



**Australian Government**  
**Australian Sports Commission**



# Yulunga

**Traditional Indigenous Games**

**Suitable for school years K–3**

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# Yulunga

## Traditional Indigenous Games

### Traditional Indigenous Games

The games outlined in this resource are considered primarily as a contribution towards the implementation of Indigenous Australian perspectives across the education curriculum, from Kindergarten to Year 12 (K–12). It is recommended that local elders are consulted and invited to be involved in some way prior to undertaking any unit of work or special event using the *Traditional Indigenous Games*.

Examples of statements that might be acceptable to local elders and that can be made in association with the use of the games in this resource are:

*'We pay our respect to the traditional custodians of this land.'*

*'We acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands of the ... peoples and pay our respects to the traditional custodians.'*

In the language of the Kamilaroi (Gamori) people of north-western New South Wales, *Yulunga* means 'playing'.

## **Acknowledgments**

The Australian Sport Commission acknowledges Ken Edwards for the extensive and thorough research undertaken to collate the Yulunga: Traditional Indigenous Games.

To create this resource, Ken Edwards with the assistance of Troy Meston reviewed almost every available account of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander games from all parts of Australia.

The Australian Sports Commission recognises the traditional owners of the games and activities that formed the basis of this resource. This resource is dedicated to all Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## **Traditional Indigenous Games Consultants**

Ken Edwards (PhD) is a former physical education teacher and academic in the Faculty of Health (School of Human Movement Studies) at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane. He is currently a staff member in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (School of Humanities — Education) at Bond University on the Gold Coast.

Troy Meston is a graduate of the Faculty of Education at QUT and currently Director of Blackbase in Brisbane. He is actively involved in the promotion of Indigenous traditional games in schools and community groups.

## **Disclaimer**

The Traditional Indigenous Games resource has been designed for people of all ages. The resource assumes that each person participating in the activities is healthy and has no medical condition that would preclude him or her from participating in the activities. People should not be allowed to participate in an activity if any medical, physical or other factor indicates that he or she is not suited to that activity. Where there are any queries or concerns about such matters, the consent of the participant, or if under 18, the participant's parent/legal guardian, should be obtained before allowing participation. Adult supervision must be provided for all activities where participants are under 18 years of age. While care has been taken in the preparation of the resource, the publisher and authors do not accept any liability arising from the use of the resource, including without limitation, from any activities described in the resource.

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For general enquiries regarding the Australian Sports Commission:

Tel: (02) 6214 1111

Fax: (02) 6251 2680

Email: [asc@ausport.gov.au](mailto:asc@ausport.gov.au)

Website: [ausport.gov.au](http://ausport.gov.au)

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Illustrations by Glenn Robey

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# Foreword



The *Yulunga: Traditional Indigenous Games* resource was developed to provide all Australians with a greater understanding and appreciation of Indigenous culture — the way it was many thousands of years ago and still is today. Over the years sport has played a major role in developing a socially cohesive environment within Indigenous communities. Many of the games you see today have evolved from traditional games of the past.

Through this unique sporting resource, traditional Indigenous culture can be experienced and enjoyed by all Australians. It combines curriculum principles and cultural traditions in sport-related activities for people of all ages, while ensuring the integrity of traditional games. It can be used in schools around Australia as an educational resource and as a guide to inclusive, structured sport within communities.

**Adam Goodes**

*Sydney Swans AFL player*

*Ambassador, Indigenous Sport Program, Australian Sports Commission*

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**Wener ganbony tillutkerrin?**  
*What shall we play first?*  
(Language of the Western people of Victoria)




# Introduction

*Yulunga: Traditional Indigenous Games* presents a selection of games and activities played in Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies. Traditional pastimes have been included along with some more ‘modern’ activities. This book is based on extensive research, including several hundred accounts collected over many years from all parts of Australia and the Torres Strait Islands. Many of the original accounts of games were recorded during the nineteenth century by explorers, government officials, settlers, scientists and missionaries. There are comparatively few descriptions of games and sports by Indigenous people, but efforts have been made to include a significant level of Indigenous input.

Some points about how the games are presented:

- Some of the games can be played in their traditional form or close to it — sometimes by using modern equipment.
- Some games have been modified from their traditional form so that there is an understanding of the basic skills and game play while considering other factors such as safety and ease of play. In some cases modifications of a game or activity have been outlined to provide opportunities for people of different ages and abilities to be able to participate in an enjoyable and relevant way.
- Some games have been reconstructed from vague or incomplete accounts into what is believed to be an accurate representation.
- Many of the games presented can be successfully played as skill games or lead-up games in physical education lessons, or in specific sports practice sessions, rather than as major games in themselves. A large number of the games can be played as outlined in this book.
- Some types of games outlined (such as wrestling and ball games) provide an opportunity to play different versions of the game or activity.
- The games vary in the type and level of competition.

As part of the process in preparing this book, an Australia-wide consultation was conducted in conjunction with the Indigenous Sport Program at the Australian Sports Commission. Where possible, approval was sought from the traditional owners of the games or from representative Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. The sole motivation in researching and developing the games presented has been to provide an outline of the types of activities that were, and in some cases still are, part of Australian Indigenous play culture.



Individuals and groups contributed information in the course of the consultation process. The enthusiasm and positive feedback received reinforces the important role that these games and activities can serve.

The games outlined cover most regions of Australia. Care has been taken to avoid games used in initiation ceremonies and religious events, or which could give a false impression of the cultural identity of Indigenous people.

It is recommended that when the games are used as part of a school or sporting program, local elders and Indigenous groups are informed of the plans and invited to participate in some way, including commenting on suitable activities.



# jillora

'jil-lor-a'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

Spinning balls or tops of various kinds were used as an amusement by Aboriginal people in most parts of Australia and by Torres Strait Islanders.

The spin-ball used in the northwest central districts of Queensland was a round ball of about 2 to 3 centimetres in diameter. It was made of lime, ashes, sand, clay and sometimes hair, rolled into shape, either between the hands or the folds of a blanket, and subsequently baked, thus making it smooth and hard. The spin-ball was often painted with red or yellow ochre.

## Language

The spin-ball was called *jillora* at Boulia, *popojo* at Glenormiston and Roxburgh, *pucho-pucho* in the Kalkadoon country, and *anai-dappi-dappa* at Headingly and Lake Nash. The game was apparently introduced from the lower Diamantina River area.

## Short description

A ball-spinning activity.

## Players

- One to ten players

## Playing area

- A suitable indoor or outdoor area

## Equipment

- Large balls such as basketballs

## Game play and basic rules

- Players attempt to make the ball spin for as long as possible.
- Players use one or both hands to spin the large balls on a smooth surface. Younger players may need help from other players in spinning the balls.

### Variations

- The game can be played by several players at once. On the signal to start, all players start their balls spinning.
- In a competition the last ball left spinning is the winner.
- Timed-team *jillora*: Players are organised into groups of three to five. Players add their times together and attempt to set a 'record'. Have three attempts to set a record. At the end add the times for all the groups to set a class record.

### Comment

This version is designed for use as a warm-up activity and is particularly suitable for younger children.

### Teaching points

- Balls ready. Hands each side on top.
- Push with one hand pull with the other. Hold in the fingers. Make it spin.
- Step back. Keep it going.
- Try again. A little harder. That's the idea.

# chuboochuboo

'chu-boo-chu-boo'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

A *chuboochuboo* is a wallaby skin stuffed with grass and about the size of a football. Men, women and children played the game.

The game generated a great deal of fun and enjoyment and never any arguments. It was observed being played in parts of South Australia.

The Aboriginal people of the Lower Murray and surrounding areas played a game similar to *chuboochuboo* called *dirlk* (or ball). The ball was thrown into the air and caught. After catching the *dirlk* a player would run about with the ball before throwing it in an unexpected direction into the air.

## Short description

This is a throwing and catching game during which a group of players make as many consecutive catches as they can of a ball thrown into the air.

## Players

- Groups of six to ten players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A soccer ball, rugby football or gator skin ball

## Game play and basic rules

- The players throw the *chuboochuboo* in the air and attempt to catch it in the hands. After catching the *chuboochuboo* a player throws it into the air for other players to attempt to catch.
- A player who is in position first to catch the *chuboochuboo* is allowed to do so without interference from other players.
- Players are allowed to jump to catch the *chuboochuboo*.

- If a player drops the *chuboochuboo*, another player nearby gathers and throws it into the air to continue the game. Count the most number of throws made in succession before the *chuboochuboo* is dropped.

### Variations

- Play a number of games in groups of six to ten players.
- Allow some limited physical contact.

### Safety

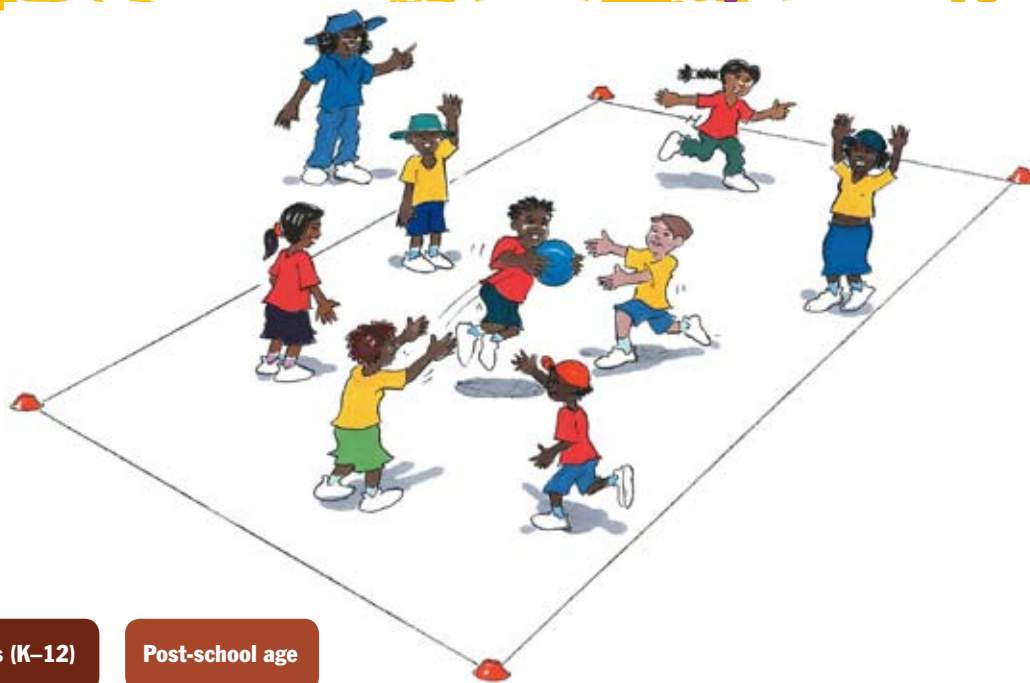
There is to be no pushing while attempting to gain the *chuboochuboo*. When the *chuboochuboo* touches the ground, play stops and the turn is taken again.

### Teaching points

- Spread out. Ready.
- Throw it up.
- Call for the ball. Jump and catch it. No contact.
- Good catch. Stop play. Let them throw.
- Throw it to different places in the area.
- Hands up to catch. Reach towards the ball.
- Keep going.

# keentan

'keen-tan'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

A keep-away game of catch-ball was played everywhere by both genders in the northwest central districts of Queensland. Because the action of the players jumping up to catch the ball resembled the movements of a kangaroo, the Kalkadoon people sometimes described this game as the 'kangaroo-play'. The ball itself was made from possum, wallaby or kangaroo hide tied up with twine.

## Language

*Keentan* is 'play' in the Wik-Mungkan language from northern Queensland. This name has been used in the absence of an identifiable Kalkadoon word for the game.

## Short description

This is a running, passing and catching team keep-away game.

## Players

- Teams of four to eight players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A ball such as a size 3 football (soccer ball) or gator skin ball

## Game play and basic rules

- When this game is played in teams the ball is thrown from one player to another player of the same team. The players of the opposing team attempt to intercept the ball while they are off the ground (only a small jump is needed). The ball is only gained if it is caught while the defender is in the air.
- If the ball is dropped or knocked to the ground by a player attempting to catch it, the other team

gains possession. A change of possession also occurs when a thrown ball falls to the ground untouched. No physical contact is allowed.

- Players cannot stop opposing players from moving around the area — no interference is allowed. Passes must be a minimum of 3 metres.
- The player in possession of the ball may run around the playing area for up to 5 metres. This player cannot be guarded (marked) or obstructed while he or she is attempting to pass the ball — the defender must be at least 1 metre away.

### Variations

- After catching the ball a player may pivot on one foot only (as in netball). Opposing players must be at least 1 metre away while a pass is attempted.
- All players (team in possession and defenders) must be in the air (two feet off the ground) to play the ball — throwing and catching. Players jump to catch (receive) the ball and jump to pass the ball. (This is recommended as the most successful way to play the game.)

### Suggestions

- Practice activities: Practise in pairs or with one player standing 5–10 metres out in front of a line of players. The player in front throws the ball for the first player in line to run out and jump into the air to catch it. After catching the ball and landing on the ground the player then jumps in the air and passes it to the thrower — players may take a few steps with the ball if they wish. Players may also jump into the air to catch the ball and throw it back to the thrower before they land on the ground.
- Team practice. Groups of four to six players form a team by running around and passing in a playing area. Teams could count the number of successful passes or play a cooperative game for fun.

### Comment

This game could be used as a skill game in sports such as netball, basketball, Australian rules football, rugby league and rugby union.

### Teaching points

- Teams ready. Go.
- Pass and move.
- Call for the ball.
- Move to open spaces. Keep moving.
- No contacts. Watch the guarding.
- Quick passes. Jump to pass, jump to catch.
- Call for the ball.



# kai wed

'kai wed'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

In this game from the Torres Strait Islands, a number of players stood in a circle and sang the *kai wed* (ball song) as they hit a ball up in the air with the palm of their hands. The game was often played using the thick, oval, deep-red fruit of the kai tree, which is quite light when dry. This game was apparently introduced by people from the South Sea Islands.

## Short description

This is a hand-hitting (volley) game in which players attempt to keep the ball in the air for as long as they can.

## Players

- Groups of four to six players

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Light balls such as a small beach ball, sponge or gator skin ball

## Game play and basic rules

- Players use underhand and overhand one-hand and two-hand hitting/striking skills to keep a ball in the air. Groups count the number of hits they can make before the ball touches the ground. Start again and continue the count to a set number.

## Scoring

In a team contest, the game is decided by the team that is able to keep the ball going the longest and does not allow it to hit the ground as often as the opposition. In a class cooperative game, add up the best scores of all the teams to set a class record.

## Variation

- Use balloons to hit in the air.

## Teaching points

- Players in a circle. Palms of hand up. Hit to start.
- Hit to different players. Hit and move back out of the way.
- Count the volleys. Keep going. Let's start again.
- Good work. Call for the ball. Watch out for each other.
- Direct the ball to another player.



Kai Keep It Up (Sports Ability Program)



# wana

'wan-a'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

The young Noongar girls in the southwest of Western Australia played many skill games. In one of these a short stick was placed on the ground and girls attempted to hit the stick while one girl defended it using her wana (digging stick).

## Language

A wana (or wanna) is a digging stick in the language of some Noongar people.

## Short description

Players use an underarm throw to hit a target, which is defended by the player with a wana (bat). This game version is suitable for younger students.

## Players

- Groups of six to eight players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A number of fleece balls, sponge balls or soft tennis balls
- A paddle bat or small Kanga cricket bat as the wana
- A large bin or container as the target

## Game play and basic rules

- Place a bin or storage cube in the middle of a large hoop or marked circle with a 1–2-metre diameter. Mark a circle or use cones to mark a larger circle with a diameter of 5–8 metres depending on the age and ability of players.

- Throwers with a ball each stand with one foot on the line/marker and in turns attempt to lob/underarm throw a ball into the bin. One player with a bat stands next to the bin but outside the hoop (or 1–2-metre circle area).
- The player with the *wana* blocks the ball but is not allowed to hit it away hard. As soon as the ball is blocked or missed by the batter the next player with a ball may throw at the bin.
- The game is continuous and all the balls are retrieved when every player in the group has had a turn. Count the number of balls that land in the bin. Change the player with the bat and continue the game until all players have had a turn.

### Variations

- Players throw in a numbered order to make it more difficult for the batter to react to throws from different directions.
- Change the player with the bat after a set time or number of hits.
- Players roll the ball to contact the bin.
- Swap over the batter when a ball goes into the bin.

### Safety

For safety reasons players are not allowed to retrieve a ball from inside the circle until all players have had a turn. Stop the game and retrieve the balls.

### Suggestion

This game could be used as a warm-up activity for Kanga cricket or as a hitting and throwing activity in physical education classes.

