

Teachers Monthly Guide To Physical Literacy NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2025

Welcome to the February edition of our Physical Literacy Newsletter. We are excited to celebrate the importance of movement and culture in promoting lifelong wellness and learning. February brings attention to various cultures, celebrating their rich histories, resilience, and vital contributions to society.

This month, we will focus on traditional Indigenous games. These games are rooted in strengthening community ties, fostering collaboration, and nurturing social cohesion. They reflect the values of sharing, mutual support and respect within Indigenous cultures. By bringing these values and games into our activities today, we gain a deeper appreciation of Indigenous cultures while also learning life skills and perspectives that enrich our understanding of Indigenous knowledge. This approach offers a meaningful way to celebrate cultural diversity and cultivate respect for Indigenous ways of knowing.

Keep the spirit of play alive and remember—every game has a story to tell!

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Dwayne Roberts

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School Physical Activity & Physical Literacy Lead



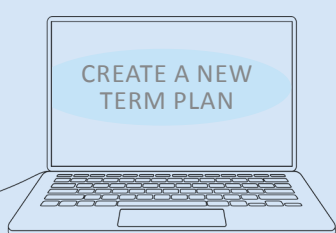
NEWS FROM OUR PARTNERS

There are many organizations focused on providing physical literacy for Canadians both through the School Physical Activity and Physical Literacy project and others organizations. Please find their updates below for this month.

WHAT'S NEW

PLAYBuilder's Term Planner

If you haven't built your term plan yet, now's the time!



[PLAYBuilder's term planner](#) makes it easier than ever to build your term plan in just six clicks!

With expertly designed activities aligned with the

BC curriculum, you can quickly map out an engaging and effective physical and health education plan for your students.

Simply select 'Create- New Term Plan', and let PLAYBuilder guide you with the rest.

Save time, stay organized, and keep your students moving with fun, curriculum-aligned activities all term long!

CONTINUING EDUCATION

2025 PHE National Conference

Sheraton Fallsview Hotel, Niagara Falls, Ontario

May 1-3, 2025

Register now for this premier national event bringing together physical and health education teachers, physical activity leaders, and sector experts to support our collective goal of all children and youth in Canada living healthy, physically active lives.

The theme of the 2025 PHE National Conference is ***Mighty Current***. This event invites professionals who share the vision that "all children and youth in Canada live healthy, physically active lives" to come together for the 2025 conference.

Don't miss out, register today! [Click here to register.](#)

Join us for Ingenious Physical Literacy Lead Training

March 3-5, 2025 Richmond, BC

Do you want to inspire students to move more and love it? This Physical Literacy Lead Training is designed for educators looking to bring more movement into the school day. Not just in the gym, but in the classroom and the great outdoors.

Don't miss this chance to become a leader in fostering healthier, more active school communities.

Register now to reserve your spot and take the first step towards a more dynamic school day.

For more information or to register, contact Dwayne Roberts at droberts@isparc.ca.

WE VALUE YOUR FEEDBACK

Integrating Physical Literacy For Life

It is important to us to achieve our goals of supporting teachers within School Districts and First Nation Schools. Submitting your feedback is vital to the growth of the program, to assist fellow teachers, and to guide the program to success. Let's make it happen together.

We look forward to hearing from you. Please send your feedback to droberts@isparc.ca.

HISTORY

When we think of our Indigenous culture, historically, we were always moving. Whether it was hunting, fishing or gathering. Our movement on the land was natural medicine as it kept us physically fit. We needed to be strong, be flexible, be agile, be quick, have good hand to eye coordination, be patient, build endurance and work together as a community, as a team. When we bring traditional games into our lives, we are practicing our culture which has been passed down by our ancestors. They are a glimpse of our traditions, our culture, our ways of living and are also so much fun.

ORIGINS OF THE GAMES

Rooted in Daily Life Traditional Indigenous games originate from the everyday activities of Indigenous communities, like hunting, gathering, and toolmaking. They evolved to practice these skills, prepare for real-life situations, and share knowledge.

Inspired by Natural Surroundings Indigenous games often draw from the animals, land and ocean, and weather patterns of their regions, making each game unique to its culture, tradition, and location.

Ceremony and Storytelling Some games began as part of ceremonies, or stories, where elders would share customs, embedding cultural values and identity in the form of games.

HISTORY OF THE GAMES

Ancient Practice and Adaptation
Indigenous games have existed for centuries, if not millennia. Over time, these games have adapted to changes in the environment, culture, and contact with other societies.

Colonization and Decline
During colonization and enforced legislation many Indigenous games were suppressed or marginalized. Colonizers often viewed these games as unsophisticated, leading to a loss of traditional practices.

Revival and Recognition
In recent decades, there has been a resurgence of interest in traditional Indigenous games. Communities, and cultural organizations are working to preserve and revive these practices, recognizing their value in maintaining cultural heritage and identity.

Global Awareness and Indigenous Games Festivals
Global Awareness and Indigenous Games Festivals: Events like the North American Indigenous Games, Arctic Winter Games, and the World Indigenous Games showcase traditional Indigenous sports and games, fostering appreciation and understanding across cultures.

HEALTHY HABITS

TEACHERS - TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF!

As a teacher, it’s easy to put others’ needs first, but self-care is essential for maintaining energy and well-being. Set aside time each day for a brief break, whether it is a walk, a few minutes of deep breathing, or simply enjoying a quiet moment.



Creating boundaries between work and personal time helps reduce stress and avoid burnout. Remember, when you care for yourself, you're better equipped to care for your students. Prioritize your own well-being to stay energized, focused, and ready to inspire!

