

FUN AT BAT



FUNATBAT.ORG

GRADES K-2

FUN AT BAT



GRADES K–2 PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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FUN AT BAT Grades K–2 Physical Education

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Program Overview

Fun At Bat is a bat and ball skills development program for all children. The overarching goal of this program is to promote fun and active lifestyles for children, while teaching them the fundamental skills of bat and ball sports. This curriculum provides the information necessary to implement the Fun at Bat program into physical education classes for grades K–2. Together, we can ensure children’s first experiences with bat and ball sports are safe, positive and enjoyable!

PROGRAM GOALS

1. Teach the fundamental skills and rules that are necessary to play bat and ball sports.
2. Enable students to learn the health-enhancing benefits that are associated with playing bat and ball sports.
3. Create a fun, active, and positive environment in which students can enjoy bat and ball sports.
4. Promote high self-esteem and self-confidence by giving all students the opportunity to learn and succeed in bat and ball sports.
5. Model and teach the fundamentals of game play, while emphasizing teamwork and good sportsmanship.

USA BASEBALL’S CHAMPIONSHIP PRINCIPLES

Participating in youth sports not only allows for children to develop physically with strong muscles and bones, but it also provides a platform for emotional development. The social interactions that students experience playing sports can build a foundation for good character and positive self-esteem.

The Fun at Bat skills development program is committed to assisting in the development of positive character building traits. Throughout the curriculum, USA Baseball has incorporated eight Championship Principles that can positively impact students beyond their time in sports, and throughout their life.

INTRODUCTION OF FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS

The K–2 Fun at Bat curriculum provides opportunities for children to develop fundamental motor skills and an understanding of movement concepts in relation to bat and ball sports. The progression of skills throughout the K–2 Fun at Bat curriculum represents a developmentally appropriate progression, in alignment with the SHAPE America National Standards and Grade-Level Outcomes.

Teachers are encouraged to follow the suggested lesson progression below and are encouraged to make adjustments to meet the needs of their students in relation to their previous skill exposure and the number of instructional physical education days per week.

- LESSON 1 Underhand and Overhand Throwing**
- LESSON 2 Catching**
- LESSON 3 Fielding a Ground Ball/Catching a Fly Ball**
- LESSON 4 Throwing/Catching/Reacting as a Fielder**
- LESSON 5 Field Positions/ Base Running**
- LESSON 6 Hitting**
- LESSON 7 Throwing (Applied Force)/Game Specific**
- LESSON 8 Game Play Specifics**

Lesson Overview

CLASS SETUP AND ACTIVITY AREA

This program recognizes that physical education classes vary in the size of the available activity area. Do your best to implement in ways that maximize student participation and the time in which students are physically active.

All lessons are designed for 30-minute class blocks and can be implemented in a gymnasium or an outside field space. Be sure to take space into account, as well as gymnasium or field specifics that might need to be modified to implement each lesson.

LESSON COMPONENTS

Championship Principle

- Introduce a Championship Principle at the beginning of each class, similar to a “word of the day.” Teachers should emphasize the principle throughout the lesson and remind students to be aware of how they encounter the aspects of the principle during class.

Active Start

- After introducing the Championship Principle, teachers should direct students to begin the Active Start dynamic warm-up, which consists of exercises designed to promote fitness and prepare the body for class activities. The Active Start Guide found at the beginning of this packet provides text descriptions and images of every exercise.

Fundamentals

- The Fundamentals section provides an opportunity for the teacher to introduce students to new skills and concepts, as well as review previously learned skills, through a brief overview and demonstration.
- The teacher is encouraged to use the **ON DECK** teaching method ([see below](#)) for introducing fundamental skills.

Active Play

- The Active Play section provides an opportunity for students to develop fundamental skills through practice and modified games.

Closure

- Closure provides an opportunity to check students’ understanding of the Championship Principle and the fundamental skills introduced during the lesson. Encourage students to read the correlating chapter in their Championship Principles book in small groups, or with their parents/guardians.