### Comment

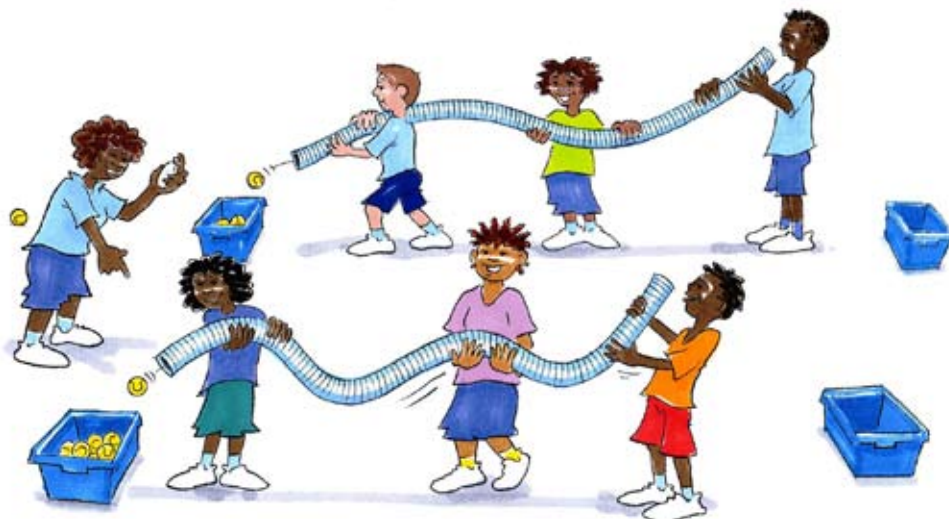
Slightly different versions of this traditional activity were observed. One version had this as a game that taught girls to look after their possessions.

### Teaching points

- Form a circle. Player in the middle.
- Thrower ready. Go.
- Good throws. Watch the ball batter.
- Tap the ball away.
- Field the ball. Next thrower. Next.
- Catch the ball if you can. Hands towards the ball.
- Keep going.

# Juluhya

'ju-lu-hy-a'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

A favourite pastime of the Aboriginal children in the Numinbah Valley area of south Queensland was rolling small round pebbles down long sheets of bark. These were folded in a tubular fashion. Competitions were held to see whose pebble appeared first.

## Language

*Juluhya* means 'to go down' in the Bundjalung language of north New South Wales and parts of south Queensland.

## Short description

This activity involves a group of players working together to roll a ball down a tube.

## Players

- A group of two to eight players

## Playing area

- An indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A piece of flexible tubing approximately 6–8 metres in length and with a diameter of 10–15 centimetres
- A supply of tennis balls or large marbles and a stop-watch. Containers to hold the tennis balls may also be used

## Game play and basic rules

- On the signal to start players put 10–20 tennis balls in one end of the tubing (one after the other) and work cooperatively to move them through to the other end of the tube and into a container.

- Time the attempt. When the teams are finished allow them a few minutes to discuss their strategy and have them try to beat their first time to set a combined class or 'world' record.

### Variations

- Relay: One tennis ball is rolled through the tubing. When it reaches the end the player closest to the container where it came out collects it and runs to the other end to place it in the tubing. Players move down a place so that all have a turn to feed the ball through the tubing.
- Students attach two tubes to each other by holding them together and move the balls from one end of the tube to the other. See if they can do it quicker on the second attempt.
- Use bedsheets or long plastic sheets and roll a large light ball down the sheet. After the ball moves onto the next sheet the group of players holding the first sheet joins on to the end of the other sheet to progress the ball down the playing area.

### Suggestion

This activity is particularly suitable for younger children.

### Teaching points

- Line up bin ready and balls ready. Go.
- Work together. Keep rolling. Faster.
- Keep going. That's good.
- Well done. Let's try again.

# diyari koolchee

'di-ya-ri kool-chee'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

This ball-throwing and hitting game was played by the Diyari people from near Lake Eyre in South Australia. The balls were called *koolchee*.

## Language

This mini-game/skill activity is named for the Diyari people who played the game of *koolchee*.

## Short description

The aim of the activity is to roll a ball to rebound off a wall in order to hit a skittle.

## Players

- Play as individuals or in pairs

## Playing area

- An open space with a rebound wall

## Equipment

- One ball and one skittle or marker cone for each player or pair of players

## Game play and basic rules

- Players place a skittle 1–3 metres from a wall. From a line 5–10 metres in front of the wall players roll up to five tennis balls in a turn to rebound off the wall and attempt to knock over the skittle. The fewer the number of balls used to knock over the skittle the better.
- If the skittle is knocked over it is moved 1 metre further away from the wall. If the skittle is missed, the skittle is moved 1 metre closer to the wall. A goal line can be set 5–7 metres from the rebound wall. A goal is scored when a player has successfully been able to progress the skittle, metre by metre, back across the goal line.

## Variations

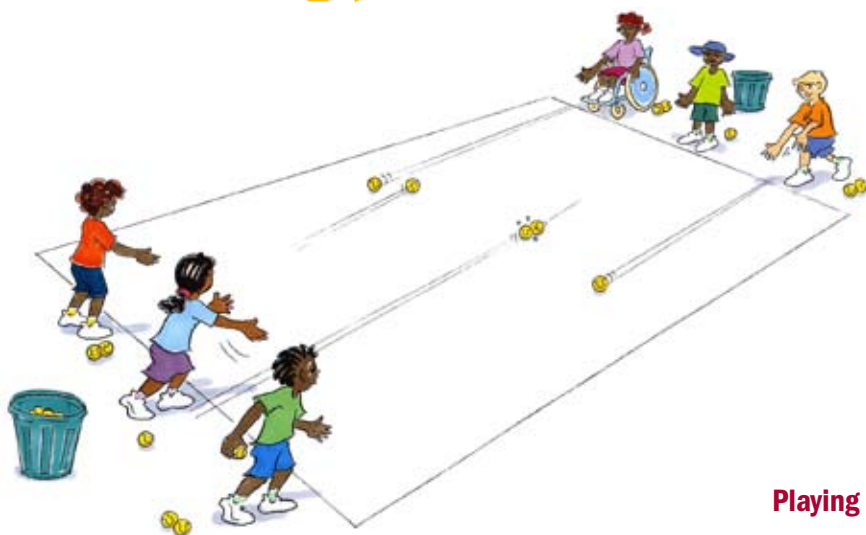
- Students alternate their rolling hand.
- Vary the angle of the rebound to increase the difficulty of the activity.
- Vary the distance of the roll and distance the skittle is away from the wall.

## Teaching points

- Line up facing the other team. Tennis balls ready. Skittle set up.
- Bend down and roll along the ground or underarm throw to bounce it off the wall.
- Aim for the skittle. Fingers towards, palms up, opposite arm and leg.
- Collect the balls. Keep going. Next player.
- Well done. Good hit.

# koolchee

'kool-chee'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

This ball-throwing and hitting game was played by the Diyari people from near Lake Eyre in South Australia. The balls were called *koolchee*. The balls used were as round as possible and were usually about 8–10 centimetres in diameter. Gypsum, sandstone, mud, or almost any material that was easy to work was used to make the balls. The game was played for hours and usually until the balls left were too few to cause any excitement.

## Short description

The aim of the game is for players to roll a *koolchee* (ball) to hit a ball rolled by a player from a team at the other end of the playing area. Players stay out of the playing area in this game.

## Players

- Two opposing sides of equal numbers (usually between two and ten or more).

## Playing area

- An area about 20–30 metres long and 10–15 metres wide (badminton and volleyball courts are ideal)

## Equipment

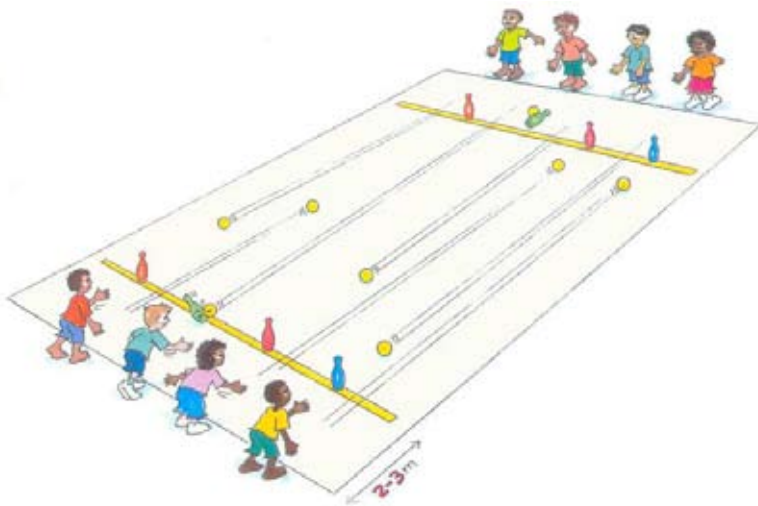
- Tennis balls, Kanga cricket balls or larger balls as the *koolchee* (ball)

## Game play and basic rules

- Players are in teams at each end of the playing area. Each team rolls their *koolchees* underarm (roll along the ground) towards the opposing team. The game is a continuous activity. The idea of the game is to hit a *koolchee* rolled by a player from the other team. Each player has a number of *koolchees* and each team has a large central supply in a bin/basket. Players may only use one *koolchee* at a time. Hits made within 3 metres of the line marked at each end of the playing area do not count.
- When there are no *koolchees* left, the game is temporarily halted for players to collect *koolchees* so that the game can continue. No set scoring is used. There is to be no interference with balls on the playing area. Players cannot go into the playing area unless the game is stopped.

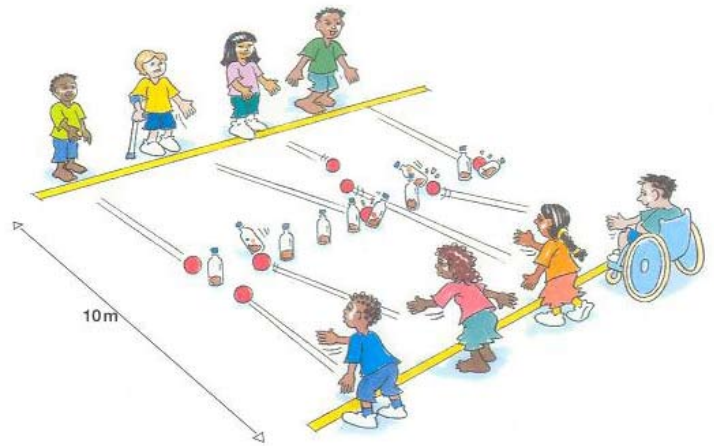
## Variations

- **Competition *koolchee*:** Use a badminton or volleyball court. Place a line of five bowling pins or skittles about 3 metres in front of each team. Each team attempts to roll their *koolchees* past these to knock over the pins at the other end of the court before the pins at their end are knocked down by their opponents. Players may 'defend' their own pins by rolling *koolchees* to hit other *koolchees* that might knock over one of their pins. Depending on the ability and age of the group the pins may be knocked down randomly or in order. No players allowed on the court.



Competition Koolchee (Sports Ability Program)

- **Cooperative *koolchee*:** A number of bowling pins or skittles (around ten) are placed along a line halfway between two groups of players. The two teams work together to knock them over. A time could be recorded until the skittles are all knocked over. Repeat a number of times with players attempting to set a *koolchee* record. For younger players the distance between the teams could be reduced and the pins or skittles placed closer together. Players may not retrieve balls from the playing area — players need a supply of balls at each end. (Recommended for physical education lessons).



Cooperative Koolchee (Sports Ability Program)

## Suggestions

In a physical education class use a badminton, volleyball or tennis court with the following progressions:

- Teams roll the *koolchees* (tennis balls) towards each other — no scoring.
- Each player has a *koolchee* (tennis ball). Place a set number of pins in the centre of the area and both teams attempt to knock them over in a cooperative activity, perhaps timed with several attempts to set the best time.
- Place five pins 3–5 metres in front of each group and the teams attempt to hit the pins in front of the team at the other end of the area. A class competition with four to six players in each team on a badminton court works well — matches are the best of three games. (Competition matches on a tennis court either to the best of 11 or the first to 11 games work well with older players. Change ends every five games.)

## Teaching points

- Line up facing the other team. Tennis balls ready.
- Bend down and roll along the ground. No throws or bounces.
- Aim for a ball. Fingers towards, palms up, opposite arm and leg.
- No players on the court. Stay behind the line.
- Collect another ball and keep going.

# koolchee koolchee

'kool-chee kool-chee'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

This ball-throwing and hitting game was played by the Diyari people from near Lake Eyre in South Australia. The balls were called *koolchee*.

## Language

This version of *koolchee* is designed for younger players. It has been named to reflect the fact that younger children often like to repeat names.

## Short description

The aim of the activity is to roll a ball to hit a skittle.

## Players

- Teams of four to six players, organised in a line

## Playing area

- A playing area suitable for the game

## Equipment

- A skittle/pin or any other target object that can easily be knocked over is set up about 5–10 metres from the front of the line
- A tennis *koolchee* (ball) or a larger ball

## Game play and basic rules

- The first player of one team steps up to the starting line and rolls a *koolchee* (ball) at the skittle. After their turn players go to the end of the line. The players roll the *koolchee* in turn. If the club/skittle is knocked down the player is congratulated and the game continues.
- The player rolling the ball should be 1 metre or more in front of his or her group to avoid contact with other players. A player may be positioned behind the skittle to return the *koolchee* after each turn or players retrieve the ball after their turn and hand it to the next player.

## Variations

- Divide each team and set them up opposite each other 10–20 metres apart with the skittle in the middle. Players take turns to knock the skittle over.
- Place two to five skittles in front of each team.

## Teaching points

- Teams line up side by side. Tennis balls ready.
- Bend down and roll along the ground. No throws or bounces.
- Aim for a skittle. Fingers towards, palms up, opposite arm and leg.
- Collect the balls. Keep going. Next player.
- Well done. Good hit.



# weme

'we-me'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

The Walbiri people of central Australia played a stone-bowling game. One player rolled a stone, which was used as a target by the second player.

In the traditional game players alternated turns, with each one aiming at the other's stone.

## Language

The game is named *weme* after a word from the Eastern Arrernte language of central Australia, which refers to 'throwing something at something else and hitting it'.

## Short description

This is a bowling game in which balls are rolled underarm along the ground to knock a ball out of a hoop. This version is designed for younger players.

## Players

- Play with two to four or more players. The game can be played alone, one player against another player, or in pairs/teams of players against another pair/team.

## Playing area

- Use a designated area. Two lines are marked 8–10 metres apart — the distance depending on age and ability of players. In the middle between the two lines draw a circle with a half-metre diameter or use a small hoop.

## Equipment

- Balls or bowls such as bocce balls (plastic bocce balls work well)

## Game play and basic rules

- Place a bocce ball in the circle/hoop with the players 3–5 metres each side of the hoop.

Players take turns to roll a ball and attempt to knock the ball out of the hoop — one to three turns each. Retrieve the balls after each player's turn.

- Play with no scoring in the game. Play for the fun of the activity.

### Variations

- Play a set number of turns (such as 20) for each player.
- Three balls are placed in the circle/hoop and players alternate turns in attempting to knock the balls out of the circle. If one or more balls are knocked out of the marked circle they are replaced before the next player's turn. Keep a score or use as a skills practice activity.
- Mark two parallel lines 8–12 metres apart. Play individually with one player against another. Players have a ball each. One player rolls his or her ball to stop before the other line. If it rolls past the line it is taken again. The player attempts to have his or her ball stop close to the line. The other player then rolls his or her ball to attempt to hit the ball. This player scores a point if he or she hits it. Players move to the other end and swap roles. (This is similar to the traditional version of the game.)
- Play in pairs. One player from each pair is at each end of the playing area. Players from one end have their turns. The player on the same team as the last player to roll his or her ball has a turn first — alternate play in this manner. The players do not swap ends in this game.
- If scoring is used a player scores one point for contacting the ball, two points for knocking the ball out of the circle and three points for contacting the ball and causing the rolled ball to remain in the circle.

### Teaching points

- Balls ready. First person ready. Aim for the ball.
- All know what to do? Ready. Go.
- Roll and retrieve. Next player's turn.
- Keep going.
- Remember; bend down arm towards, palm and fingers up. Opposite arm and leg.
- Keep going. Good. Work to help each other.

# kandomarngutta

'kan-do-marn-gut-ta'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

In some parts of Australia children were allowed to use the bullroarer (whirlers), or small versions of it, as a source of amusement. In other areas the bullroarer had a special significance and was not used as a 'toy'.

In parts of Victoria a bullroarer called the *kandomarngutta* was used. This was a thin piece of wood, oval, about 10 centimetres in length and about 5 centimetres in width. It was tied to a string and swung to cause a humming noise. In the north-west central districts of north Queensland bullroarers were used by either gender and at any age.

In the Bloomfield River area it was called *teripa*, at Lower Tully *chachalmo*, and at Cape Grafton *birbobirbo*. These were playthings and varied in size from 8 to 15 centimetres in length. They were never engraved, although they were occasionally painted.

## Short description

This activity is related to swinging a 'bullroarer' to make a noise (roar).

## Equipment

- Either purchase or make a *kandomarngutta*. A typical toy bullroarer is made from a flattened, spindle-shape piece of wood, 8–12 centimetres in length and 5 centimetres in width. It is attached, by means of a hole drilled through one end, to a length of twine.

## Game play and basic rules

- The twine attached to the *kandomarngutta* is held in the hand and the *kandomarngutta* is swung rapidly over the head and with an extra effort it is made to 'roar'.

### **Variation**

- Experiment with different sizes and thicknesses of toy bullroarers.

