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# INVASION GAMES

Presently, Invasion Games undoubtedly get more attention than any area within a school's PE curriculum and often these are taught as discreet 'sports' such as football, netball or hockey. As a result of the sports focus in schools, which in recent years has been encouraged by successive governments and initiatives such as TOP Sport, there has been a tendency to teach (or more accurately coach!) the skills associated with a specific sport. Though such skills clearly have a place, it's important to stress these are not the 'be all and end all' of games teaching and should not lead the planning but rather be inserted into a programme led by sound principles e.g. What is the most effective way to win a point? Where should I move in order to receive the next pass? One key point that should be highlighted here, as can be seen from the summarised programmes of study outlined in the PE National Curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 shown below, is that the use of small sided and modified games is specified as a preferred mode of delivery.

## Key Stage 1:

### Pupils should be taught to:

- a. travel with, send and receive a ball and other equipment in different ways
- b. develop these skills for simple net, striking/fielding and invasion-type games
- c. play simple, competitive net, striking/fielding and invasion-type games that they and others have made, using simple tactics for attacking and defending.

## Key Stage 2:

### Pupils should be taught to:

- a. play and make up small-sided and modified competitive net, striking/fielding and invasion games
- b. use skills and tactics and apply basic principles suitable for attacking and defending
- c. work with others to organise and keep the games going.

The ideas here are focused upon netball and basketball as a vehicle for this area, as it is possibly the area that Primary schools are best equipped to provide (though it is relatively easy to apply the same principles to other invasion games that schools may have provision for such as football or hockey). The lesson ideas provided are linked to the following QCA Schemes of work for Physical Education:

**Year 1 & 2: (Unit 4) Games Activities 2**

**Year 3 & 4: (Unit 11) Invasion Games 2**

**Year 5 & 6: (Unit 24) Invasion Games 4**

# KEY POINTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

When delivering effective Invasion Games in Primary school there are three fundamental principles that need to be considered:

## **Develop individual confidence by having lots of time with equipment**

Nothing develops confidence more during a games session than having command over the equipment being used. Though for many this has often been interpreted as doing lots of skills practices, it need not be the case. Giving a child five minutes guided play for example with a ball at the start of every session will reap considerable benefits in terms of control, far beyond anything that repetitive drills could develop.

## **Develop fundamentals using small sided games**

Though an activity being used may be a recognised sporting form such as football, it must always be remembered that the full adult version is not appropriate for Primary age pupils. Children do not have the physiological development to run extensive distances and what is more, in a large sided game such as eleven or eight a-side, pupils do not get enough time making decisions or gaining touches with the ball to develop their confidence learned from above. During any kind of competitive play, a considerable amount of time should be spent developing principles in 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 situations.

## **Remember to teach and not just manage**

It is easy to be satisfied once the children have been organised into teams to simply allow them to 'get on with it'. However, it is important to remember to keep teaching them rather than to simply manage the activity (a regular criticism from OFSTED). Opportunities can be found at many different times during a session to demonstrate or give specific teaching points, but if natural breaks seem not to be obvious then don't be afraid simply to stop or 'freeze' a game and ask questions such as 'Show me where you should run next? Why?' Teaching within a game situation may seem an alien concept but to facilitate aspects such as passing and moving there is simply no better way.

# ACTIVITIES FOR YEARS 1 & 2

## Children should learn:

- to improve the way they coordinate and control their bodies and a range of equipment
- to remember, repeat and link combinations of skills
- to choose, use and vary simple tactics

## Walkabout

**Resources** – One ball per child

**Task** – Staying in control, bounce a ball and then take it for a walk whilst bouncing it. Remember to encourage children to keep their heads up as much as possible and to use both left and right hands.

## Traffic Lights

**Resources** – One ball per child

**Task** – Ask children to follow the commands of Red, Amber and Green and perform different tasks on different colours e.g. Red = Hold the ball still in two hands, Amber = Bounce the ball on the spot, Green = Take the ball for a walk.

## Duck

**Resources** – One ball per group of four

**Task** – Three children stand in a line, one behind the other, facing towards the person with the ball. The person with the ball, passes to the front of the line, who then returns the ball. Each time this is successful the child at the front ducks down. This is repeated until all have ducked down and then the positions can be rotated.

## Beat Your Score

**Resources** – One ball per pair

**Task** – In pairs, children attempt to pass the ball quickly to each other and complete as many passes as possible in a short time e.g. 30 seconds. To encourage the concept of getting better with practice a quick cheat is to allow them another chance to improve but secretly give them 40 seconds the second time instead of 30!

## Catch Me If You Can

**Resources** – One ball per group of eight

**Task** – Eight children make a circle and warm up by passing a ball around the circle (in sequence). Then another ball is included and passed around. The task is to try and make one ball catch up with the other.

## Piggy in the Middle

**Resources** – One ball per group of three

**Task** – A classic but an important step in decision making. A pair of children attempt to pass the ball to each other whilst a 'piggy' in the middle attempts to stop them. Give both the pairs and the piggy a score to aim for e.g. 10 passes or 2 blocks.