ON DECK TEACHING METHOD

The **ON DECK** Teaching Method is an effective teaching tool for introducing fundamental skills:

1. **Overview of New skill:** Introduce the new skill and provide fundamental keys.
2. **Demonstration of skill:** Demonstrate to students how to execute each fundamental skill, while reinforcing the fundamental keys of the skill.
3. **Experiment with the skill:** Provide students with an opportunity to practice the skill through active play activities.
4. **Clarify keys:** While students practice the fundamental skills, provide feedback on performance and clarify the fundamental keys (e.g., "Use two hands").
5. **Key mastery:** Provide students with multiple practice opportunities to aid their skill development. While students practice, continue to reinforce the fundamental keys that are necessary for skill mastery.

EQUIPMENT

What follows is a list of equipment provided by Major League Baseball (MLB) and USA Baseball, as well as additional or alternative items that may be used for each lesson in the K–2 Fun at Bat curriculum. Each lesson plan includes equipment recommendations for each activity, as well as modifications that you can make to meet student needs.



You should view the quantities of additional/alternative equipment listed as suggestions for a class of 30 students. As class sizes vary, you will need to adjust equipment quantities to best meet the needs of all students. Larger classes might need more equipment to maximize practice opportunities and activity time.

MLB/USA Baseball Equipment Kit	Additional/Alternative Equipment
MLB 1-position Rubber-Tek™ batting tee (1)	Hitting tees or large cones (6)
MLB Throw-down Rubber-Tek™ base set (1)	Throw-down bases (8)
Foam bat and ball set (2)	Foam paddles (8) and/or foam bats (6)
Oversized foam baseballs (8)	5-inch foam balls, 8-inch foam balls, and/or fleece balls (some activities recommend a ball for every student)
Regular-size foam baseballs (12)	
Deflated 5-inch Vibe ball (2)	Medium cones (18)
Training discs (8)	Large mats (2)
Mesh equipment bag (1)	Music
12-inch inflation pump (1)	Poly spots (22)

SHAPE America’s National Standards and Grade-Level Outcomes for K–12 Physical Education

Throughout the K–2 Fun at Bat curriculum, students learn the fundamental skill sets that will enhance their ability to use both a bat and a ball. They will have the opportunity to develop their throwing mechanics as well as their catching abilities. An introduction to the hitting progression and game play will allow students to investigate different parameters of bat-and-ball sports, all while enhancing their physical fitness levels.

National Standard	Grade-Level Outcomes		Description
1	Locomotor	S1.E1.K	Performs locomotor skills (hopping, galloping, running, sliding, skipping) while maintaining balance.
		S1.E2.2a	Runs with a mature pattern.
		S1.E2.2b	Travels showing differentiation between jogging and sprinting.
1		S1.E3.K	Performs jumping & landing actions with balance.
1	Nonlocomotor (stability)	S1.E8.2	Transfers weight from feet to different body parts/bases of support for balance and/or travel.
1 Dynamic Warm-Up Only		S1.E10.1	Demonstrates twisting, curling, bending & stretching actions.
1 Dynamic Warm-Up Only		S1.E11.2	Combines balances and transfers into a 3-part sequence (i.e., dance, gymnastics).
1	Manipulative	S1.E13.K	Throws underhand with opposite foot forward.
		S1.E13.1	Throws underhand, demonstrating 2 of the 5 critical elements of a mature pattern.
		S1.E13.2	Throws underhand using a mature pattern.
1		S1.E14.2	Throws overhand, demonstrating 2 of the 5 critical elements of a mature pattern.*
1		S1.E16.Kb	Catches a large ball tossed by a skilled thrower.
		S1.E16.1.b	Catches various sizes of balls self-tossed or tossed by a skilled thrower.
		S1.E16.2	Catches a self-tossed or well-thrown large ball with hands, not trapping or cradling against the body.
1		S1.E25.2	Strikes a ball off a tee or cone with a bat, using correct grip and side orientation/proper body orientation.