### **Comment**

The humming sound of the bullroarer is produced by the blade alternately presenting its flat surface and sharp edge to the air. Care should be taken to ensure that the twine is attached firmly to the bullroarer.

### **Note**

Although sold as souvenirs some care should be taken to ensure that the use of a 'bullroarer' in a particular region is not of special significance or restricted to use by certain people. It is advisable to check with the local elders if the activity is to be undertaken as part of a program.

### **Safety**

Safety must be considered in all aspects of preparing and swinging the bullroarer.

### **Teaching points**

- Watch out for others. Spread out. Stand back.
- Ready. Go.
- Swing it hard. Faster, faster.
- Good.
- Stop. Next person.

# koabangan

'ko-a-ban-gan'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

A game called *koabangan* was a finding-object game observed being played in the early 1900s by the Kokominni boys of north Queensland. The object commonly used was a goanna claw, but other objects were also used.

## Short description

A player hides an object in a designated area and the other players attempt to find it.

## Players

- A group of four or more players

## Playing area

- A designated outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- An object such as a tennis ball or a paper clip for a goanna claw
- A number of short bushy trees are required. If this is not suitable then other areas can be used to hide the object

## Game play and basic rules

- The players sit in a circle with their heads low and hands over their faces. One player hides the object somewhere in the playing area.
- On a signal being given by the 'hider' the players jump up and start looking for the hidden object. The idea is to be the first to find the object within a set time.
- The player finding the object has the next turn.

## Variations

- Use a number of different objects.
- Restrict the size of the playing area.
- Players are blindfolded.
- Play in an indoor hall or similar using a tennis ball to hide.

## Comment

This game is suggested for younger children.

## Teaching points

- Close your eyes. Hide the marble.
- Keep looking.
- Find it. Are we 'hot' or 'cold'?
- Well done. Change over and we start again.

# luka-pul pul

'lu-ka-pul pul'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

Finding-the-object games were played in many parts of Australia as well as the Torres Strait. The objects to be found were usually the eye lens of a fish or other animal. The hidden article used would often be the lens, obtained after cooking, from the eye of a fish, possum, rat or wallaby. The usual method of hiding the lens was to pick it up with a little sand and drop it during the sprinkling — the palm was turned down.

In a game from central Australia a *luka-pul pul* (little grub) was used.

## Language

In north Queensland finding games were often named after the local term signifying an eye; for example *milti*, *chili*, *mil dambanbar* (eye to throw). In other places it had a special name applied, *palagin*, or *animo*.

## Short description

A player hides an object in an area of sand and the other players attempt to find it.

## Players

- Two players or a number of players who take turns

## Playing area

- A beach area or tray of sand that is smoothed out

## Equipment

- A small glass bead or marble to represent the object to hide — the *luka-pul pul*

## Game play and basic rules

- Players hide their eyes while a selected player places the *luka-pul pul* (marble or bead) in the sand.
- The sand is usually roughly levelled out. The *luka-pul pul* is hidden somewhere in the area so that a small part of it can be seen, or the 'hider' may push it just under the sand leaving some sort of evidence that it is buried there.
- The first player then attempts to find the *luka-pul pul* and if he or she cannot do so after a short time the 'hider' helps by pointing vaguely in the correct direction. Other players in the group have turns. This continues until the *luka-pul pul* is found ('recaptured').

## Variations

- The *luka-pul pul* is buried under the sand and the surface is smoothed out. The players are all given a stick to push in the sand where they think it might be. The winner is the nearest player to it. A small prize may be given for the winner.
- A finger ring is hidden in a pile of sand and players carefully dig for it using long, thin sticks. Turns can be taken or all players go at the same time.
- A length of thin rope about 10 centimetres (and tied at both ends) is hidden in a pile of sand. Players each have a long thin stick or ruler about 50 centimetres in length. The players push their sticks slowly and carefully into the sand and try to lift out the rope.
- A tennis ball or other object is hidden in the playing area. Players stand where they think the object is hidden. The winner is the player closest to the spot and digs up the ball. (Suitable for younger players.)

## Teaching points

- Close your eyes. Hide the marble.
- Take turns. Next.
- Find it and then change over.

# moka bandi

'mok-a-ban-di'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

This guessing game was observed being played by young and old at Cape Bedford in north Queensland.

## Language

The game is called *moka bandi*, which means 'to think' or 'remember' in the Kurna language of South Australia. No local word for the game was found for the people from north Queensland and the name selected recognises that this type of activity was played in various parts of Australia.

## Short description

A guessing game similar to 'I spy'.

## Game play and basic rules

- One of the group of players may notice a new flower just in bloom, a bird half-hidden in a bush, a tussock of grass uprooted, or whatever, and taking care to look in quite a different direction — anywhere but in the correct direction — says, 'What am I thinking of?'
- The other players take turns to guess what it is. The players laugh when the correct guess is made. Hints may be given if necessary.

## Variations

- Play indoors.
- Players may give the first letter of the object as a hint for the other players.
- Use 'animal, plant or place' questions to help guess.



# segur etug

'seg-ur e-tug'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

This is a guessing game that originates from Mer Island in the Torres Strait region.

## Short description

A number-guessing game.

## Language

The game is named *segur etug* for the Meryam Mir language (Torres Strait Islands) word for 'play'.

## Players

- Groups of four to ten players

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A number of small objects such as seeds or marbles

## Game play and basic rules

- One player takes a quantity of small objects and places them in a closed hand or cup.
- The other players attempt to guess the number. The player who is correct has the next turn. If no player guesses correctly the player has another turn.

## Variations

- Use numbered markers such as used in some eight-ball games (such as Kelly's Pool). One player chooses a number and the others attempt to guess it. The player who guesses the number (or is the closest) has the next turn. First player to ten wins the game if a competition is conducted.

- Players guess how many small sticks, fragments of bark or clods of earth are in a designated group.
- Conduct a team number-guessing contest in groups of four to six. Players take turns to guess. The first team to 20 is the winner.
- Partner guessing. Each player has a set number of pebbles or beads (such as 15). One player hides between one and five objects in his or her hand. The other player guesses. If the guess is correct he or she receives the objects. If the guess is incorrect the guesser gives one object to the hider. Change over roles and continue. End the game after a set time or if one player has all the objects. Cooperative play is encouraged.

### **Suggestion**

This game is very suitable for younger children.

### **Teaching points**

- Ready. Collect the objects and hide them.
- First person have a guess.
- Next. Keep going.
- Good.
- Well done. Next turn.

# Wabbyn

'wab-byn'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

## Background

The Injibandi people of Western Australia had many guessing games. *Wabbagunja kambong*, *wabbyn*, *ngabbungee jenarnung*, *kambugenjjin* were some of the names of their guessing games.

Guessing games were often played around the campfire after the day's hunting was over. Women might also play these guessing games among themselves while returning from a root-gathering expedition.

## Language

In the language of the Noongar people of the Perth area:

**Bo'kul wabberding koolongur**  
*There playing are the children.*

## Short description

This is a game very similar to the 'animal, vegetable and mineral' game known to most children.

## Game play and basic rules

- A player who has been away all day on a 'hunting expedition' begins by saying, 'I saw something today, very funny, who can tell me what it was?'
- The guessing continues until the correct guess is made or the players 'give in'. Players take turns.

## Comments

- Hints may be provided if players are unable to guess correctly.
- For very young children the game can be played where they recall many of the things they did or saw during the course of the day.

# Wingara

'win-gar-a'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

## Background

A guessing game played by Aboriginal children in the areas around Newcastle in New South Wales was described. Using the kernel of a wild plum the children drew a picture of a fish or animal. This was concealed in a closed hand and the group sat around and attempted to guess what was represented on it. When the drawing was guessed there was a loud shout of laughter.

## Language

The game is called *wingara* ('to think') in the language spoken by the people in the Sydney and surrounding areas.

## Short description

A simple guessing game in which players attempt to guess what has been drawn or written on a piece of paper. This game is recommended for younger players.

## Players

- A group of two to eight players

## Playing area

- An indoor area such as a classroom is suitable

## Equipment

- A pencil and small pieces of paper (a small whiteboard and pen or a Pictionary game set could also be used)

## Game play and basic rules

- The players close their eyes or turn away while a player draws a picture — or writes the name — of a fish or animal. When the player is finished he or she folds up the paper and places it in the palm of the hand or otherwise hides it.
- The other players attempt to guess what has been drawn. If a player guesses successfully the paper is unfolded to indicate that he or she was correct.

- The player who guessed correctly has the next turn or players may follow an agreed order.

### **Variations**

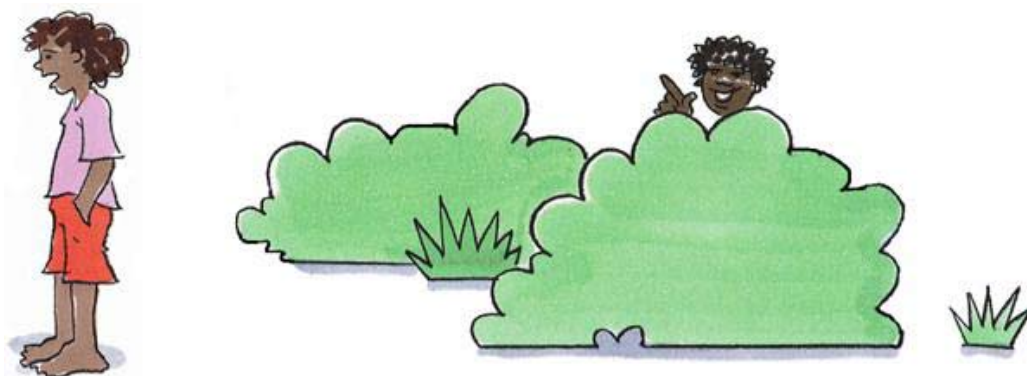
- Players draw or write a word from a list or from a defined area such as sport, famous people, minerals, fruits and so on.
- Hints are given if players cannot guess correctly.
- The game may be played by the picture-drawer answering 'Yes' or 'No' to questions by the other players.

### **Teaching points**

- Draw or write on the paper. Other players turn away.
- Ready. First person have a guess.
- Next. Keep going.
- Any hints? Good.
- Well done. Next turn.

# brajerack

'bra-jer-ack'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

## Background

Many different types of hide-and-peek games were played in Australia and the Torres Strait Islands. A game played in one part of Victoria in the latter part of the 1800s was called *brajerack* (the wild man). It was essentially a game of hide and seek whereby a player would hide in a wombat hole and would need to be dug out of this hiding place.

## Short description

A simple game of hide and seek, suitable for younger children.

## Players

- Groups of four or more players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable to the activity

## Game play and basic rules

- The *brajerack* hides in the playing area and the other players attempt to find him or her.
- Change around after the *brajerack* has been caught.

## Variations

- Have a number of *brajeracks*. After three are caught a new game begins.
- Play at night using torches.
- The *brajerack* hides somewhere in a hall or designated area and the finders only have 60 seconds to find him or her.



# paliwan

'pal-i-wan'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

Hide and seek constituted a series of very commonly played games, even by adults. In some games either a person or thing was hidden. The Kokominni people in the northwest of Queensland had a hide-and-seek game called *paliwan*.

## Short description

A version of hide and seek.

## Players

- A group of up to 20 players

## Playing area

- A designated outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Game play and basic rules

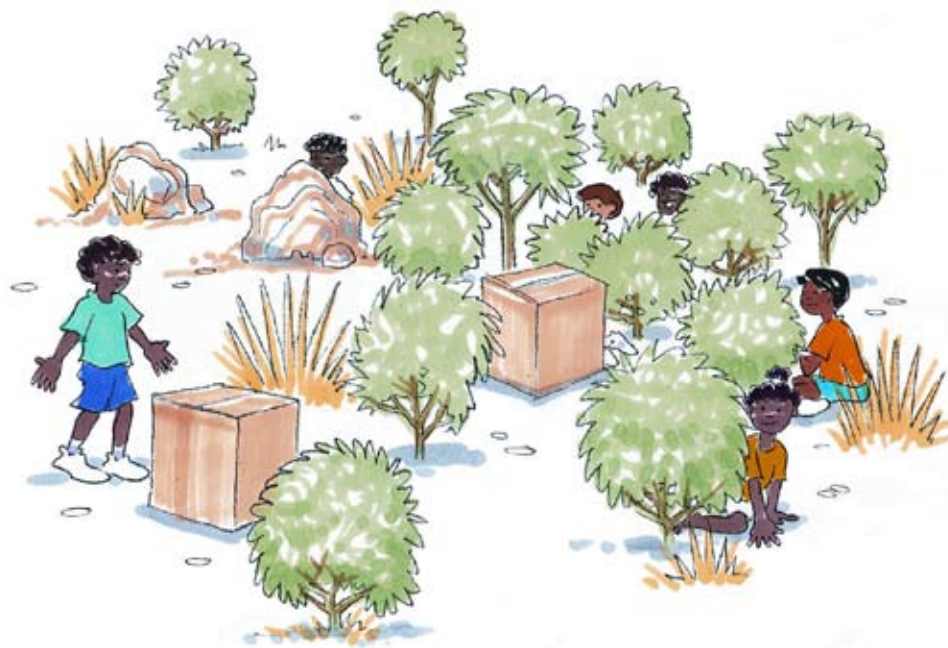
- A player is sent away to hide and the rest of the players attempt to find him or her.
- The player who first hides attempts to reach 'home' without being caught (touched) by the other players before he or she is found. The finders may not remain around the 'home' area.
- A new player is sent away to hide and the game continues.

## Comment

In the north-west central districts of Queensland there were up to three seekers. The seekers covered their eyes with their hands, or put their heads with eyes shut close to the ground, while the other players hid. If the 'seekers' could not find those who were hidden they made a whistling sound as a sign of defeat.

# thirring-nunna

'thir-ring-nun-na'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

This hide-and-seek game was described as being played by the Aboriginal children in an unidentified part of Queensland. It was called *thirring-nunna* (Where are we?).

## Short description

A hide-and-seek game where all players hide from a player who looks for them.

## Players

- A group of up to 20 players

## Playing area

- A designated outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Game play and basic rules

- One player is the 'seeker' and the other players hide. Once hidden the players are not allowed to move from their hiding places. As soon as they are all hidden the players call out, 'Yanman' ('go' or 'ready').
- The seeker searches for the hidden players as though stalking an animal.
- When a player is found he or she is brought back to the starting point one at a time. As each player is caught he or she calls out to inform the other players still hidden.
- The game ends and a new one commences when four players are caught. The first player found becomes the new 'seeker'.

## Variation

- When players are found they help the 'seeker' to find the other players.



# wallee ngnan weerrup

'wal-le nan weerr-up'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

In the west Kimberley area of Western Australia the young men were fond of playing a version of hide and seek called 'the hunting or bush game' (*wallee ngnan weerrup*).

## Language

A few sentences used by the players:

**Pindan yangarrama**

*We will play the bush game.*

**Joon wanjoolboo**

*You drive him.*

**Nowloo goon weerrup**

*Hit with club.*

**Joona joodoo joodoo wongoola**

*You throw him down there.*

**Booroo ngnan dammajinna**

*I missed him.*

**Kai! kala! ngnan barrin**

*Hurrah! I've got him.*

In the Gooniyandi language of the Kimberley area a male kangaroo was called *jamarra*.

## Short description

This is an imitation and acting game that is also a form of hide and seek. Younger players pretend to be on a kangaroo or emu hunt.

## Players

- A group of four or more players

## Playing area

- A suitable indoor or outdoor area (a tree area is recommended)

## Game play and basic rules

- The game is based on kangaroo and emu hunting. One or two players represent a kangaroo (*jamarra*) or emu and the other players are the hunters.
- The kangaroo is given a short time to 'disappear' into the bush (somewhere in the playing area). The other players pretend to hunt the kangaroo.
- When the hunters find the kangaroo they imagine they have 'captured' the kangaroo and return with this player back to the camp.
- The game is then restarted.

## Suggestion

This could be used as an acting game for younger children.

## Teaching points

- Find a good hiding spot. Make it good.
- Finders ready. Go.
- Bring them home.
- Next turn.

# kangaroo

'kang-a-roo'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

Imitation activities were a favourite and popular activity for children everywhere. In one activity children would copy the actions of the kangaroo.

## Language

The word kangaroo appears to have originated from a word (*gangarru*) in the language of the Gouguyimithirr people in the (Wahalumbaal) Endeavour River area of north Queensland.

## Short description

A jumping relay race based on the actions of a kangaroo jumping.

## Players

- Teams of four to eight players

## Playing area

- An appropriate area with lines about 10–15 metres apart

## Game play and basic rules

- This simple relay game is conducted over a distance appropriate to the age group of the players.
- The players jump or bound (hop) like kangaroos, keeping their legs together. They hold their arms close to their bodies at waist to chest level and with hands pointing down. They jump in long strides using an up and down motion.

## Variations

- Players step and hop — 'hippety hop' — or gallop step.
- Place a large ball between the legs and hop.

- The relay course could include an obstacle to climb over or could be a winding rather than a straight path.
- Have races between pairs of groups of players.
- Players line up next to each other and all hop together past a line 10–15 metres away.
- On mats and over low hurdles.

