulder width apart with most of the body weight on the back foot when preparing to strike a ball).

Movement Strategies

Understanding and developing tactics to quickly field the ball in order to prevent the batter from scoring points (e.g., passing the ball quickly and returning it back to the batting tee).

Considerations

- Incorporate some or all of the variations listed in the “Variations” section while planning the activity. This will help to best meet the diverse backgrounds, identities, needs, and interests of participants and maximize the fun, inclusion, participation, and success of everyone.
- To elevate participant voice and choice, periodically pause the activity and share the variations with participants. Ask them to determine how they would like to change the activity to maximize the fun, inclusion, meaningful participation, and success for everyone. Encourage participants to add any variations of their own.

Equipment

- 1 base per group (e.g., hula hoop, carpet square, rubber spot, floor marker, tape)
- 1 object per group to mark a designated area near the tee (e.g., cone, pylon, skipping rope, floor marker, rubber spot, carpet square) (optional)
- 1 tee or pylon per group
- 2 – 3 implements for striking per group (e.g., rubber bats, racquets, lollipop foam paddles)
- 3 balls per group (e.g., soft balls, elephant skin balls, foam type balls)

Safety

- Inspect the equipment and activity area to identify and remove hazards. Check that the activity surface provides sufficient traction.
- Establish the boundaries for the designated playing area at a safe distance from walls and obstacles. Share the boundaries with participants.
- Review the safety rules and activity instructions with participants prior to the activity.
- Instruct participants to be aware of their surroundings, including the locations of other participants during play.

How to Play

- Divide participants into triads or small groups (e.g., 4 – 6).
- Groups set up a tee or pylon and a base in front of the tee or pylon at a distance of their choosing. Groups may increase or decrease the distance between the tee or pylon and the base at any point during play.
- Groups divide up, with 1 participant, the batter, at-bat. The remaining participants are the fielders retrieving the hit ball and returning it to the tee or pylon.
- Groups decide the rules for fielding (e.g., fielders bring the ball back to the tee or pylon, roll the ball back to a designated marker beside but a safe distance from the tee or pylon, pass the ball to all fielders before returning it to the tee or pylon). Groups may change the rules for fielding after each participant has had a turn at-bat.
- The first batter chooses an implement for striking (e.g., rubber bat, racquet, lollipop foam paddle) and a ball (e.g., soft ball, elephant skin ball, foam type ball) to hit off the tee or pylon into the field. Participants may choose to use their arm, hand, or foot to strike the ball, eliminating the use of the tee or pylon.
- The batter hits the ball off the tee or pylon or with their arm, hand, or foot.
- The batter then attempts to move to their base and back to the tee or pylon as many times as possible before one of the fielders retrieves the ball and places it back on top of their tee or pylon or until the

ball is sent so it crosses the designated marker. The batter is out if the ball is caught by a fielder before it hits the ground or when the ball is returned to the tee or pylon or crosses the designated marker when the batter is between the tee or pylon and the base.

- One point is scored for each time the batter gets back to their tee or pylon safely.
- Once the batter has had 3 turns at-bat, participants rotate so that each participant has a turn at-bat. Participants may choose the ball they want to send and how they want to strike it each time they are at-bat (e.g., with the same or different implement for striking, arm, hand, or foot).
- After a period of play, provide participants with some or all of the variations. Ask them to decide how they might change the game to enhance their fun, challenge, and success. Encourage participants to add any variations of their own.
- Consider having groups share their variations and select another variation to try with their group.

Video: Visual Depiction of the Activity Instructions

[Video link](#)

Pause for Learning

Throughout the activity, ask open-ended questions to help participants refine their movement skills, strategies, and tactical solutions. Examples include:

- How do you decide where to send the ball to score the maximum points?
- How do you decide how you would like to strike the ball? Does this change with the type of ball you select?
- How much force do you have to use when you are striking the ball to send it into open space? Does this change with the type of ball/implement for striking you select?
- Where and how do you position your body to be successful at fielding the ball?
- How do you work with your group to field the ball and return it to the top of the tee or pylon or across a designated marker?

- Which games or sports have you played or know about that use similar rules and strategies to the ones used in this game?

Variations

- Play in larger groups with the home base in the middle and the batter hitting in any direction, including behind them.
- Play in large groups and have 2 batters, making sure batters are spaced so as not to hit each other with their implement for striking as they follow through on their swing.
- Catch the ball using an implement for striking (e.g., an upside-down pylon, a bucket) when fielding.
- Have someone pitch the ball.