(continued)

* According to SHAPE America’s Scope and Sequence for K–12 Physical Education overhand throwing is an emerging skill for Grades K–1. SHAPE America’s Grade-Level Outcomes do not address overhand throwing until Grade 2.

National Standard	Grade-Level		Description
	Outcomes		
2	Movement Concepts	S2.E3.K	Travels in general space with different speeds.
		S2.E3.1a	Differentiates between fast and slow speeds.
		S2.E3.1b	Differentiates between strong and light force.
3	Physical Activity Knowledge	S3.E1.K	Identifies active-play opportunities outside physical education class.
		S3.E1.1	Discusses the benefits of being active and exercising and/or playing.
3	Physical Activity Knowledge	S3.E2.K	Actively participates in physical education class.
		S3.E2.1	Actively engages in physical education class.
		S3.E2.2	Actively engages in physical education class in response to instruction and practice.
3	Fitness Knowledge	S3.E3.2	Recognizes the use of the body as resistance (e.g., holds body in plank position, animal walks) for developing strength.
4	Personal Responsibility	S4.E1.K	Follows directions in group settings (e.g., safe behaviors, following rules, taking turns).
		S4.E1.1	Accepts personal responsibility by using equipment and space appropriately.
		S4.E1.2	Practices skills with minimal teacher prompting.
4	Personal Responsibility	S4.E2.K	Acknowledges responsibility for behavior when prompted.
		S4.E2.1	Follows the rules & parameters of the learning environment.
		S4.E2.2	Accepts responsibility for class protocols with behavior and performance actions.
4	Accepting Feedback	S4.E3.K	Follows Instruction/directions when prompted.
		S4.E3.1	Responds appropriately to general feedback from the teacher.
		S4.E3.2	Accepts specific corrective feedback from the teacher.
4	Working With Others	S4.E4.K	Shares equipment and space with others.
		S4.E4.1	Works independently with others in a variety of class environments (e.g., small & large groups).
		S4.E4.2	Works independently with others in partner environments.
4	Rules & Etiquette	S4.E5.K	Recognizes the established protocols for class activities.
		S4.E5.1	Exhibits the established protocols for class activities.
		S4.E5.2	Recognizes the role of rules and etiquette in teacher-designed physical activities.

(continued)

National Standard	Grade-Level		Description
	Outcomes		
4	Safety	S4.E6.K	Follows teacher direction for safe participation and proper use of equipment with minimal reminders.
		S4.E6.1	Follows teacher direction for safe participation and proper use of equipment without teacher reminders.
		S4.E6.2a	Works independently and safely in physical education.
		S4.E6.2b	Works safely with physical education equipment.
5	Challenge	S5.E2.K	Acknowledges that some physical activities are challenging/difficult.
		S5.E2.1	Recognizes that challenge in physical activities can lead to success.
		S5.E2.2	Compares physical activities that bring confidence and challenge.
5	Self-Expression & Enjoyment	S5.E3.Ka	Identifies physical activities that are enjoyable.
		S5.E3.1a	Describes positive feelings that result from participating in physical activities.
		S5.E3.2	Identifies physical activities that provide self-expression (e.g., dance, gymnastics routines, practice tasks in game environments).

Active Start Guide

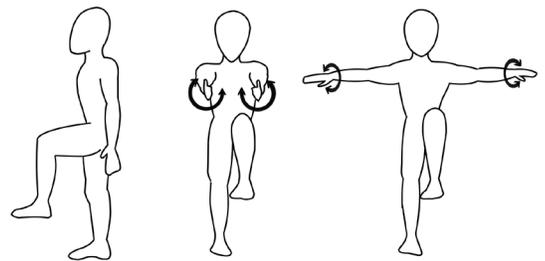
GRADES K–2 DYNAMIC WARM-UP

The dynamic warm-up incorporates activities designed to improve and develop basic functions that are the building blocks of higher-level sports skills and physical fitness. These are exercises that emphasize postural alignment, mobility, balance and coordination. The objective is to stimulate and prepare the brain and body to behave and work together.