### Teaching points

- Teams line up. Ready.
- Arms up, feet together. Go.
- Feet together. Hop.
- Keep going.
- Allow player to hop then one step, hop on two feet then step again.



Kangaroo

# Walbiri

'wal-bir-i'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

A memory-testing game was played by the Walbiri children of central Australia. Players were required to recall sand-drawing maps of the locality after watching for a short time. This was a game that helped the children remember and identify the surrounding topography.

## Short description

This is a memory-testing game using various objects.

## Language

This game is named for the Walbiri people observed playing a memory game.

## Players

- Groups of four to ten players

## Playing area

- An indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Use cards, markers or pictures to represent the 'landmarks' of the area. For more experienced and older players as many as 50 objects can be placed around the playing circle at one time.

## Game play and basic rules

- A circle (5–10 metres in diameter) is drawn on the ground and around it are placed a number (10–30) of sticks and stones (or other objects), with each 'representing' prominent local landmarks in the area.
- After studying the arrangement of the objects for a time the players turn their backs on the circle. With their backs to the arrangement the first player calls an object at a given point and continues to call each object on the line around the circle until he or she calls incorrectly. When this occurs the next player continues.

- If the players cannot remember all the objects they turn away once more while the objects are re-arranged for the next game. The first player to call all the objects correctly has the 'honour' of arranging the pieces in readiness for the new game.

### Variations

- Use cards of animals, people and places as well as objects such as a marble, ball, pencil and so on.
- Pattern game: Use about 30 small pebbles of as many different colours and shapes as possible (such as found in sample rock kits) or draw/ make objects out of cardboard and paint them with designs in different colours. The pebbles (or objects) are laid out in a pattern — design several charts before the game (these will show set positions for the pebbles). Players observe the pattern for 1–2 minutes. The pebbles are gathered up and the group (about six players), or an individual, attempt to arrange the pebbles in their original order.
- Another method of play is to cover the pattern and have players draw on a piece of paper the approximate sizes, positions, colours and markings of the pebbles. The game can be played several times going from more simple patterns to more complex ones. The player who is the best at remembering the pattern arranges the pebbles for the next game. Allow players to receive hints.
- Add and take: Arrange a display of objects. These are re-arranged, added to or taken away from, and players attempt to list the object/s re-arranged, added and/or removed.
- Have pairs of cards (10–20 pairs). These are turned up and players have 1–2 minutes to remember them all. The cards are then turned face-down and players take it in turns to remember where the pairs of cards are. If they make a successful guess the cards are removed and they continue with their turn. When a player makes an incorrect guess the next player takes a turn. Continue until all the pairs are found. Re-arrange the cards and play another game.

### Teaching points

- Form a circle. Look closely at the objects.
- Turn your backs.
- First player go. Good.
- Next player.
- Stop. Well done.

# Inkanyi

'in-kan-yi'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

Although not a universal activity, athletic events were common. In a part of central Australia the children would have running races together. The race was a cooperative effort. According to age, running speed and fitness levels, runners started at different distances and all players attempted to finish together.

This activity is a more 'recent' observation.

## Language

The word *inkanyi* means 'play' in the language of the Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara of central Australia.

## Short description

This is a running activity whereby all players attempt to finish the race together. In some respects it is a cooperative activity.

## Game play and basic rules

- Players in this activity attempt to run as fast as they can and attempt to finish together.
- Use a set distance or a set time to 'organise' for a final race where all players attempt to finish together.
  - A. Players run for a set distance of 50 to 100 metres. A quick method of determining a starting place in the final race is to have the players all run in a couple of trial races and work out roughly where they finish.
 

By taking into consideration the distance between the runners at the finish of the race, the places where they start are set accordingly. (This is a fairly imprecise method and depends on the cooperation of the runners.)
  - B. Instead of a set distance players, run for a set time and see how far they can run. If a time is used the idea is to measure how far someone can run in a set time, for example 12 seconds. Players have a few attempts to

see how far they run. After all players have worked out their average distance, a race is organised where players are placed at various points along a running track. If a player can run 80 metres in 12 seconds he or she starts at a 20-metre mark. If another player can only run 60 metres in 12 seconds he or she starts at 40 metres. When all players are organised along the running track a race is held.

Players should be encouraged to try their best. The fun comes from running as fast as they can but all attempting to finish at the same time. (Adjust the starting positions to fine-tune the results and run the race a second time or on another day.)

### **Variation**

- Players can all run the same distance or start from different places but adjust their running speed so that they all finish together. There should be no 'winner'.

### **Comment**

This activity may be more practical for younger age groups in a physical education lesson.

### **Teaching points**

- Practise your runs. Time your distance.
- Work out where you will start.
- Run. Try to finish together but run hard.
- Let's try again. All run hard and work to finish together.

# tarnambai

'tar-nam-bai'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

Although not a universal activity, athletics-type events were common. On Tiwi (Bathurst) Island the children collected the seed heads of the 'spring rolling grass' (*Spinifex hirsutis*) that grew on the sand hills near the coast. These were taken to the beach and released. The children allowed these to be blown along by the wind and after a start chased after them and picked them up while running at full speed past them.

In the same area the children competed in running and jumping.

In the Batavia area of north Queensland running (*tarnambai*) as well as long-jumping (*brá-acha*) was often indulged in.

## Language

*Tarnambai* means 'running' in the language used in the Batavia area of north Queensland.

## Short description

This is a running-and-chasing game in which a ball is rolled and returned to the starting line.

## Game play and basic rules

- Players roll a ball away from their partners, who sprint after it, pick it up on the run after it crosses a line 20 metres away, and return to the starting line. Time the attempts, hold a team relay, or use this as a tabloid event in small groups (two to four players) with a set time (2–3 minutes).



## Variations

- Players roll a ball so it passes a line 20 metres away. As soon as it is released they chase and retrieve the ball and return across the starting line. Players time each other. Add the time together for all players to set a class or 'world' record. Repeat for a number of turns or at another time.
- A version of this activity has been successfully used by special-needs students who use wheelchairs. The student works with a partner and after rolling the ball is either pushed or accompanied to retrieve the ball. The ball is placed in the lap of the player in the wheelchair and both players return to the start.

## Suggestion

This activity could be included as part of a track-and-field carnival event, recognising traditional Indigenous Australian play culture.

## Teaching points

- Players ready. Roller with the ball. Runner ready. Go.
- Run. Let it cross the line. Pick it up. Run hard.
- Change over. Try your best.
- Good work. Time your rolls to their speed so your partner picks it up as it crosses the line.



# turi turi

'tur-i tur-i'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

## Background

In the northwest-central area of Queensland, the Maidhargari children made a type of skipping-rope (*turi turi*) from the long roots of the *Bauhinia* (Queensland bean tree), or white-gum, which grew near the water's edge.

A vine rope was used in the same way by Wogadj children on the Daly River in the Northern Territory.

## Language

The name of the game is taken from the language of the people near the area where the game was described:

*Nayu patyanur namalponu wululu kanpin*  
*I'm watching the kids playing.*

## Short description

This is a simple skipping game for younger children.

## Players

- A group of about six players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A skipping rope up to 6 metres long as the *turi turi*

## Game play and basic rules

- The rope is held by two players, who swing it backward and forward (side to side) — it is not swung overhead.
- One player at a time takes a turn for a number of jumps or jumps the rope once, moves away from the rope and waits for his or her next turn. Another player takes his or her place and players follow each other in order.

## Suggestion

This activity is suitable for younger children.

## Teaching points

- Rope turners ready. Skippers ready. Off we go.
- Swing side to side. Wait for the rope.
- Keep jumping.
- Watch the rope. Good.
- Another turn.
- Next skipper.

# ngor-go

'nor-go'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

A form of spin-ball was played among the lower Tully River people. The spinner was made out of a gourd of the *Benincasa vacua*. This game was played by women more often than men.

It was known among the Mallanpara people of north Queensland as *ngor-go*, after the name of the gourd used.

## Short description

Making and playing with a spinner toy.

## Equipment

- Use a very large button or object such as a flat stick or small round wheel from a toy.
- Sticks may be used at the end of the string to protect the thumb/fingers when the spinner is twirled.
- A length of strong twine up to 2 metres.

## Game play and basic rules

- Two holes are drilled either side of the centre of a small wheel or other object. A length of string is passed through both holes and joined to form a large loop with the spinning object in the centre.
- A thumb is inserted at either end of the loop of string, and the 'spinner' rotated over and over.
- The hands extend and the doubled string untwirls the ball or spinner. The hands are brought together and the spinner untwirls in the reverse direction. Continue in this manner so it may be kept spinning for a long time.

## Comment

This is an activity that has been observed as part of play culture in many parts of the world.

# kamai

'kam-ai'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

Using a length of twine, adult women and young children of both genders often amused themselves for hours at a time with cat's cradle (string-figure games). These were played almost everywhere throughout Australia and also in the Torres Strait. In some areas older boys and adult men also played these games.

Elaborate figures resembling such things as animals and natural objects were made by skillful manipulation. Similar string figures from different locations often had different interpretations.

## Language

*Meeroo-meeroo* (string games) was played in one area of Western Australia. Imitations of animals' and birds' feet and many other most ingenious designs were reproduced with fur or fibre string.

Among the local names applied to string figures in north Queensland included the following: *kápan*, *morkuru*, *ane-ingá*, *man-jing*, *yirma*, *mianman*, *andia-ibi*, *kumai* and *kamai*. *Wame* is the word used for string figures in the Torres Strait.

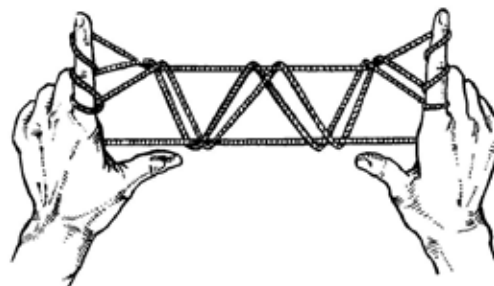
## Comment

String figures are made with a length of string up to 2 metres long, with the ends spliced or knotted together. The loop is then placed on the fingers of the hand and manipulated in a series of movements.

The diagrams available often only record the finished article. Some of the string figures are extremely complicated. During their creation, the figures often require not only the hands, but even the mouth, knees, and so on, to make the different loops, twists and turns. Occasionally two endless strings are used and one or even two assistants are involved.

## Suggestion

Use a 20–30 metre length of skipping rope and have small groups of four to six players copy (from a book) or 'invent' string figures.



# birray

'bir-ray'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

## Background

Young children in the Bloomfield area of north Queensland played the game of *birray* (march-fly). It was observed by Walter Roth in the early 1900s.

## Language

The name of the game is taken from the Wik-Mungkan language of north Queensland.

## Short description

This is a game where a chaser (*birray*) attempts to tag (touch) other players.

## Players

- A group of four to eight players

## Playing area

- A suitable designated area free of obstructions

## Game play and basic rules

- Players spread out around the playing area.
- Shutting their eyes (or blindfolded) the player who takes the part of the *birray* (march-fly) runs about trying to catch (touch) another player in the group.
- As soon as the player is successful he or she makes an unpleasant noise (imitating the insect's buzz) near the ear of the player caught and also give him or her a 'pretend' pinch (indicative of the sting). The player caught (touched) becomes the new *birray* and the game continues.

## Suggestion

This game is recommended for younger children.

## Teaching points

- Spread out.
- Keep moving. Watch out for the *birray*.
- Look out for other players.
- Caught. Change over. Let's go again.

# giriga

'gir-i-ga'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

## Background

A duck 'catching' game was played by little boys and girls at Cape Bedford, Cooktown and the McIvor regions in north Queensland. This game was recorded by Walter Roth in the early 1900s.

## Language

The game is called *giriga*, which means 'play' in the Yidiny language of the Cairns–Yarrabah region.

## Short description

This is a role-play, running-and-chasing tag game suitable for younger children.

## Players

- A group of four to eight or more players

## Playing area

- A suitable area with a designated 'home' area

## Game play and basic rules

- One of the players takes a long 'stick' (a swimming 'noodle' works well), and holding it up at an angle, allows the far end to touch the ground. This represents a man catching ducks by means of a slip-noose attached to the end of a long slender rod. The other players circle round and round, bobbing underneath the stick in single file (one behind the other).
- The player with the stick suddenly drops the stick down in front of a player who will be considered 'caught'. This player has to lie down on his or her back, perfectly still, and with eyes closed. Players in the game are 'caught' until they are all lying in a row.
- The child with the stick comes up to the first 'duck' and says, 'Where do you come from?' 'I come from Yarrabah' is the reply.
- 'Well, then, go home to Yarrabah,' says the player with the stick and with a light touch from the

stick the 'duck' gets up on his or her feet and runs away 'home'.

- Continue in the same manner for all the other players.

### **Variations**

- The catcher is blindfolded when he or she catches the 'ducks'.
- Play music as the players move around in a circle. When it stops the stick drops down to catch the 'duck'.
- All the players run home after the 'catcher' asks one of them where he or she comes from.

### **Teaching points**

- Circle round and round.
- Caught. Lie down on your back.
- Go for home.
- Safe at home (or touched)

# gitja

'git-ja'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

## Background

The *Gitja* (moon) play game from the north Queensland area was usually played when a number of children gathered together. The full version of the game observed involved imitation and acting aspects along with a running-and-chasing activity.

## Language

*Gitja* was the Koko-yellanji language term signifying the moon.

## Short description

This is a chasing-and-catching (tag) game. It is a simplified version of a more involved game.

## Players

- A group of 10–14 or more players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Game play and basic rules

- In this game a player takes the part of *Gitja*. Players form a circle around a player with *Gitja* on the outside and another player on the inside of the circle.
- The player in the circle represents someone who has eaten *Gitja*'s food by mistake and *Gitja* wants him or her to know it was the wrong thing to do.
- The game starts and *Gitja* attempts to catch (touch) the player who is in the middle of the circle. The players in the circle hold hands to attempt to 'stop' the *Gitja* and to help the player being chased.
- The *Gitja* may not break through the arms but can duck under them to chase. The players in the circle bend down to stop the *Gitja*. Players allow the player in the middle to go outside the circle and back into it as he or she is chased by *Gitja*.
- Play continues until *Gitja* has succeeded in catching (touching) the player or a set time expires. The players must stay within the designated playing area when running and chasing.

## Variation

- Play with two people to be chased by *Gitja*.

## Comment

This version is shortened from a full game of *Gitja* and does not include the acting and playing aspects. However, it still reflects the basic nature of the game.

## Teaching points

- Form a circle. Player inside, *Gitja* outside.
- Hold hands. Do not break through the arms.
- Duck under.
- Keep going. Help the runner. Cheer for him/her.
- Good. Change over. Well done everyone.



# tabud nuri

'ta-bud nu-ri'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

## Background

A game of tag observed being played on Mabuiag Island in the Torres Strait by Margaret Lawrie.

## Language

*Tabud nuri* means 'snake coiling'.

## Short description

A group activity that is suitable for younger players. Players in a line coil and uncoil like a snake before a player is chased by other players, who attempt to touch (catch) him or her.

## Players

- Players in groups of six to 12

## Playing area

- A designated area of approximately 20 metres square

## Game play and basic rules

- Players line up next to each other and hold hands. The leader at a designated end of the line stands still while the second player wraps him or herself around the first player and so on down the line so that they are coiling like a snake. When all the players have 'coiled' they then unwind until all players are back in a straight line.
- The leader suddenly drops the hand of the player who is next to him or her and runs around the designated playing area.
- The players all chase this player as they evade being touched for as long as they can.
- When touched the player stops while all players come and touch him or her to represent catching the snake.
- Swap around the leader (snake) and the arrangement in the line and continue playing until all players have been a leader.

### Variations

- The leader runs away until touched by a player and the game stops.
- When the players uncoil they do so at speed and as soon as they uncoil the leader (snake) runs away.
- The leader attempts to touch the other players.
- The leader wears a tag belt and the chasers must remove one of these from a player to catch him or her.