## 'Shooting Hoops'

**Resources** – One ball per pair and a scattering of large hoops

**Task** – In pairs, children move around the hooped area and score points by passing the ball to each other by bouncing it in a hoop. As children progress they can be encouraged to stand further away or to use one hand.

## Endball

**Resources** – One ball per group of six

**Task** – Arrange groups into 3 v 3, playing in a small area. Don't allow children to run with the ball or to tackle. Each team should try and pass the ball through their area and score by throwing the ball against a wall or throwing it over a line (in other words very large goals!). Additional rules maybe required but try not to add them unless absolutely necessary.



# ACTIVITIES FOR YEARS 3 & 4

## Children should learn:

- to improve their ability to choose and use simple tactics and strategies
- to devise and use rules
- to use and adapt tactics in different situations

## Slalom Dribble

**Resources** – One ball per team/pair, cones

**Task** – In turn each child negotiates a number of gates/cones whilst dribbling a ball and then swaps with the next person. This activity can be raised or lowered to vary the competitive aspects but a key consideration is not to have too many in a queue.

## Runaround

**Resources** – One ball per group of eight

**Task** - Eight children make a circle and warm up by passing a ball around the circle (in sequence). Then one child who is the designated starter attempts to run around the outside of the group before the ball can be passed around the circle. The larger the circle the harder children will have to work.

## 15 Up!

**Resources** – One ball per child/pair, large cones and/or hoops

**Task** – Individually or in pairs, children travel around an area and score points for shooting into hoops or hitting skittles. Once a score such as 15 has been achieved, the game is replayed. Again different rules can be applied and in this case to different children e.g. more able have to use their less dominant hand to shoot.

## Triangles

**Resources** – One ball per group of three

**Task** – In threes (triangle shape) children demonstrate a range of different passes. Specific skills such as bounce passes etc. can be inserted when appropriate. Encourage children to change direction, so that the ball doesn't always go the same way.

## Tag Dribble

**Resources** – One ball per child

**Task** – Children dribble around in a small area and three appointed children attempt to tag their ball. The purpose is for each to defend/shield the ball by turning and changing direction. As children progress the 'taggers' can have a ball too. To differentiate further, the game can be played in small groups of similar ability with seven dribblers and one chaser.

## Lineball

**Resources** – One ball per group of six

**Task** – Arrange groups into a 3 v 3, playing in a small area. Don't allow children to run with the ball or to tackle. Each team should try and pass the ball through their area and score by touching the ball down (as in rugby) over a line. Again, additional rules may be required but try not to add them unless absolutely necessary. At this stage try and 'teach within the game' and ask questions such as 'Can you point to a space?' and 'Where should you move next?' The key aim is to work at preventing the herding that occurs at this age. If you don't teach them good principles of where to move they'll just follow the ball.

## Hoopball/Skittleball

**Resources** – One ball per group of six

**Task** – As above but instead the aim is to score by shooting the ball into a hoop on the floor or hitting a skittle. This step, as well as encouraging accuracy of shooting, will see children develop the principle of defence over time as they aim to protect their hoop or skittle. Should this occur, look for ways to modify the game with the children e.g. mark out an area around the target or have targets (which don't have to always be placed at the end of an area).

## Overload 1

**Resources** – One ball per group of four

**Task** – Without dribbling, a group of three children attempt to pass the ball through an area whilst one defender aims to tag the ball. Targets can be given for the number of successful attempts or successful tags.

# ACTIVITIES FOR YEARS 5 & 6

## Children should learn:

- to choose, combine and perform skills more fluently and effectively in invasion games
- to understand, choose and apply a range of tactics and strategies for defence and attack
- to use these tactics and strategies more consistently in similar games

## Pass and Follow

**Resources** – One ball per group of eight

**Task** – Eight children make a circle and warm up by passing a ball across the circle. Once a ball is passed the child should follow it across the circle. Children should be encouraged to make eye contact and call each other's name before passing. As a group becomes more proficient another ball is included and children should be encouraged to make good decisions about when to run, stop or pass.

## Passing Squares

**Resources** – One ball per group of four/five

**Task** – In fours (square shape) children demonstrate a range of different passes. Specific skills such as shoulder passes etc. can be used when appropriate. Encourage children to change direction, so that the ball doesn't always go the same way. As soon as children are used to this, put pressure on their passes by asking another child to try and chase the ball.

## Caterpillars

**Resources** – One ball per group of six

**Task** – In groups of six (standing in two lines), children attempt to pass a ball from one line to another. Once a pass has been made the passer runs to the other end of the line ready to receive the ball again once it has zigzagged along. Competition can be added by racing caterpillars against each other.

## Alley Dribble

**Resources** – One ball per child, markers

**Task** – In small groups, children attempt to dribble a ball through a narrow area, from one end to another. Two children, near either end attempt to tag the ball of anyone running through. Encourage children not to turn back but to beat the defender with a specific skill or change of direction.