Each class will start with this dynamic warm-up (roughly 5 minutes). Depending on the space and size of the group, have students stand in a circle with you in the middle, or in lines facing you in front. Remember to vocalize and demonstrate each exercise. Students may rest for a few seconds after each exercise, as well as at your discretion, and remind students to always breathe.

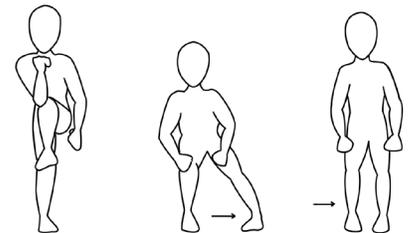
1. **MARCH IN PLACE:** This drill works postural stability and the action of running while stimulating the body's ability to balance. This challenges the eyes and brain to work together regardless of the sight line. This will prepare students to accelerate, decelerate and run whether running to a base or chasing after a live ball. **Students perform each March in Place exercise for 5 seconds.**

- March in place, looking straight ahead
- March in place, turning head to left
- March in place, turning head to right
- Challenge level: March in place, with arms out to side, performing arm circles forward and backward, or arms in front with arm circles clockwise and counterclockwise.



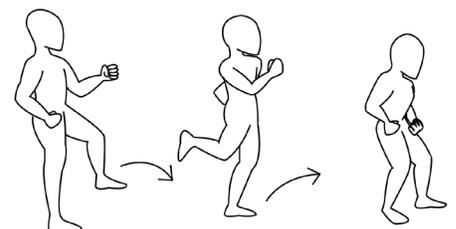
2. **SLIDES:** This prepares students to change direction quickly, whether accelerating or having to run back to a base or spring after a batted ball. Bringing the knee to the opposite elbow promotes the trunk's ability to rotate properly for hitting and throwing. **3 repetitions with each leg.**

- Slide to the right, bring R knee to L elbow, take R foot and step to R, slide L foot.
- Slide to the left, bring L knee to R elbow, take L foot and step to L, slide R foot.



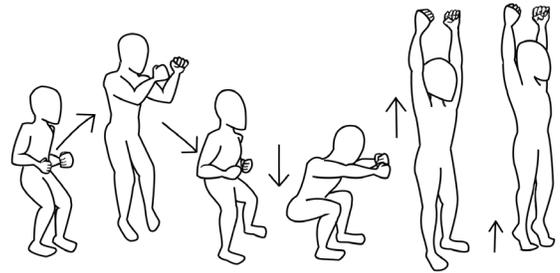
3. **HOP (SINGLE-LEG JUMPS):** This movement prepares the body for all of the energy and power required for jumping, running, accepting landing forces and observing individual differences in right- and left-side abilities. Baseball is a power game, whether hitting or going from standing to recognizing fly balls and ground balls immediately and chasing them. **3 repetitions each leg, alternating in between.**

- Going forward, jump off L leg to R leg, then from R leg jump and land on both feet.
- Going forward, jump off R leg to L leg, then from L leg jump and land on both feet.



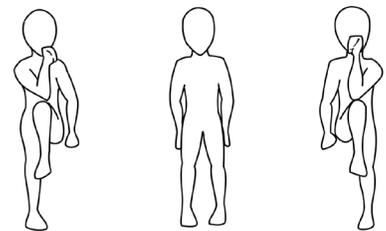
-
4. **DOUBLE-LEG JUMP/SQUAT/REACH/TOE RAISE/SQUAT JUMP:** This drill is designed to display double-leg power and to use the body as an entire chain that can express power, express the ability to bend with a full, deep squat requiring mobility of the ankles, hips and mid-back, trunk stability, and displaying strength and balance while doing a toe raise. Baseball requires full-body connection, whether throwing, pitching, hitting or fielding. This drill links it all together. **2 repetitions, focus on landing jumps softly.**

- Standing on both legs, jump forward, land and go to a full-squat position. Raise up from the squat, reaching arms to the sky, then add the toe raise. Lower heels, then jump straight up.