### Comment

While the players are coiling they chant: *Tabud nuri.*

When they are uncoiling they chant:  
*Mata muia gudwaii.*

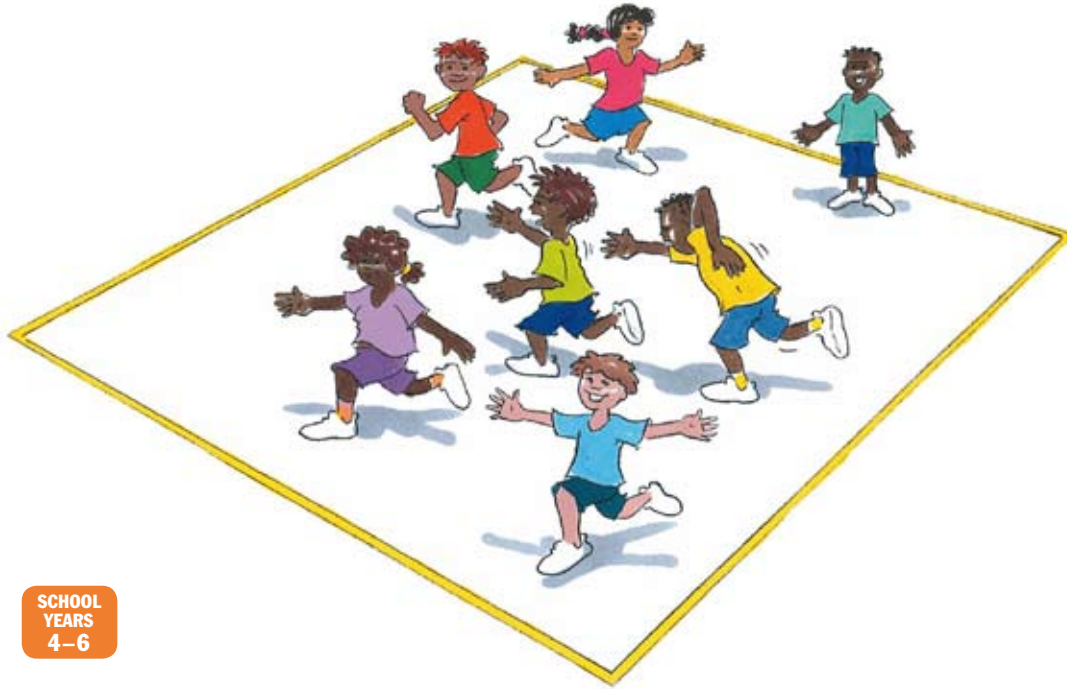
### Teaching points

- Line up. Next to each other. Ready.
- Start winding. Good. Keep going.
- Stop. Now unwind. Drop hands.
- Run. Watch out.
- Good. Stop there.
- Change over. Who's next?



# thapumpān

'tha-pum-pan'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

The tag game of *thapumpān* (shark) was observed being played by little children at Cape Bedford in north Queensland.

## Language

The name of the game was taken from the Wik-Mungkan language of north Queensland.

## Short description

A chasing-and-tagging game

## Players

- A group of four to eight or more players

## Playing area

- A designated area of around 10–15 metres square, depending on the number of players

## Game play and basic rules

- A player bends one arm over the top of his or her head like a *thapumpān* (shark) fin — (or may touch with a palm on the back between the shoulders or a hand on the head). The player then bends over and chases the other players in a manner to represent a *thapumpān*'s movements in the water.
- When a player is touched he or she becomes the new *thapumpān* and the game continues.

## Variations

- Have a couple of hoops, which are 'islands' for players to rest on for up to 5 seconds — (the game can also be played with a hoop for each player). Players walk or jog around the playing area and every so often a whistle is blown and players are safe if they reach their island before being caught (touched) by the *thapumpān*. Keep playing the game but change the *thapumpān* after a set time.

- Play the game in waist-deep water. The players stand in a circle and the *thapumpun* swims around (underwater or on top of it) and attempts to catch/touch a player below the knees as he or she attempts to jump out of the way.

### Teaching points

- Make the shark. The rest spread out.
- Ready. Go.
- Keep away from the shark. Look out.
- Caught. Next.



# Wanambi

'wa-nam-bi'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

*Wanambi* was a large snake. This game was observed being played by the Pitjantjatjara people of central Australia.

## Short description

This is a chase-and-tag game. Players in a line move towards another player, who suddenly chases and attempts to catch (touch) them.

## Players

- A group of four to eight players for each game

## Playing area

- A suitable indoor or outdoor area marked with a large spiral

## Game play and basic rules

- *Wanambi* sits in the middle of the large spiral drawn to represent a large snake. The other players place their hands on the hips of the player in front of them and slowly move around the spiral towards *Wanambi*.
- When the line of players reaches a set point about 5 metres away, *Wanambi* jumps up and attempts to catch (touch) the players as they quickly attempt to retreat backward (or turn and run) out of the spiral and back past a marker or line.
- Change over the *Wanambi* and continue playing.

## Variations

- When *Wanambi* attempts to touch the players in the line they drop hands and turn and run back to a marker or nominated line.
- The first person caught (touched) becomes the new *Wanambi*.

- Players next to each other in a line walk towards *Wanambi*. On a signal (whistle or call) they drop hands and turn and run back past a marker while *Wanambi* attempts to catch (touch) them.
- The player who was *Wanambi* joins on to the end of the line for the next turn and the players move forward one place.

### **Comment**

Accounts indicate that this game does not have any special ceremonial significance. The activity was played for enjoyment.

### **Safety**

Due care must be taken to avoid accidents through falls or contact with another player. Players should use minimum force when they catch (touch) another player.

### **Teaching points**

- From a line. Hands on hips.
- Make a spiral. Move forward.
- Go. Unwind. Quickly.
- Watch out. Don't get touched.

# borna jokee

'bor-na-joke-e'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

In parts of Western Australia mimic battles with toy spears frequently took place among the younger male members of the camp. Mock fights and duels were fought. There were also trials of skill with *kyley* and spear and kangaroo and emu hunts, the children taking turns at being hunter and hunted. In these activities the boys are encouraged by their elders in order to acquire dexterity in handling their weapons, and boys are usually watched closely by the men, especially in their spear-throwing games.

The game of *boorna jokee* was the throwing of blunted spears at a human target. In this manner a player perfected skills in spear throwing and spear dodging. In displays of skill some men could expertly dodge three spears thrown together. They would use their shield or *woomera* to deflect the spears at the last moment.

## Language

*Noongar* is the word used by the people of the southwest of Western Australia to describe who they are.

## Short description

In this game players throw soft balls at a player, who attempts to avoid being contacted.

## Players

- Groups of four to ten players (*Noongars*)

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A sponge or some other type of soft ball instead of small spears

### Game play and basic rules

- One player (*Noongar*) stands in the centre of a line of *Noongars* and about 10–15 metres away. The line of throwers is spread out along the throwing line.
- The *Noongars* throw sponge balls or similar at the ‘dodger’. The *Noongar* in front attempts to dodge these. *Noongars* collect the balls when there are none left to throw. The *Noongar* in front is changed and the game continues. Only contacts below the shoulders count.

### Variation

- Two teams of players 10–15 metres apart. One player at a time stands 5 metres in front of his or her group while the opposing team throw balls at them. The player must not move his or her feet and may only dodge the balls thrown by turning the body or moving the head. He or she may knock the balls aside by using a cricket pad or cricket bat as a shield. Alternate roles between teams.

### Teaching points

- Spread out. Dodger ready.
- Dodge and move.
- Throw and hit. Below the shoulders.
- Stop. Collect the balls.



# gorri

'gor-ri'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

Bowling-ball or disc games were played by Aboriginal boys and men in all parts of Australia. A piece of rounded bark (disc) was rolled by one of the players for the other boys to use as a target for their short spears.

A version of this activity is still played in the Kimberley area and Northern Territory (and perhaps elsewhere) using flattened tin lids as targets and stones or other missiles.

## Language

*Gorri* was a disc-bowling game played in central Australia.

## Short description

This is a game involving the throwing of a ball (for a spear) at a moving target.

## Players

- A group of players of up to 20 or more

## Playing area

- Use an area about 15–30 metres long. Markers are placed at each end of the area, and throws may only be made by players when the target is between these markers.

## Equipment

- Marker cones are used to designate the playing area
- Large gym balls
- Two tennis balls for each player

## Game play and basic rules

- The player who will roll the target ball stands 5–10 metres to one side of the playing area, away from the throwing marker, and about 10 metres or more in front of the other players.

- The players who are to throw at the target stand behind a line along one side of the playing area and parallel to the direction that the ball is to be thrown.
- These players call out for the ball to be rolled when they are all ready.
- The thrower calls out 'gool-gool' and starts the ball rolling towards the other end of the area.
- As the target ball rolls between the markers in the playing area the players either throw or roll their tennis balls at the target in an attempt to hit it. Players stop throwing when the rolled ball goes past the marker at the other end of the area.
- After their turn players wait until told and then collect the balls they have thrown. (A whistle is useful here.)
- Vary the speed, distance and angle of the rolls and the number of balls rolled. For younger players some stationary targets might be used.
- Note: When a player makes a hit he or she is greeted with applause. Successful players are expected to be modest about their achievement.

### Variations

- Spear the hoop. Use a small hula-hoop or rubber quoit as the target and 1-metre pieces of medium-sized dowel that can be marked with different colours. Players stand behind a line marked 5 metres away from a target area, which is 10–15 metres long. The aim is to either make the hoop (or quoit) stop rolling, or to throw through it.
- Human *gorri*: Have players either side of the area and 15 metres apart. Players gently roll a soft ball underarm at a target player as they run through the area between them. Players must be hit below the knees. This can be played with three teams (two throwing and one running).
- Attach a cardboard box to a long length of strong twine and pull it through the target area.
- Use spear throwers (*woomeras*).

- *Gorri* contest: Conduct a contest for a set time or number of turns. Each player or team has a set number of balls. The player or team that hits the target the most number of times is the winner.

### Safety

The area to be used should be marked out and players who roll the ball have no chance of a thrown ball being directed towards them. The players should not move after they have thrown their balls, until a signal to retrieve the balls is given.

### Teaching points

- Wait for the signal.
- Pick your target. Stand side on. Ball in your fingers.
- Ready. Ball back behind the ear, wrist bent.
- Step, elbow leads, points the fingers.
- Throw and follow through.
- Wait. Retrieve.



# kalkadoon kee'an

'kal-ka-doon kee-an'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

In areas of north Queensland, a game of throwing skill was played. A large bone, such as an emu shinbone (with twine attached to it) was thrown over a net (used to catch emus) into a pit or hole. Considering the distance to the hole, great skill was required to correctly aim the bone and ensure that it did not touch the net.

## Language

The game is called *kee'an*, which means 'to play' in the Wik-Mungkan language of north Queensland. The Kalkadoon people from around the Mount Isa area also played a game similar to the one outlined and their connection has been recognised as part of the name of this game.

## Short description

This activity involves throwing a ball into a small bin target as many times as possible, as part of a tabloid activity or a skill game.

## Players

- Play singly or in groups of two to four players

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Use 'foxtail' or a tennis ball in a stocking (or long football sock) as the bone, with twine attached. When a ball in a stocking is used the length of the foxtail may be adjusted.
- Use a large plastic bin or hoop as the pit or hole.

## Game play and basic rules

- Players in groups of two to four line up behind one another. Players hold the foxtail a short distance away from the ball and take it in turns to attempt to throw the foxtail ball into a small bin from 3–5 metres away.

- To avoid interference, the player throwing the foxtail is 2 metres in front of the rest of the line of players (mark a line for this).
- As an extra challenge the balls are held further down the tail. Players retrieve the ball after their turn and give it to the next player.

### Scoring

- The game is usually played for fun and recognition for a successful throw, but players can keep a team score from a set time (2–3 minutes) or set number of turns (four to six).

### Variations

- Players throw into a hoop 3–5 metres in front of them. They score one point if it touches or bounces in and out of the hoop and two points if it stays in the hoop. A group score can be used. (Suitable for younger players.)
- Players have a set number of turns (for example, five) before the next player in line has a turn. Either play a competition between individual players or groups, or add all the individual scores together for a class total.

### Teaching points

- Form a line.
- Player in front with the foxtail.
- Thrower ready. Go.
- Good throws.
- Watch the target.
- Point your hand and follow through.
- Collect the ball.
- Next player move up and ready.
- Go to end of line. Keep going.

# kolap

'ko-lap'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

This object-throwing game was observed being played on Mer Island in the Torres Strait region in the nineteenth century. More recent versions have also been observed.

## Short description

A game based on throwing accuracy. Teams of one to two players throw objects, attempting to make them land on a target on the ground.

## Players

- Two players form a team to compete against another team, or the game can be played with one player against another.

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Two mats (softball bases, carpet squares, rubber mats or small towels) placed 5–7 metres apart
- Beanbags, coins, large buttons or flat bocce balls to represent the *kolap* beans

## Game play and basic rules

- Two players sit (or stand) behind each mat.
- The players who are partners are diagonally opposite each other.
- Each player has four *kolaps*, which he or she attempts to throw to land on the mat opposite.
- One player has a turn. The *kolaps* are collected and then the player on the opposite team at the other mat has a turn. Continue in this manner.

## Scoring

A combined total of 20 finishes the game for a team. The *kolap* must land completely on the mat to count.

## Variations

- Use wooden markers such as used in the game of draughts.
- Players stand to play the game and use rubber mats or carpet squares.
- Throw coins or flat bocce markers onto large carpet squares, or into hoops.
- Skills practice — consecutive throws
- Players take turns to see how many times in a row they can land the *kolap* beans (markers) on the mat. Play from a standing position.
- Tabloid *kolap*: Players (two to six) line up behind each other and take it in turns to attempt to land the *kolap* on the mat. Throwers collect the *kolap* and give it to the next player. Count the number in a set time (2–3 minutes).

## Teaching points

- Line up behind the mat.
- Teams face each other.
- First thrower ready. Go.
- Underarm or sidearm throws. Be careful. Aim for the target. Bend the knees a bit.
- Good throw. Watch the target. Point your hand and follow through.
- Next turn. Keep playing.

# mer kolap

'mer ko-lap'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

This object-throwing game was observed being played in the Torres Strait on Mer Island in the nineteenth century. More recent versions have been observed.

## Short description

This version of an object-throwing game is a relay event.

## Players

- Teams of four to six lined up behind a starting line

## Playing area

- A marked indoor or outdoor area suitable to the activity

## Equipment

- One hoop for each team
- Beanbags, coins, large buttons or marbles to represent the *kolap* beans

## Game play and basic rules

- Place a hoop about 5 metres in front of each team.
- On a signal to start, the first player in each team throws the disc (or beanbag) and attempts to land it in a hoop — it must land completely in the hoop without touching the hoop. After his or her turn the thrower runs out, retrieves the disc and hands it to the next person before joining the end of the line.
- Repeat for each team member and continue play for a set time (2–3 minutes) or set number of turns (20–50).

## Variations

- Cooperative *kolap*: Teams continue until they reach a required number of throws or use a set time and add up the score for each team to set a class record. Repeat the activity a number of times.
- Teams compete against each other in a timed or numbered competition. A series of events (such as two minutes or 90 seconds) could be used to determine the 'champions'. This activity could be used as part of a tabloid event or skills circuit.
- *Kolap* golf: Set up a series of hoops around a playground or indoor area. Players use an underarm throw of their beanbag or marker from different distances and attempt to land it in the hoop. Add up team and/or individual scores or use this as a practice activity.

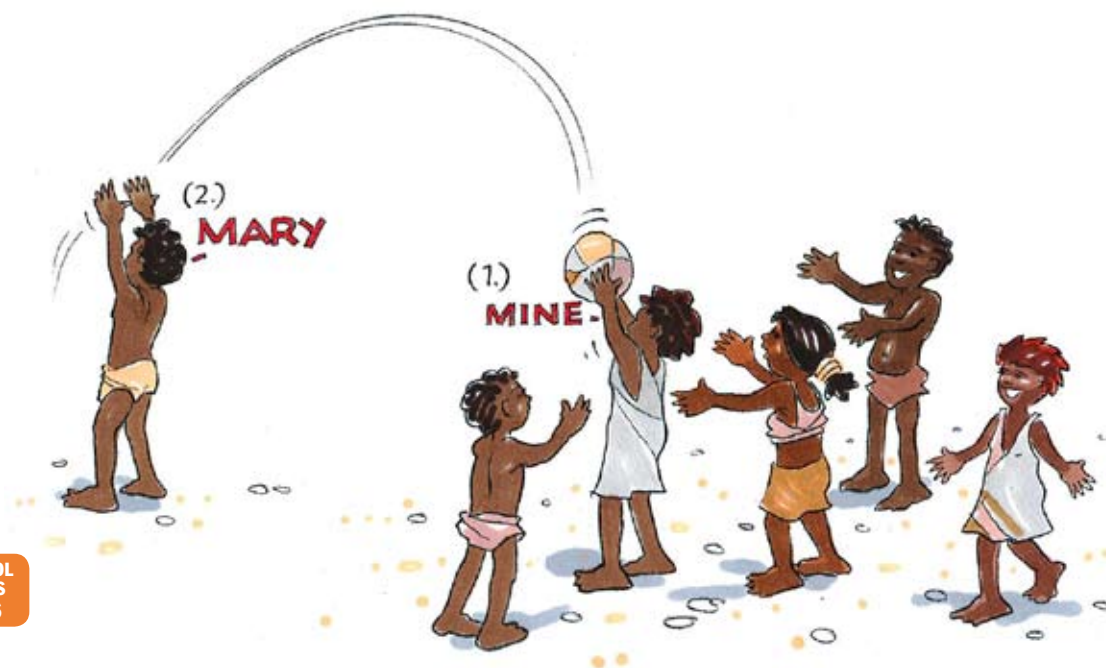
## Teaching points

- Set up the hoops. Stand in line.
- Ready. Go
- Aim and throw. Underarm. Hand towards.
- Retrieve and hand to next player.
- Keep going. Quick.



# nanyima

'nan-yi-ma'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

Catch-ball games were played in many places. The balls used were made of seeds, stones, clay, seaweed, grass, hair-string and stuffed fur. In one game a player tosses a stone (ball) over his or her shoulder to a number of players and attempts to guess who caught the stone.

## Language

*Nanyima* means 'to play about' in the language of Aboriginal people from the northwest district of Victoria.

