

COVER-DAY · YEAR 1-6 / GRADE 1-6

Cover Day P.E. Lesson

Any class, no equipment

Why this lesson is cover-friendly

P.E. is often the trickiest cover subject. You don't know what apparatus the class can safely use. You don't know who can swim, climb, vault. You haven't seen risk assessments. You may not have a kit at all. This lesson uses NONE of the equipment that needs supervision training. It uses cones (or chairs), a ball if available (or a balled-up sock — works fine), and the children's own bodies. It works on any flat surface — outdoor playground, indoor hall, even a large classroom with chairs pushed back. IT IS ACTIVE — every child is moving for most of the lesson. It is INCLUSIVE — children with limited mobility can play modified versions. It is FUN — it borrows from games most children already know. LENGTH: 45 minutes. Adjust as needed.

Lesson at a glance

Time	Activity	Focus
0-5	Warm-up walk + stretch	Get the body moving
5-15	Game 1: Number Reactions	Listening, agility, fitness
15-25	Game 2: Capture the Cones	Teamwork, strategy
25-35	Game 3: Throwing target challenge	Coordination, accuracy
35-43	Game 4: King of the Castle (or Octopus for KS1)	Cardio, agility
43-45	Cool-down + finish	Lower heart rate, return to class

Before you start (2 minutes)



WHEN CHILDREN ARRIVE AT THE HALL/PLAYGROUND: • Sit them down on the floor / line. • 'Quick rules. ONE: when I blow this whistle / call STOP, you stop. Frozen still. Two: no tackling, no grabbing. Three: if you're hurt, walk to me — don't shout from across the field.' • Check: any children with notes? Asthma? Recent injuries? — get them to mention now. Ask them to sit out the running games and act as scorers. IDENTIFY 2 CHILDREN to be 'demonstrators'. Pick confident-looking ones — KS2 will likely volunteer; for KS1 pick yourself.

Warm-up walk + stretch (5 mins)

0:00 — 'Stand up. Walk around the space at a normal pace. Don't bump into anyone.' 0:30 — Add commands every 20 seconds: • 'Walk faster.' • 'Walk on your toes.' • 'Walk like a giant.' • 'Walk like a mouse.' • 'Side-step.' • 'Walk backwards SAFELY — keep checking behind you.' 3:00 — 'Find a space. Stretches.' Lead from the front: • Reach up high — 5 seconds • Reach to the floor — 5 seconds • Twist to the right — 5 seconds, then left • Roll shoulders backwards 5 times, forwards 5 times • 5 jumps on the spot to finish 5:00 — 'Sit down. Listen for the next game.'

Game 1: Number Reactions (10 mins)

EQUIPMENT: None. Just space. RULES: • Children walk around the space. • Teacher calls out a NUMBER. • Children must form a group of EXACTLY that number, holding hands or arms touching. • Anyone who can't get into a group of the right size sits out for ONE round (then comes back). PROGRESSION: • Start with '3!' '5!' '2!' (easy) • Then mix it up: '7!' '4!' '6!' • Add complications: '4 boys!' '3 girls!' (they have to find right gender combo) • KS2 STRETCH: 'A group of 5, with at least one person from each year group' (mixed-year cover only) STOP after 8 minutes. Give a brief 'Well done — biggest group reaction was [the round of 8 forming groups of 7]' compliment. ADAPTATION FOR KS1: Smaller numbers only (2-5). Give plenty of time.

Game 2: Capture the Cones (10 mins)

EQUIPMENT: 8-12 cones (or items that can stand in — chairs, books, water bottles, jumpers). SETUP: • Mark out two 'team zones' at either end of the space. • Place all the cones in the MIDDLE of the playing area. • Split children into TWO teams. Quickest way: count round 1-2-1-2 as they sit. RULES: • On 'GO', both teams run to the middle. • Each player can grab ONE cone at a time, take it back to their team's zone, and run for another. • You CANNOT take a cone from the OTHER TEAM'S ZONE — only from the middle. • Game ends when middle is empty. Team with most cones wins. PROGRESSION (if time): • Round 2: 'You CAN steal cones from the other team's zone now.' (More chaotic, more exciting.) • Round 3: 'No running this time — only walking.' (Tactical, slower.) ADAPTATION FOR KS1: Skip the steal-from-other-team rule. Keep it simple.

Game 3: Throwing target challenge (10 mins)



EQUIPMENT: Any throwable items (balls, beanbags, balled-up socks). Plus targets — cones, hoops, chairs, anything you can aim at. **SETUP:** • Children in pairs / threes. • Each group has 1 ball / beanbag and 1 target (a cone or chair). • Ground markers at 1m, 3m, 5m from the target. **RULES:** • At 1m: each child throws 3 times. Hits earn 1 point each. • At 3m: each child throws 3 times. Hits earn 2 points each. • At 5m: each child throws 3 times. Hits earn 3 points each. • Group totals their score. **MIX UP THROWING TYPES:** • Round 1: overarm throw • Round 2: underarm throw (lower / smaller children may need this anyway) • Round 3: weak hand only (right-handed children throw left, etc.) **ADAPTATION FOR KS1:** Just 1m and 2m distances. No weak-hand round.

Game 4 (KS2): King of the Castle (8 mins)

EQUIPMENT: Cones to mark a small circle (the 'castle') in the middle of the space. **RULES:** • 1 person stands inside the castle (the 'King'). • Everyone else runs around outside the castle. • When the teacher calls 'CHARGE!', everyone tries to enter the castle. • The King tries to TAG (gentle two-finger touch on shoulder) anyone entering. • If tagged, you sit out for ONE round. • If you make it INTO the castle without being tagged, you become the new King. Old King joins the runners. **PLAY** in 1-minute rounds. Reset between rounds. Keep momentum. **ADAPTATION FOR KS1:** Game 4 (Octopus) — One child is the 'octopus' in the middle. Others run from one end of the space to the other. The octopus tags as many as possible. Tagged children become 'seaweed' (frozen but can tag others as they go past). Last one running becomes the next octopus.

Cool-down + finish (2 mins)

ALL CHILDREN sit down where they are. • 'Take 3 deep breaths. In through your nose. Out through your mouth. Slowly.' • 'Now: tell the person next to you ONE THING you enjoyed today.' • 30-second buzz of chatter. • 'Stand up. Tuck shirts in. Two minutes to walk back to class. Quietly.' Line them up by table or by birthdate (any month — first to last) — gives them something to do as you organise. **WALK BACK** as a group. Praise the children who walk the quietest.

Safety reminders