-
5. **CROSS-CRAWL:** This drill not only prepares the body to move in a reciprocal or opposite pattern that is similar to running, it also connects the lower and upper body to coordinate action together and stimulates the brain and balancing system to engage as the arm and leg cross midline or at the center of the body. Bat-and-ball sports require cross-body action in batting, fielding and running, as well as full mental alertness. This drill covers all of those important functions. The act of throwing is a reciprocal pattern, or one in which you step and throw with the opposite arm and leg. The ability to cross-crawl underpins throwing mechanics. **4 each way for a total of 8.**

- Standing cross-crawl, R elbow to L knee then alternate.



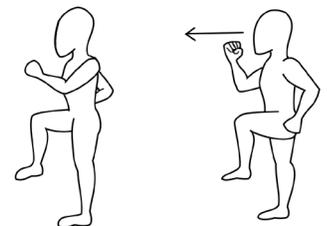
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6. **BRIDGE AND HIP EXTENSION:** The bridge is a hip hinge movement on the ground and is the same athletic stance that a fielder would take in preparation to field a ball and that a batter takes to prepare for the pitch. It works the power muscles of the backside and loosens the hips. It allows the student to bend appropriately not only to field a ground ball but also to rise fluidly to throw in one motion. Pulling the knees to the chest enhances full range of motion about the hips and knees. **2 sets of each exercise.**

- Lie on back and push hips to the sky; hold for 3 seconds. When hips are back on the ground, pull both knees to chest and hold for 5 seconds.



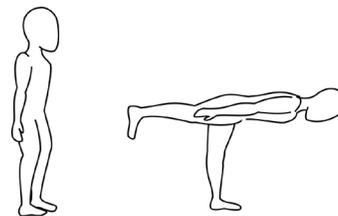
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7. **SUPER-SLOW-MOTION MARCH:** This challenges one's balance through standing on one leg while teaching the body how best to handle being out of balance. Baseball requires many different movements that come at high speeds and in balance-compromising positions. This helps prepare the stabilizing muscles to act appropriately in most situations. **1 set for 10 seconds.**

- March in place, in super-slow motion, looking straight ahead.



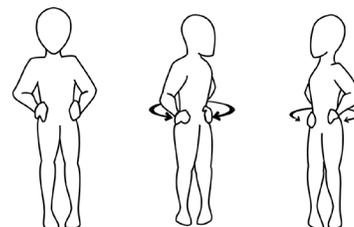
8. **STAND ON ONE LEG:** Taking a more advanced approach to form the bridge and hip extension, the athlete stands on one leg and then performs a hip hinge on one leg while the other leg goes behind him or her. This is an excellent drill for single-leg balance, stability and strength that challenges the ability to bend and balance on one leg. It also uses all critical elements of running and moving in any direction and very much is a precursor to throwing and pitching. **2 repetitions, alternating R and L leg. Attempt to hold each pose for 5 seconds.**

- Stand on L leg, hinge at the hip, taking chest toward the ground, R leg behind to create a T.



9. **WHIRLY BIRDS:** Hips and trunk that move well will perform well when playing. This drill simply opens up the hips and trunk, allowing freer movement when running, fielding and batting. 1 set rotating hips clockwise, then 1 set rotating hips counterclockwise. **10 seconds each direction.**

- Standing on both legs with feet close together and hands on the hips, rotating hips in different directions.



LESSON 1

LESSON OBJECTIVE:

Students will understand the fundamental keys of underhand and overhand throwing mechanics, identifying targets and moving safely in personal space, while identifying different playing areas.