**Malnangyer, wida umeit warreete, umuk  
perperduuk**

*Now let us see who throws out the farthest.  
Throw it out.*

(From the language of Aboriginal people from an unidentified part of Victoria.)

## Short description

A player throws the ball over his or her head (and behind) to a group of players and then attempts to guess who has the ball. This activity is suitable for younger players.

## Players

- Groups of six to eight players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A soft ball

### Game play and basic rules

- A player with a ball stands 5–10 metres in front of a group of players and facing away from them. The player then throws the ball high and back over his or her head to the group of players. These players attempt, without physical contact, to catch the ball.
- When a player has caught the ball (or secured it if it drops to the ground), the player who threw the ball must guess who caught it.

### Variation

- To help the thrower guess who has caught the ball the catcher might have to say something. The catcher can attempt to disguise his or her voice.

### Teaching points

- Player in front with the ball.
- Face away from the group.
- Throw it high back over the head.
- Ready. Go.
- Call for the ball. Watch out for other players.
- Take the catch. Good. Guess who it is?

# tambil tambil

'tam-bil tam-bil'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

In many areas of Australia people played skills-practice games, where they threw objects at each other. These included sticks, mud and stones of various sizes.

A spear-dodging game called *tambil tambil* (refers to the blunt spears used) was played by the Jagara (Jagera) people of the Brisbane area, as part of sham fights and mock war. These sham fights taught the boys how to manage when it was required as they grew into manhood.

In parts of Australia the girls were taught to fight and use the digging stick (called *kalgur* in one area) so they could protect themselves later on in life.

## Language

In the Wembawemba language from western Victoria the word *ngalembert* referred to a 'champion dodger' or 'expert at dodging spears'.

## Short description

This is a throwing-and-dodging game.

## Players

- Groups of four to 12 players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Fleece balls, paper balls, or sponge balls
- A small shield (bat) for protection only — optional.

## Game play and basic rules

- One player represents a kangaroo. The kangaroo stands 10–15 metres in front of a group of players, who are spread out along a line.
- The 'kangaroo' hops or runs around in front of the group, dodging the throws until he or she is hit by a thrown ball. When hit the player falls over, and the player who hit him or her becomes the new kangaroo.
- A supply of balls is provided for the throwers. Players do not move out past the line to retrieve thrown balls unless the game is stopped and they are directed to do so.

## Variations

- Players throw their weapons 'weakly' at each other by lobbing, rolling or bouncing tennis or sponge balls towards each other. (This is recommended for younger players.)
- Circle dodge: One player (dodger) is in the centre of a circle of six to eight players. Throwers use a fleece or sponge ball to throw, or they roll/bounce a large soft ball to attempt to hit the dodger. Players take turns to stay in the middle as long as they can.
- The game can be made more difficult by having the dodger stay inside a small circle or hoop, or by using a number of balls. (This game works well for class groups of younger students.)
- Obstacle dodge: One or more players acting as kangaroos (targets) start at one end of a course and 5–10 metres in front of several throwers. The 'targets' start with four to six small beanbags in their hands and run/walk through a line of markers in a zigzag, slalom-like course. Each time they are hit by a sponge or fleece ball they drop a beanbag. Count the number of times they are hit.
- A number of players walk across 5–10 metres in front of a line of throwers who have fleece or sponge balls. As the kangaroo 'target' moves across the area they step up and walk along benches. They can only be hit when they are on the benches. When hit they step off the back of the bench and start again. Count the number of hits.

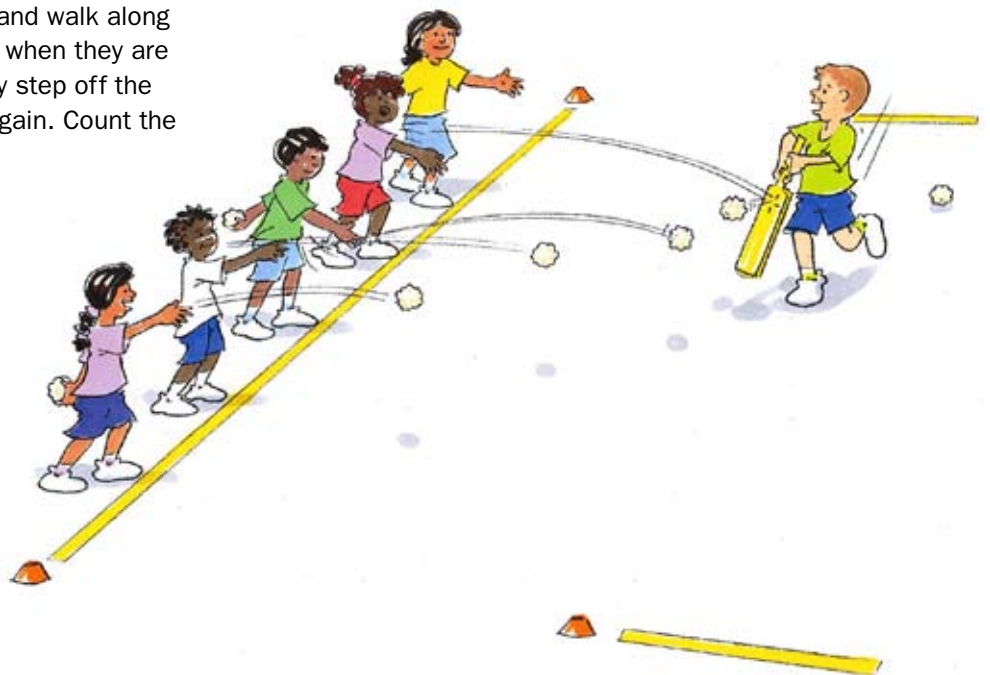
- Gauntlet run: The 'kangaroo' starts at one end of a line of players and 5–10 metres in front. They run past the line of players as they either roll or underarm throw a soft ball to attempt to hit their legs. Swap around the kangaroo.
- Use two to four players as the kangaroos. Throwers may be required to take turns rather than all throw at once.

## Safety

Safety factors needed to be considered to avoid injury to the dodging player. The use of a helmet, eye and face protection and a tracksuit could be considered. It is possible to substitute a person for some types of targets.

## Teaching points

- Move around 'kangaroo'. Duck and weave.
- Aim below the shoulders.
- Throw and wait for the signal.



Gauntlet run

# weet weet

'weet weet'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

The throwing of the play-stick, commonly called the *weet weet* ('wit-wit') was a popular activity among Aboriginal people in some parts of Australia, and various contests were held.

The *weet weet* was often referred to as the 'kangaroo rat', because when thrown correctly its flight resembled the leaping action of this small marsupial. A *weet weet* was like a giant tadpole. The tail was a flexible stick and in some types when it was thrown it was swung backward and forward and bent almost double.

After being thrown onto (or through) a small mound or pile of bushes, a *weet weet* could:

- leap along in a succession of bounds
- travel along the ground
- spin in a 'bouncing' action as it turned end over end

- travel in a parabola and strike the ground before travelling further
- be thrown to slide along the ground (such as along a sandy beach).

## Language

In the language recorded from some people in the western district of Victoria:

**Malnangyer, wida umeit warreete,  
umuk perperdunk**

*Now let us see who throw out the farthest.  
Throw it out.*

## Short description

This is a throwing competition for distance and accuracy, using a club or pin to represent a throwing stick or *weet weet*.

### Game play and basic rules

- Although a popular sport with Aboriginal people in parts of Australia it is very difficult to recreate the weet weet. To give some idea of the throwing for accuracy and distance associated with this activity, rhythmic gymnastic clubs or juggling clubs are worth using.
- Players use different coloured clubs and conduct contests of distance and accuracy. Players may have three turns each as part of an athletic event.

### Scoring

The player who throws the weet weet the longest distance or who hit — or was closest — to the target was considered the winner of the game.

### Variation

- For younger players use a 'foxtail' ball (or a tennis ball in a stocking). These are twirled around and either thrown directly into the air or bounced from an inclined board or mat. Players aim to throw the longest distance or for accuracy at a target.

### Safety

Strict observance of safety measures is necessary to conduct any activities associated with throwing of the weet weet.

### Comment

Use a number of clubs (three to five) as the weet weet. These can be made by copying designs and experimenting, or using a rhythmic gymnastic club or similar as the weet weet.

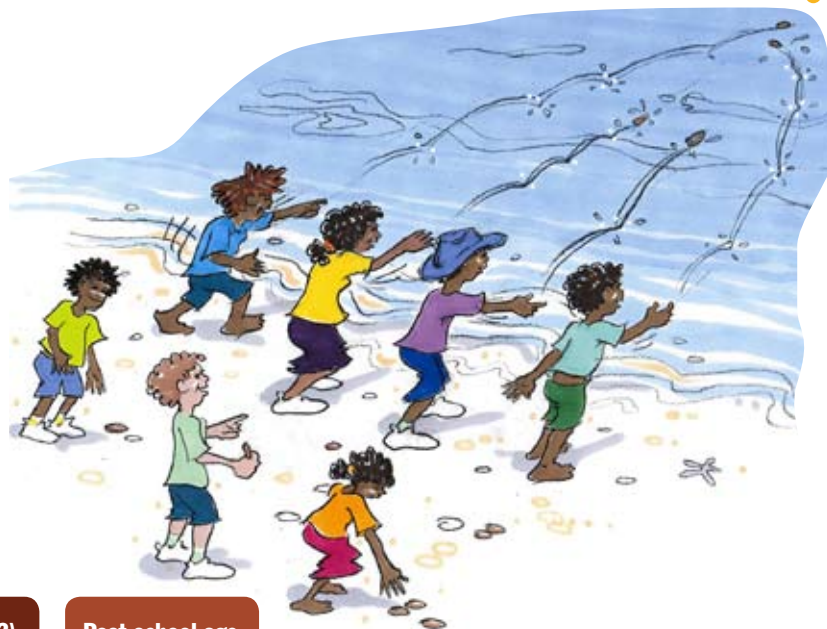
### Teaching points

- Ready. Throw and follow through.
- Watch the target. Watch where you are throwing.



# Wirrwuyu

'wirr-wu-yu'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

As in various other cultures, stone skipping (throwing) along a surface of water was played by Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

On Dunk Island in Queensland, the throwing of cuttle-fish (*krooghar*) bones was observed. The bones were thrown along the surface of the water like 'skipping stones' and often reached surprising distances in a series of skips.

## Language

The word *wirrwuyu* means 'throwing stones' in the Djapi dialect of the Yolngu language of northern Australia.

## Short description

An outdoor education activity where players take turns in throwing the stones to make them 'skip' as many times as possible along the surface of the water. It provides a fun activity as well as practice for throwing.

This activity is usually known as 'ducks and drakes' and is a well-known favourite.

## Players

- Any number of players but usually two to six in a group spread out in a row

## Equipment

- A large supply of small flat pebbles or stones

## Playing area

- An open area near water

## Game play and basic rules

- This game of throwing skill was played by both children and adults who lived near a sea, lake or river.
- Players collect a supply of small flat stones or pebbles.

- The idea of the activity is to throw a small flat stone across the surface of the water to see how many times it skips or bounces before sinking.

### Comments

This activity requires considerable skill and much practice. The thrower attempts to release the stone as low as he or she can towards the water at a flat angle.

If performed well, the stone skips along the surface of the water in a spectacular fashion. A stone that skips or bounces across the water more than five times is a very good throw, and more than ten would be excellent.

### Variations

- Use a 'target' such as a stick or large rock to aim at.
- Use tennis balls and a bin or wicket. Players 'bounce' the ball off the ground (or even water) once or twice to hit the target.
- Use a suitable light ball and standing in waist-deep water bounce the ball off the water for a partner or other players to attempt to catch.

### Safety

Ensure that appropriate safety aspects are observed for all activities. It is recommended that only one player throw at a time.

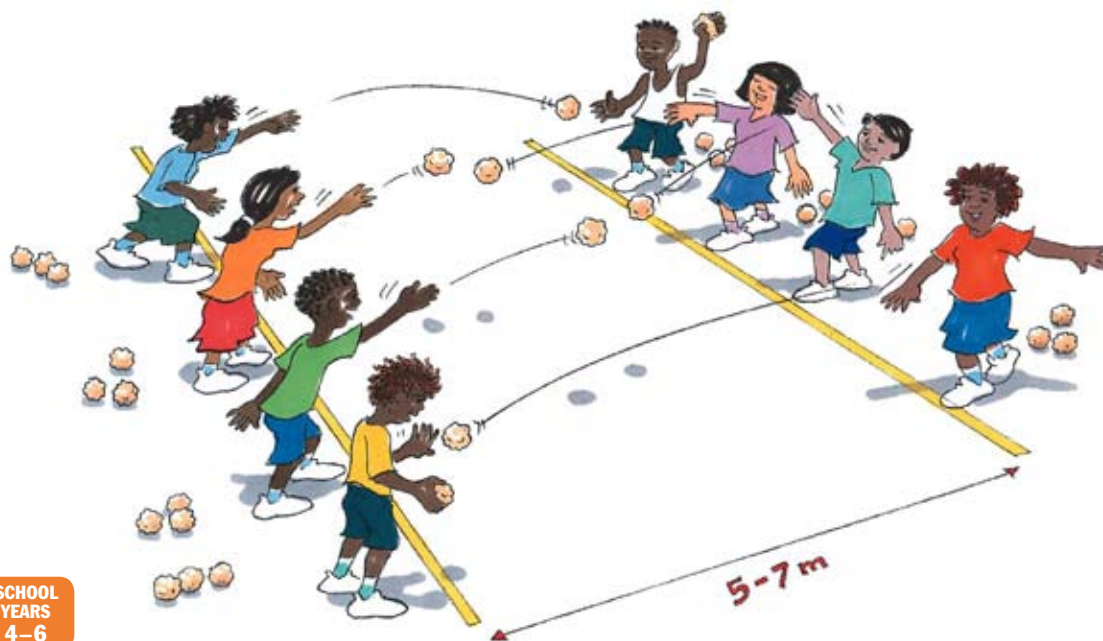
### Teaching points

- Collect the stones. Spread out in a line.
- Off you go. Keep the arm low, bend the knees, flick the wrist. Elbow leads.
- Count the bounces.
- Keep going.



# yeeboo ngandoonyoo

'yee-boo nan-doon-yoo'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

In most parts of Australia young boys played fighting games or mock combat games for enjoyment and as a practice for adult life. In one part of Australia the boys would rise early in the morning to practise their self-taught skills of spear throwing.

The little boys also indulged in imitating the skills of fighting as practised by their elders. The miniature weapons they used were either manufactured for them by their older male relatives and friends, or else made themselves. These included boomerangs, throwing sticks, spears, knives and axes.

## Language

Yeeboo *ngandoonyoo* means 'just for fun' in the language of the people of the Broome district of Western Australia.

## Short description

A throwing-and-evading game where players attempt to hit each other with sponge balls.

## Players

- Two lines of about eight to 12 players facing each other 5–12 metres apart, depending on the age of the players

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Sponge balls or some other type of soft balls

## Game play and basic rules

- Players spread out in two lines and face each other. Each player has up to five balls.

- On a signal to start the players throw their sponge balls to attempt to hit a player in the opposing line. Players try to avoid being hit on the body.
- The balls are thrown very quickly and may be warded off by the hands, which act as shields. Players cannot go in front of the throwing line to retrieve balls. An extra supply of balls may be positioned behind each group.
- Play is continuous but may be stopped from time to time to allow players to retrieve sponge balls.

### Variations

- After a few throws a signal is given and the players of both teams run towards each other — but not over a half-way line — and attempt to hit opposing players (until all the balls are thrown).
- Players stand about 3–5 metres apart and use under-arm throws of fleece or sponge balls to try to hit each other.
- Use plastic cups of water to hit an opponent. Players stand at least 3–5 metres apart.
- Use sponge balls dipped in water. Underarm throws only are allowed and from no closer than 5–7 metres.

### Teaching points

- Spread out. Five balls each.
- Ready.
- Dodge and move.
- Throw and hit.
- Stop. Collect the balls.

# Waayin

'waa-yin'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

The study of different animal and bird tracks was an important part of the education of Aboriginal children.

These were drawn in the smoothed earth or sand by means of the fingers, fingernails, palms, small sticks and so on. A great deal of care was taken by adults in imitating the tracks of various animals for the benefit of the children. The children in some areas were often encouraged to compete in reproducing these.

## Language

In the Dativuy language of the northern part of the Northern Territory, *waayin* refers to 'land animals and reptiles'. These are classified as eaten or not eaten or by their movements (such as flying, crawling or slithering).

## Short description

In this activity players attempt to make the tracks of animals on the ground and other players guess what they might be.

## Game play and basic rules

- An experienced player draws the tracks of several animals in the sand and the other players attempt to guess what they are. The watching players may comment on how well the tracks have been made.
- It might also be possible to obtain plaster moulds of different animal tracks and use these. They would also serve as a good way to learn and understand the different tracks.
- Photos of animal tracks would allow the players the opportunity to learn some different and unusual tracks of animals. Players could find tracks and take photos or use some books.

## Examples

- An **emu track** is made by impressing lengthwise the thumb and first finger in the sand. Changing the thumb to the other side without lifting the first finger, a second impression is made with the thumb in this position at about the same angle as the first. The pad of the emu foot can be added by an impression of the thumb at the intersection of the three toes.



- A **kangaroo track** is made by pressing a finger or the big toe twice into the sand, a short distance apart so that the resulting marks are two parallel grooves to represent the impressions of the long central toes. A shorter mark at the centre of these, at an angle of 45 degrees, will indicate the lateral toes when the track is complete. A small scratch or hole can be made at the end of each of the 'toes' to represent the claw marks.



- A **dingo track** is made with the fingers alone, the thumb making the impression for the pad, and the tips of the fingers those of the toes, the imprints of the claws are added by a small stick.



- A **turtle track** is made by moving the hand backwards in a sudden jerky movement, with the result being a good imitation of the real flapper prints.



## Variations

- Draw an outline of various tracks on paper or cardboard and players (individually or as a group) attempt to name as many tracks as they can. As a relay game players run out 10 metres from their group and attempt to match six cards (or more) with pictures of the correct animal.
- When they are correct the cards are jumbled and the player returns to the group so the next player can have a turn. The cards could be changed after each player's turn or kept the same by the teacher.
- A picture of a track is shown and photos of animals are provided for players to guess the animal.
- A photo of an animal is shown and players attempt to make what they think its track might be.
- Players could research various animals and tracks they make, and compile a resource to be used.
- Players make or obtain plaster casts of various animal tracks. Stamp these on damp sand and have the players attempt to name and/or copy them.

# bondi

'bon-di'



All school-age groups (K–12)

## Background

The Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had many water and diving games, which were often indulged in at any convenient creek, waterhole or at the beach. In various parts of Australia, contests in diving, floating, remaining beneath the water, and many other aquatic activities, were undertaken.

They also used recognisable swimming strokes, such as single overarm sidestroke, which was first observed in a lagoon at Bondi in the Sydney area in the 1800s and developed into an international stroke that was popular up to and including the 1896 Olympic Games.

## Language

The activity is named after the Bondi area in Sydney, where Aboriginal children were observed swimming. *Bondi* means 'water breaking over rocks' in the language of the Eora people.

*Thurakami* is the word for swimming used in the Dieyerie (Diyari) language of South Australia.

## Short description

This activity is related to swimming single overarm sidestroke.

## Game play and basic rules

- Competitors swim on their side with a sidestroke or other type of kicking action. Only one shoulder may be in the water while performing the stroke and the other shoulder is clear of the water.
- The head should not be fully underwater. One arm is underwater at all times and the swimmer uses an underwater sidestroke-type arm action but the other arm comes out of the water in a crawl-stroke action (pull and push). The arm that is underwater may be changed at the end of each lap of the pool.

- Races can be held over 25, 50 or 100 metres, individually or as a relay. The stroke could also be used as part of a medley race or a training drill/activity.

### **Variation**

- Long-distance race: Conduct a 1000 to 3000-metre swim race in a pool or other suitable location.

### **Suggestion**

As part of a recognition of swimming activities undertaken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, single overarm sidestroke could be included as part of physical education lessons and swimming carnivals.

### **Teaching points**

- You know the rules. Change sides at the other end if you wish.
- Ready. Go.
- One arm over, other arm under. Kick.
- Ear in water and top shoulder out [of water].

# bubu sagul

'bu-bu sag-ul'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

One of the many water games observed being played at Mabuiag Island in the Torres Strait.

## Language

*Bubu sagul* means 'tide play'. Players sing a song as they are circling in the water.

### **Bubu nuri (repeated)**

*Tide is going round.*

## Short description

A group of players run in a circle to form a whirlpool and then lie down and float.

## Players

- Groups of about ten to 14 players work best

## Playing area

- A swimming pool with water about waist to chest deep for the players

## Game play and basic rules

- To begin the game, players stand in a circle and splash the water as much as they can. When the splashing has reached a peak they lie on top or dive under the water.
- After this the players then either hold hands in a circle or line up behind each other.
- They begin to run in a circle as fast as they can to form a 'whirlpool' with the water.
- On a signal players stop running and lie down on their backs and float as they are carried around in the water.

### Variations

- Players run in one direction and then float. On another signal they stand up and start running against the flow of the water and make a whirlpool going in the other direction. Repeat.
- Players attempt to hold onto each other by the leg as they float around.

### Comment

This is a fun activity that needs careful supervision. Care needs to be taken that players are not 'spun' out of the whirlpool into deeper water or into the side of the pool.

### Teaching points

- In a circle. Ready.
- Splash, splash.
- Stop. Floating.
- Start running this way. Faster, faster.
- Keep going.
- Stop. Float. Lie down.
- Up. Back the other way. Run. Faster.
- Keep going. Float.
- Stop and splash.



# makar

'ma-kar'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

Various types of toy boats and canoes are found in parts of Australia and the Torres Strait Islands. On Sunday Island in northern Australia, small models of the raft (*kaloa*) were made for children to play with. In other areas of Australia small replicas of dugout canoes were fashioned.

In parts of the Torres Strait simple boats were made of half a coconut husk. An upright stick with a leaf to represent a sail was attached. Miriam children in the Torres Strait played in the sea with the spathes of the leaves of coconut palms, pretending they were small canoes.

Toy sailing boats are still raced on various islands in the Torres Strait. These move along at great pace. They are usually only sailed parallel with the shore and quite close to it. The canoes vary according to location and are often rigged in the same manner as their own canoes. In some places this included mainsail, foresail and jib.

## Language

In Torres Strait Creole a toy racing boat was called a *makar* or *wagwag* in pidgin.

## Canoe belong play

*Toy canoe*

## Short description

Players make and then play with toy boats.

## Equipment

- One or more toy canoes or boats

## Game play and basic rules

- Either conduct a series of sailing races or play with the boats in the water. The players can decide on any special conditions to be associated with any races.

## Comment

The special day for sailing in the Torres Strait is the first of July (the Coming of the Light) or other ceremonies such as tombstone openings.

## Suggestion

Attempt to obtain or make a racing canoe like those of the Torres Strait Islands.

A piece of wood is shaped like a canoe and planed on the side and the top. Two holes are drilled for a mast. The sails are attached and the outrigger is added with weights attached to it. The boat is painted in individual colours such as red and white on the side and green and white on the top. The best time for sailing is in a moderate to strong wind.

# Sanbaing

'san-ba-ing'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

In parts of Papua New Guinea and the Torres Strait Islands players of both genders were observed playing a game of sand-ball throwing. It required a deal of expertise to perform successfully and was often played all day.

## Language

This activity has been named *sanbaing*, which means 'sandbank' in Torres Strait Creole.

## Short description

Players make 'bombs' out of sand and throw (lob) them into the water.

## Players

- A group of players of a manageable size

## Playing area

- A sandy beach area

## Equipment

- A ready supply of suitable sand near water

## Game play and basic rules

- The players make little oval balls of sand in their hands and throw them up into the air to fall into the water. Players take turns.
- The object of the game is to count how many sand balls in a row can be thrown into the water without them breaking apart. If the balls fall whole into the water they do so with a hollow sound. The higher the balls are thrown — a high underarm lob works well — the greater the measure of success.

## Scoring

As each sand ball drops into the water as a whole, the thrower makes a mark on the sand with his or her feet, to remember how many successful throws in a row he or she makes. If one of the balls breaks up in the air or in contacting the water a player has to rub out the marks and start again. The player with the most successful throws in a row is the winner.

## Suggestion

To make the sand 'bombs,' start with a handful of wet sand and add progressively less wet layers and smooth over with dry sand. It is recommended that fist-sized or slightly larger 'bombs' only are made for safety reasons.

## Variation

As a recommended pool-based alternative to the outlined activity it is possible to use very large rubber medicine balls or balls filled with water — these can either float or sink. Players line up on the side of the pool and throw the balls high into the air to make the biggest splash, individually or all together. After all players have thrown the ball a signal is given and players dive in and retrieve the ball for the next group. For the balls that float the players can attempt to 'catch' them underwater before they return to the surface.

## Teaching points

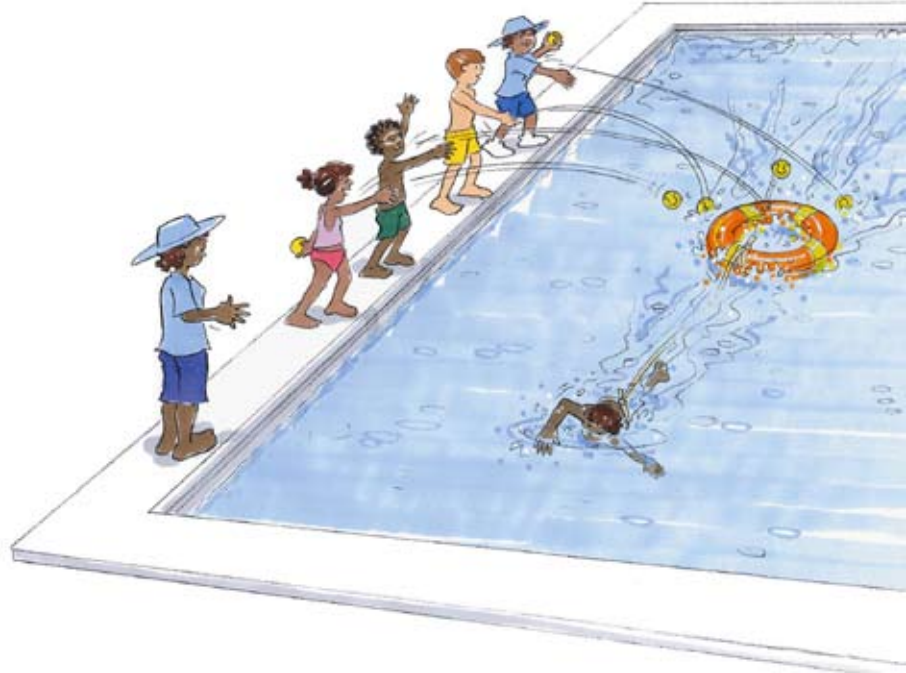
For rubber medicine balls into the pool:

- Line up with a ball each. Remember to throw it high.
- Up and away.
- Big splashes. Ready. Go.
- Wait. Retrieve.



# yiri

'yir-i'



All school-age groups (K–12)

## Background

A spear game was recorded being played by the boys at Ulladulla in New South Wales. Small spears were thrown at pieces of wood, which were placed into running water.

On Dunk Island in Queensland the boys used wood chips and pieces of bark floating on the water, or threw at small fish.

## Language

The activity is called *yiri* ('to throw') from the language that was spoken in the Sydney area of New South Wales.

## Short description

This is a throwing-practice game played near water.

## Players

- A group of players between six and 15, or more

## Playing area

- A swimming pool, lake or flowing water

## Equipment

- Several small rubber balls as the spears
- Larger balls, kick boards, rubber quoits, and pieces of wood as targets

## Game play and basic rules

- This is a throwing game for accuracy. As a basic activity the players stand along the edge of the pool and throw balls at pieces of wood or other floating targets placed at different places in the pool. When the players have no balls left the game is stopped while the balls are retrieved.

- As part of practice on a moving target, a player tows a target (such as a rescue tube at the end of a 5–7-metre rope) across the pool. Throwers have two balls each and attempt to hit the towed rescue tube — with a 7-metre rope attached for safety. A team contest could be held with a swimmer from each team towing the tube across the pool and 5–7 metres in front of the line of players. Count the number of hits made and try to beat this in the next turn. The players stop throwing at the target when the swimmer touches the side of the pool. The rescue tube at the end of the towing rope is then pulled in.
- The activity can be done with the swimmer underwater. Safety needs to be considered with regard to underwater swimming. When the swimmer touches the end or side of the pool the activity immediately stops.

### Variations

- Small plastic or dowel spears could be used.
- Have a variety of objects for the players to throw at. These may include hoops, rubber quoits, floating toys, kickboards, fins, balls and so on.
- Vary the distance of the throws and the size of the targets.
- Mark the targets with a point value and arrange a competition. Players have a set number of turns.
- Use stones to hit pieces of wood or bark thrown into flowing water.

### Comment

This activity provides for variety in throwing-skills practices or as a swimming pool game.

### Safety

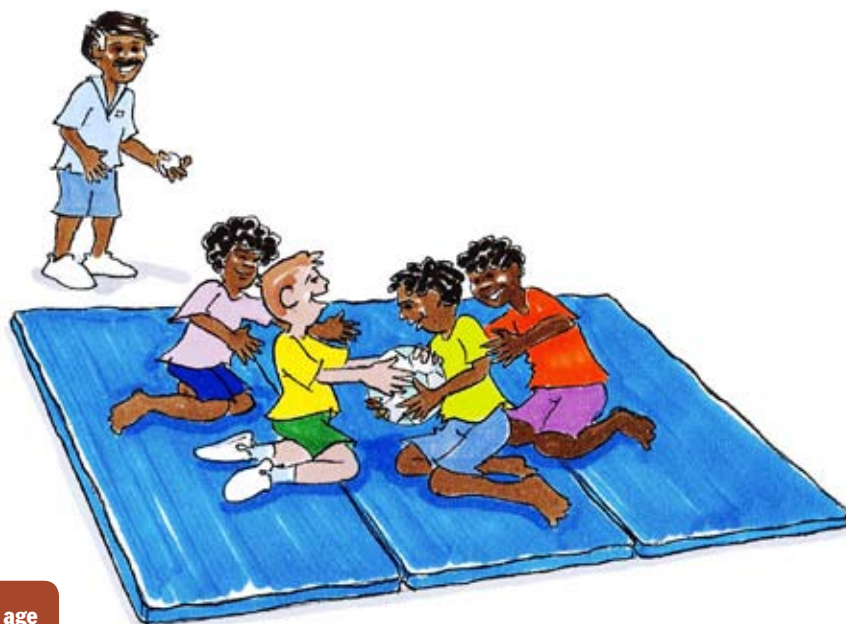
Safety considerations for all forms of this activity need to be observed. This is particularly the case for underwater swimming and for a player towing a target. The activity is stopped immediately if players are not following the correct guidelines.

### Teaching points

- Collect two balls each.
- Spread out along the edge. Ready.
- Swimmers go.
- Aim for the target only. Go.
- Stop throwing when they touch the end.
- Sit on the edge. Slide in and retrieve the balls.

# kari-woppa

'kari-wop-pa'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

A wrestling game was played by the people in the Torrens area of South Australia. The contests were generally held on the meeting of groups from different areas. Players wrestled for a tuft of emu feathers called a *kari-woppa*.

*Komba burrong* or *kambong burrong* (the game of 'catching hold') was the name of a similar game played by the Noongar people of the south-west of Western Australia. Emu feathers were tied onto one end of a stick and the other end was stuck into the ground. One player 'defended' the stick while the other players in the group attempted to take the emu feathers off the stick.

## Language

The name of this game is from the language of a group of Noongar people of the south-west of Western Australia. It is an active game.

### Banya goongar

*Perspiration (is) rolling off him.*

## Short description

This is a wrestling game where a player attempts to take a ball from another player.

## Players

- A group of four to six players

## Playing area

- A designated area with a circle marked 5–7 metres in diameter, or play indoors on mats

## Equipment

- A football or medicine ball to represent a bundle of feathers attached to a stick. Gymnastic mats may be used for an indoor area.

### Game play and basic rules

- Players work in a small group of four to six, or with a partner about their own size. Both players are on their knees.
- One player holds onto the ball while his or her partner and/or two to three or more other players attempt to take the ball away within a 30-second time limit.
- If the ball cannot be taken away then it is a draw. Repeat as the best of three. Players change around or choose another partner/group.
- If working in a small group continue play until everyone has had a turn holding the ball.

### Variations

- Players may either be standing or kneeling on a mat.
- Both players hold onto the ball and attempt to take it away from his or her partner. There is a 30-second time limit.
- The player with the ball is only allowed to hold it under one arm. Players may not use the other arm to fend off the other player.
- Place players in groups according to size and conduct a round-robin competition for each group.
- Conduct a double-elimination tournament where they play until they have lost twice. Winners play winners and losers play losers after the first round. This continues until there is only one person left.
- One player holds a short piece of hose (for the bundle of feathers). The other players (two to four) attempt to take the hose but are not allowed to interfere with the defender in any other way. The defender protects the hose by pushing the other players away. No kicking is allowed. (This is the traditional form.)

### Safety

Ensure that safety aspects are closely observed to avoid injury. Participation in this activity should be voluntary.

### Comment

This activity could be very useful as a practice activity for the skill of mauling in rugby union.

### Teaching points

- On your knees. Hold onto the ball.
- Watch the contact. Be careful. Go for the ball only. Leave them alone otherwise.
- Ready. Go.

# bari barlam bembinge

'bar-i bar-lam bem-bing-e'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Short description

This is a suggested outline of a traditional games event.

## Language

*Bari barlam bembinge* means 'the children are playing' in the Barunggam language of the Darling Downs area of Queensland.

## Explanation

The games and activities outlined have been modified for use with co-educational classes and groups of different age and/or abilities, as a workshop or traditional games activity over a time period of one hour to one and a half hours. Groups of six to 12 may be used. The games represent a mix of activities (cooperative and competitive) and allow for a high level of player participation.