Equipment

MLB/USA Baseball

- 10 oversized foam baseballs
- MLB throw-down Rubber-Tek™ base set

Additional/Alternative

- 5-inch foam balls (1 for each student)
- Fleece balls
- Music
- Zip ties (if outdoors)

SHAPE America National Standards and Grade-Level Outcomes

STANDARD 1 S1.E1.K (Locomotor-*Hopping, galloping, running, sliding, skipping, leaping*); S1.E8.2 [Nonlocomotor (stability)-*Weight transfer*]; S1.E10.1 [Nonlocomotor (stability)-*Curling & stretching; twisting and bending*]; S1.E11.2 [Nonlocomotor (stability)-*Combinations*]; S1.E13.K, S1.E13.1, S1.E.13.2 (Manipulative-*Underhand throw*); S1.E14.2 (Manipulative-*Overhand throw*)

STANDARD 2 S2.E3.K, S2.E3.1a, S2.E3.1b (Movement Concepts-*Speed, direction, force*)

STANDARD 4 S4.E1.K, S4.E1.1, S4.E1.2 (Personal Responsibility); S4.E2.K, S4.E2.1, S4.E2.2 (Personal Responsibility); S4.E3.K, S4.E3.1, S4.E3.2 (Accepting Feedback); S4.E4.K, S4.E4.1, S4.E4.2 (Working With Others); S4.E5.K, S4.E5.1, S4.E5.2 (Rules & Etiquette); S4.E6.K, S4.E6.1, S4.E6.2a, S4.E6.2b (Safety)

STANDARD 5 S5.E2.K, S5.E2.1, S5.E2.2 (Challenge); S5.E3.Ka, S5.E3.1a, S5.E3.2 (Self-Expression & Enjoyment)

CHAMPIONSHIP PRINCIPLE: Introduce Responsibility

Responsibility means we not only care about making good choices for ourselves, but that we care about others, as well. You might be responsible for feeding your pet, helping with family chores or remembering to brush your teeth before bed. When we show responsibility, it means we are prepared and ready to learn and play. In class, you are responsible for paying attention to our class rules, making sure that you are safe and taking care of our equipment.

ACTIVE START – DYNAMIC WARM-UP

5 MINUTES

FUNDAMENTALS OF UNDERHAND THROWING (Overview and Demonstration)

3 MINUTES

Make sure students hold the ball in their preferred hand. Then, students step with the opposite foot, making sure that the hips are facing the target. Holding the ball at the waist, students swing the ball backward behind themselves without twisting the body.

As students **step** with the opposite foot, they swing the ball forward past the hip and release/toss the ball so that it travels upward toward the target.

Key 1: Step with the opposite foot

Key 2: Swing past your hip

Key 3: Release and follow-through

(continued)

ACTIVE PLAY**5 MINUTES****Invisible Throwing**

Students stand in their own space, using invisible balls to develop their underhand-throw mechanics. They place the “ball” in the favorite (preferred) hand. Then, they step with the opposite foot; making sure that the hips are facing the desired target. Holding the ball at the waist, students swing the ball backward behind themselves without twisting the body.

As they step with the opposite foot, students **swing** the ball forward past the hip and **release/toss** the ball so that it travels upward toward the target.

Targets, Targets Everywhere

Each student has an oversized foam ball. Students try to locate and throw underhand at as many targets as possible in the gym. These targets can be large items such as doors or posters, or small items such as numbers on the bleachers, cracks on the wall, etc. If outdoors, targets can be attached to the backstop or other fences with zip ties or similar fasteners. Hang targets at varying levels, low and high. Students should move by sliding (as instructed in the dynamic warm-up) from target to target.

FUNDAMENTALS OF OVERHAND THROWING (Overview and Demonstration)**3 MINUTES**

Make sure that the ball starts in the students dominant hand and point at the desired target with their non-dominant hand. Bringing their throwing arm back into an “L” shape (arm bent at the elbow and hand held in the air with the ball), the student will step with their opposite foot as they turn their hips and begin throwing the ball toward their target.

Key 1: Point to the target

Key 2: Step with your opposite foot

Key 3: Follow through across your body

(continued)

Invisible Throwing

Standing in their own space, students use invisible balls to develop their overhand-throwing mechanics. They place the "ball" in their favorite (preferred) hand and point at the target with the non-preferred hand. Then, they step with the opposite foot; making sure that the hips are facing the target. They place the arm in an "L" position, holding the ball at the top of the L. As students step with the opposite foot and the ball travels in front of the body toward the target, they release the ball.