The use of coloured circles/dome markers works very well. Each team may be assigned a colour (and a team name) and the gear for that colour is in one place — players take their own gear. The coloured circle/marker for a team may be taken to the playing area to be used and this makes it easy to identify teams.

The usual procedure in a workshop format (often for groups that come together at a camp, conference or sports session) would be to call groups in and explain the activity, with one group demonstrating the game/activity. Groups go to their designated playing area. Use a whistle to control the activity and explain any progressions.

In a traditional games event format it may be possible to arrange for people at each group to learn and conduct the activity — give the name, a brief explanation and demonstration followed by a short practice and question-and-answer session, then play. All groups could do the same activity at the same time or groups could rotate around six to eight activities, with about eight to ten minutes each.





### Short outline of activities

1 *Cross boomerangs*: Use a number of foam boomerangs (sold as Roomarangs). These can be used by groups as a warm-up/introductory activity.

2 *Gorri* (this is a good ‘ice-breaker’): Players spread out behind a line. Each player has a tennis ball and each group uses a large ball. As the large ball is rolled across in front of the group (8–10 metres in front) players attempt to hit it. Gather the balls and repeat the turns. Variations of this activity include:

- varying the speed
- bouncing the ball
- using two balls at once
- using a *woomera* (thrower) and ball
- using balls of different sizes.

3 *Kai*: Use a light ball, such as a medium-sized gator skin ball. Use the palm of the hand to hit upward above head height.

Progressions:

- Players hit the ball around in a circle (either direction).
- Players hit it to other players who call out their name — attempt to work through the whole team.
- Players work as a team to hit the ball in the air and go through the letters of the alphabet. No player is allowed to touch it twice in succession or receive it straight back from another player.
- Give each player a number and work through the numbers in a set order.

- One player stands in the middle of the circle and the ball is deflected to the other players, who in turn hit it back to the middle player. Change the middle player each time any player makes an error — the aim is to keep the centre player in as long as possible.

4 *Kalq*: Players in a group of four to six stand in a circle 2–4 metres apart. Players have a paddle bat (plastic play bat) each and each group uses a unihoc ball. One player without a paddle bat starts with the ball and lobs it underarm to the next player, who may use one or two hits to hit the ball — preferably underarm — to the next player, in an attempt to make the ball go around the circle and back to the thrower to catch. Change every couple of turns. Either score a point for every successful circuit or give one point for every player who hits the ball (use this for younger players).

5 *Wuljini*: Use a light ball, such as a sponge ball or a medium-sized gator skin ball. Divide the group of players into two teams, with players next to each other and facing the other team 3–5 metres away. Players use an underhand hit with the flat of the hand only.

Progressions:

- Allow each player two contacts and each team at least one and up to three player contacts before the ball is hit over to the other team.
- Aim to keep the rally going as long as possible.
- Hit the ball higher and try to make only one contact per player, and at least one and no more than three contacts for each group.

6 *Wana*: Use a large hoop and place a wooden skittle or plastic bowling pin in the centre. Players stand around the outside of circle (radius of 5–7 metres). The player in the middle has a Kanga cricket bat. Start with one softball-sized unihoc ball (in the team colour, if possible). The players around the circle throw the ball underarm so that it bounces off the ground outside the hoop in an attempt to knock the skittle over. The player in the centre with the bat may only tap the ball away and is ‘out’ if the ball is caught, the ball goes out of the playing area on the full, the ball is hit too hard, the batter steps inside the hoop, or the batter knocks the skittle over. Players may throw the ball to another player in an effort to hit the skittle.

Progression:

- Start the game using one ball and then add another.

7 *Boogalah*: Use a gator skin ball or slightly deflated size two soccer ball or similar. Divide the group in half. A player from one group throws the ball high up in the air and all the players in the other group attempt to catch it. The successful player scores one point. Play until the first player gains five points, or compile a 'record team score' after a set time. Physical contact is limited.

8 *Kolap*: Players line up behind each other. Each player in turn attempts to throw a beanbag (or fleece/koosh ball) into a small hoop 3–5 metres away. The thrower retrieves the beanbag each time. Count the number of throws that land inside the hoop. Allow 3–4 minutes.



9 *Kee'an*: Players line up behind each other and take turns to throw a foxtail ball (hold in the middle of the tail) over a set of cricket stumps and into a storage bin. Count one for each successful throw. Retrieve the ball for the next player. Allow 3–4 minutes.

10 *Turlurlu*: Play between two teams of one to five players. To start play, each team lines up facing each other 12–14 metres apart. The length of the line they stand behind varies according to the number of players — for five players the line is 5 metres long. Each player has a unihoc stick and one ball is used. A player from one team attempts to hit or underarm roll the ball along the ground towards or at the opposing team and within the reach of at least one player of that team, in such a manner that the opposing team cannot hit it or stop it before it crosses the line they are standing on. Scoring depends on the success or failure of the

hitting team. A good hit, without being hit/stopped before crossing the line, scores a point for the hitting team and a bad hit (off the ground/in the air, mis-hit, or misdirected) results in one point for the receiving team. Teams attempt to score 11 points to win the game.

11 *Taktyerra*: Two teams of four to eight players. Use a volleyball court. Players have a number of balls (paper, fleece balls or socks). They stay in their own half of the court and behind the spiking line of the volleyball court. On a start signal players throw the balls and attempt to hit the players of the opposing team. Any balls in the middle area of the court (between the spiking lines) are retrieved when there is a stoppage in play.

12 *Koolchee*: Players form two teams behind the base line, at opposite ends of a tennis or badminton court. Each team has a supply of tennis balls. Players roll one tennis ball at a time underarm towards the other end of the court. A player must have one foot behind the base line before rolling a ball. Balls that stop on the court may be retrieved but care must be taken to avoid any interference.

Progressions:

- Teams roll the tennis balls towards each other — no scoring.
- Each player has a tennis ball. Place a set number of pins in the centre of the area and both teams attempt to knock them over in a cooperative activity — perhaps timed with several attempts to set the best time.
- Place five pins about 3 metres in front of each group and the teams attempt to hit the pins in front of the team at the other end of the area. A class competition with four to six players in each team on a badminton court works well for younger players — matches are the best of three games. (Competition matches on a tennis court to the best of 11 or the first to 11 games work well with older players. Change ends every five games.)

13 *Keentan*: Form two teams of four to six players in an area about the size of half a tennis court. Use a size 2 soccer ball. The ball is thrown from one player to another player of the same team — to pass the ball a player must jump into the air and

pass. The players of the opposing team attempt to intercept the ball while they are off the ground. The ball is only gained if it is caught while the catcher is in the air. If the ball is dropped or knocked to the ground by a player attempting to catch it the other team gains possession.

A change of possession also occurs when a thrown ball falls to the ground untouched or is dropped by the receiver. No physical contact is allowed. Players cannot stop opposing players from moving around the area — no interference is allowed. Passes must be a minimum of 2–3 metres.

The player in possession of the ball may run around the playing area for up to 10 metres. The player with the ball cannot be guarded or obstructed while he or she is attempting to pass the ball — the defender must be at least 1 metre away. A player may not hold the ball for longer than three seconds. The ball must remain inside the playing area.

### Practice

Before playing, both teams practise running around the area, jumping to pass the ball and jumping to catch it. Feet must be off the ground by at least 20 centimetres.



# riawena

'ri-a-we-na'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Language

*Riawena* means 'fun (sport)' in the language used by the Aboriginal people of the Oyster Bay area of Tasmania.

## Description of activities

A number of the games and activities can be conducted as athletic events. Examples include:

- 1 Spear throw for accuracy: Use a 'ball thrower' and a tennis ball with a large wheelie bin as the target (10–20 metres away). Each player has five to ten attempts. Conduct two rounds and add the scores of both rounds for a total.
- 2 Spear throw for distance: Use a 'ball thrower' and a tennis ball. Players get three attempts to throw as far as they can.
- 3 *Tarnambai*: Players line up behind a starting line, with a tennis ball in one hand. On the signal to start players roll their ball past a line 20 metres away and run out to retrieve it. The first player to cross the starting line is the winner.

4 Boomerang-return contest: Players stand in a circle with a 1-metre diameter and throw a boomerang at least 20 metres away (mark a circle). They see how close it lands to the centre circle. Players get five attempts each.

5 *Weet weet* throwing: Use a gymnastic club or small skittle as a *weet weet*. Players attempt to throw as far as possible — they get three attempts. Mark where the *weet weet* lands.

6 *Koolchee*: Players stand next to each other behind a line. Place five wooden skittles 1 metre apart, along a line about 10 metres away. Players roll five tennis balls to attempt to knock over the skittles. Play three rounds in a competition for a total out of 15.

7 Possum pushing: Mark a circle with a 3–5-metre diameter, or use a centre circle on a basketball court. Players start in the centre of the circle and attempt to push/pull their opponent completely outside the circle.

Players must place their arms on the upper arm and shoulder of their opponent and hold on while they push — no hitting, throwing or tripping is allowed. Conduct a round-robin or elimination tournament. The best of three turns is played.

8 *Jillora*: Use upturned discs and billiard balls. The game may be played by several players at once. On the signal to start all players start their balls spinning with their thumb and first two fingers. The last ball left spinning is the winner.



# Yulunga

'yu-lun-ga'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Language

*Yulunga* means 'playing' in the language of the Kamilaroi (Gamori) people from the northwest of New South Wales.

## Explanation

The following games and activities may be organised as part of a display of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander games. People come and try some of the activities and move on. Select around eight to ten activities.

It may be useful to have a person stationed at each activity to explain and control it. In some cases it may be possible to have an explanation (diagram or information sheet) for people to follow. (Refer to the respective outline of games for more detail.)

It may be useful for students to learn and practise the games, and perform them as a display for other groups.

- 1 *Weme*: Use two markers 5–10 metres apart and two to four bocce balls. Roll to hit a ball out of a centre circle.
- 2 *Kolap*: Two small hoops or large carpet squares 4–6 metres apart and four wooden blocks or beanbags. Throw into the hoop.
- 3 *Koolchee*: Use two to four wooden skittles 5–10 metres apart. Have a supply of tennis balls. Attempt to knock the skittles over.
- 4 *Gorri*: Use sponge or tennis balls and a large ball. Throw the smaller balls at the large balls (either stationary or rolled).
- 5 *Woomera*: Use a 'ball thrower' and tennis balls. Throw at a target such as a large gym ball or other target.
- 6 *Jillora*: Use a number of billiard balls and discs. Spin the balls as long as possible.
- 7 *Kalq*: Players with a paddle bat each stand 2–3 metres apart in a circle. Attempt to hit the ball around the circle or as a group (keep it in the air as long as possible).

8 *Kee'an*: Use three foptail balls (or a tennis ball in a stocking), a set of cricket stumps and a storage bin. Throw over the stumps and into the bin.

9 *Taktyerrain*: Place large carpet tiles 5 metres apart. Use sponge or fleece balls. Players stand on the carpet tiles and attempt to hit their opponent.

10 *Kai*: Use a medium-sized gator skin ball. Players use the palm of their hands to hit the ball around in a circle, in the air, or back and forth to each other as many times as possible.

11 *Wana*: Use a large hoop, Kanga cricket bat, cone marker, unihoc balls and a marked 5-metre radius circle. Players attempt to hit the cone marker being protected by a batter as in French cricket.

12 Cross boomerangs: Use a number of foam boomerangs (sold as Roomarangs).

# gugiyñ nahri

'gu-gi-yn nah-ri'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Explanation

The activities outlined are examples of how the games can be modified to be used in a tabloid event. Groups of four to six players over a two to three-minute time period are recommended.

Groups are taken around each activity and the rules are explained. Groups are then assigned an activity to start with and the rules are quickly revised. After each rotation, and while the scores are being recorded, one player from each group stays behind to explain the activity to the next group before rejoining his or her own group. Allow a short practice time.

Student leaders may be used where mixed age/ability groups are involved — these leaders remain at each activity and explain the activity to each group and are responsible for scoring.

## Language

*Gugiyñ* means 'fast' and *nahri* means 'play' in the Bundjalung language of northeast New South Wales and southeast Queensland.

## Tabloid activities

1 *Kalq*: Players with a paddle bat each stand in a circle 2–3 metres apart. Players hit (underhand) a unihoc ball around the circle. Count one for a hit by each player.

Number of hits:

2 *Koolchee*: Players divide into two groups, 10 metres apart. Arrange marker cones 1 metre apart in the middle. Players in each group take turns to attempt to roll a tennis ball between the markers.

Number of good rolls:

3 *Gorri*: Players line up behind each other. A hoop-sized target is marked against a fence or wall 5–7 metres in front of the group. Players take turns to attempt to throw a ball 'through' the hoop. Balls must hit inside the circle to count.

Number of good throws:

4 *Boogalah*: Players are in two groups either side of a goal post crossbar or volleyball net. A ball is thrown back and forth over the bar/net. Count the number of successful catches.

Number of catches:

5 *Kee'an*: Players line up behind each other and take turns to throw a foxtail ball — held in the middle of the tail — over a set of cricket stumps and into a storage bin. Count one for each successful throw. Retrieve the ball for the next player.

Number of good throws:

6 *Tarnambai*: Players line up behind each other. Each player in turn rolls a tennis ball out past a line 5–7 metres away and runs out to retrieve it. Count one for each time the ball is returned.

Number of returns:

7 *Kolap*: Players line up behind each other. Each player in turn attempts to throw a beanbag or small soft ball into a small hoop 3–5 metres away. The thrower retrieves the beanbag each time. Count the number of successful throws that land inside the hoop.

Number of good throws:

8 *Kai*: Players stand in a circle about 2 metres apart. Use a light ball such as a medium-sized gator skin ball. Use the palm of the hand to hit the ball upward towards the next player. Players hit the ball around in a circle (either way). Count the number of players that hit the ball.

Number of hits:



# Sports Ability

Sports Ability is an exciting initiative from the Australian Sports Commission, designed to encourage people with disabilities to get involved and participate in sport and physical activity across Australia.

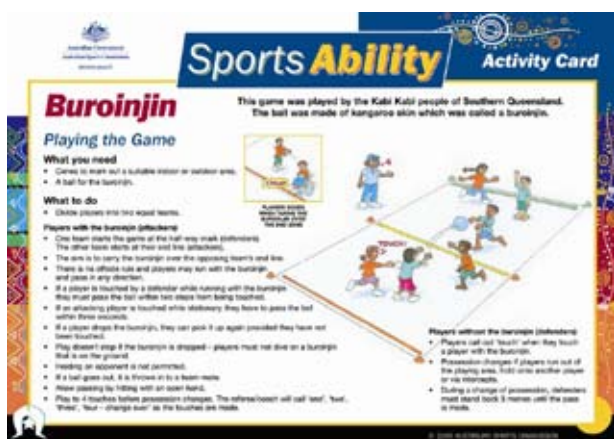
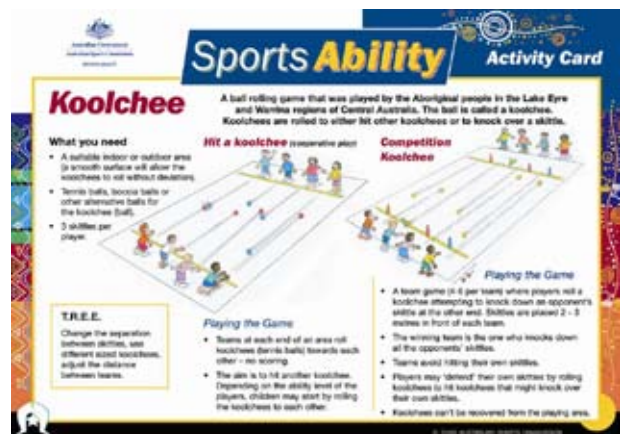
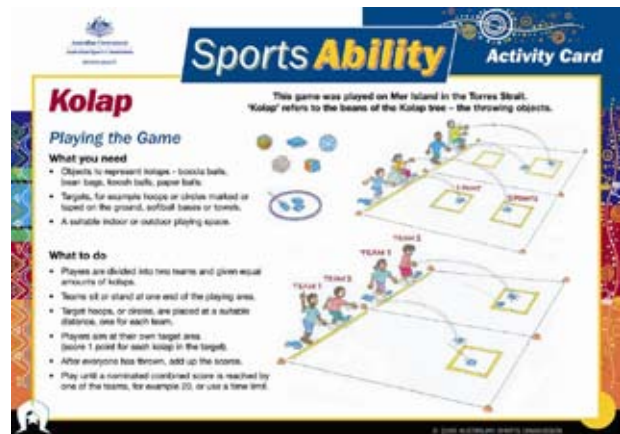
## Sports Ability activities

The Sports Ability program is based around five activities: boccia, goalball, sitting volleyball, polybat and table cricket.

## Additional resource

Traditional Indigenous Games: five traditional games have been included and can be adapted and modified to suit all abilities. These games have their origins in the Torres Strait, central Australia, northern New South Wales and southeast Queensland. The games are outlined on specially designed activity cards and instructional DVD.

The traditional Indigenous games included in the Sports Ability program are an extension of activities outlined in *Yulunga: Indigenous Traditional Games*.



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**Tinderbeek tillutkerrin**

*All done (with) play.*

(from a language spoken in Victoria)