VARIATIONS

- Have students practice facing different targets in the activity area (wall posters, the teacher, windows, etc.) and practice their throwing motion on command.
- Students can move safely around the gym using different locomotor skills while music is playing and when the music stops, they will find the teacher (adjust their feet/hips) and throw an imaginary ball to the teacher.

Targets, Targets Everywhere

Each student has an oversized foam baseball. Students try to locate and throw overhand at as many targets as possible in the activity area. These targets can be large items such as doors or posters, or small items such as numbers on the bleachers, cracks on the wall, etc. If outdoors, targets can be attached to the backstop or other fences with zip ties, or similar fasteners. Hang targets at varying levels, low and high. Students move by sliding (as instructed in the dynamic warm-up) from target to target.

Infield/Outfield (see Infield/Outfield diagram)

Divide students into two groups, with one group on each side of the activity area (one side designated the infield and the other side the outfield). Place fleece balls throughout each activity area. Explain that the infield and outfield groups are responsible for keeping their part of the field as clean as possible by having the fewest fleece balls in the activity area. This means that infield players try to throw all of the balls onto the outfield area, while outfield players try to throw all of the balls onto the infield area.

When the music begins (or command is given), students pick up a fleece ball and, using the overhand-throwing technique, throw the balls to the outfield or the infield. Allow them to throw one ball at a time, and have them continue throwing until the music stops.

VARIATIONS

- Use different locomotor skills when moving toward the fleece balls.
- Stop periodically to count the balls and see the differences in the number in the infield versus the outfield.
- Divide the activity area as you feel appropriate (e.g., half court or some established line in your gymnasium or field space).

(continued)

CLOSURE

2 MINUTES

What new skills did we learn today?

Fundamentals of Overhand Throwing

Can you name one important part of the overhand-throwing motion?
 What other sports or games involve an overhand-throwing motion?

Championship Principle: Responsibility

What championship principle did we learn about today?
 How were you responsible during our game play today?

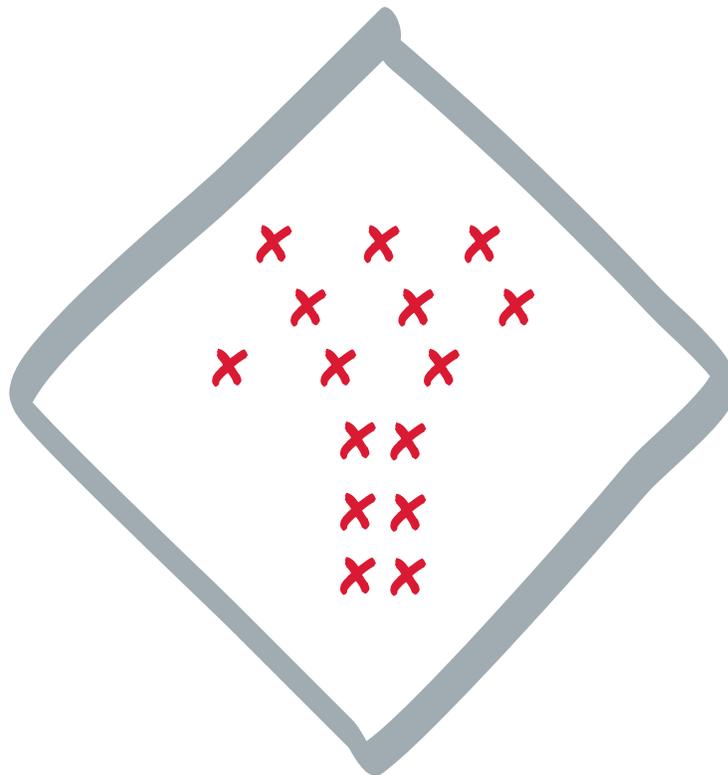
*Remind students to read the chapter on **Responsibility** in a small group or with their parents/guardians.*

What do you think we will be doing next class?

INFIELD/OUTFIELD



Outfielder:
 Throw the foam or fleece balls into the infield



Infielders:
 Throw the foam or fleece balls into the outfield

X = students