FUN GAME—RING AND PIN

INTRODUCTION

The ring and pin game has ancient Indigenous roots. Nearly every First Nation, Metis, and Inuit communities across North America has its version which uses unique materials from the natural environment for the ring and pin. Be thankful if you obtain sticks from your surroundings and offer a prayer acknowledging what our Mother Earth has given you.

FOCUS

This activity also enhances hand–eye coordination.

EQUIPMENT

- Ring and stick.
- Traditionally, Willow was used for rings and pins. Today, you can build your ring and pin equipment with dowels and craft rings.

SETUP LOCATION

Field or gym.

HOW TO PLAY


Warm-Up Duration: 5-10 minutes.

Main Activity or Game Duration: 10–20 minutes.

- Place the ring on the floor and hold the stick in one hand.
- Use your wrist to flick the stick, making the ring fly up into the air.
- Try to guide the end of the stick through the ring as it comes back down.

SCORING

Award 1 point for each successful “Pin in the Ring.”



FUN GAME—STICK PULL

INTRODUCTION

The Stick Pull game was used to help strengthen the hands and wrist of the Dene people and prepare them for the fishing season. Often large fish swam along the shores and rivers enabling the Dene easy access. They would simply reach down and grab the fish near the middle of its back and throw it up on the land or shoreline. Be thankful if you obtain sticks from your surroundings and offer a prayer acknowledging what our Mother Earth has given you.

FOCUS

Developing balance, core stability, and grip strength.

EQUIPMENT

- One pull stick for every two students
- Traditionally, Willow and tree branches cut into 6-12 cm. Today, we are using sanded sticks or dowels.

SETUP LOCATION

Field or gym.

HOW TO PLAY

Warm-Up Duration: 5-10 minutes.

Main Activity or Game Duration: 10–30 minutes.

- Standing hip to hip, shoulder to shoulder, facing opposite directions.
- Two students hold one stick with arms straight, other arm by your side
- No bending or twisting or pulling fast. You are relying on your wrists and fingers.
- Competitors pull the greased stick from their opponent or pull the stick back past their waist for two seconds.

SCORING

1 point for pulling behind hip for 2 seconds. 2 points for removing stick from opponent's hand.



STICK CATCH GAME

INTRODUCTION
The stick catch game was played by many Indigenous people across Turtle Island. The Pimas and Papagos from the southern states, the Inuit from Alaska the Pacific Northwest Coastal nations like the Haida.

FOCUS This activity enhances hand eye coordination and patience.

EQUIPMENT
• Sticks, twigs from trees, or small tree shoots.

SETUP LOCATION Field or gym.

HOW TO PLAY
Warm-Up Duration: 5-10 minutes.
Main Activity or Game Duration: 10–30 minutes.

- Divide the class into equal teams.
- The first player from each team runs to center where the sticks are.
- A stick is picked up and placed on the top of an outstretched hand.
- The stick is dropped from the top of the hand with the intent of catching it with the same hand before it hits the ground.
- If player is successful in catching the stick, they run back to next player in line and shout "Two" meaning the second player must attempt to catch 2 sticks.
- You can't progress to the next number until a player has successfully caught the correct number of sticks.

SCORING Set a time limit to catch as many as you can.



SLING BALL

INTRODUCTION
Played by many Indigenous nations with leather strips in the shape of a sock. Grass, animal fur, or dried feces was stuffed into the end of the leather and tied into a ball.

FOCUS Developing fundamental movement skills of throwing. Core stability and flexibility.

EQUIPMENT
• Modern sling balls can be made with a sock filled with rice covered with a balloon.

SETUP LOCATION Field or gym.

HOW TO PLAY
Warm-Up Duration: 5-10 minutes.
Main Activity or Game Duration: 10–30 minutes.

- Have participants sit on the ground in a straight line facing away from the activity space. The tail of their sling ball is pinched in between their two big toes.
- When everyone is ready, give a signal to sling the ball. On the signal, the participants need to roll onto their back, raise their legs and sling the ball backward over their heads.
- Sling ball can be used as a relay race game.
- Each team must travel a certain distance.



RUN AND SCREAM

INTRODUCTION
This is a Blackfoot game. This activity was traditionally completed by taking turns, one at a time, teaching tolerance and patience. Run and Scream is a game to help students with endurance and to prepare their voices for song. Run and Scream is also a stress release.

FOCUS Developing fundamental movement skills of running and endurance.

EQUIPMENT
• Sticks for marking.

SETUP LOCATION Field.

HOW TO PLAY
Warm-Up Duration: 5-10 minutes.
Main Activity or Game Duration: 10–30 minutes.

- Participants take in a big breath of air, start running, and at the same time scream out loud.
- When they can no longer scream without taking a new breath, the spot where the scream stops is marked by their marking stick.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are grateful to be gifted these games by the following knowledge keepers:

- Nella Nelson Honored Elder
- Barb LeBeau
- Wes Sandy
- Lana Binder.



In the games we play, we carry the teachings
of our ancestors, learning balance,
respect, and the strength of community
with every move."

— Unknown

FEBRUARY 2025

SUN	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT
						1
2	YOUTUBE Ninja Now 3 Workout	3 EXERCISE 30 seconds each: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Side plank rightSide plank leftBicycle crunchesButt kicks.	4 YOUTUBE Arctic Games Kneel Jump Have an Artic Games kneel jump competition.	5 EXERCISE 20 Basketball jumps 20 Tuck jumps 5 Laps skipping around the classroom.	6 YOUTUBE Learn the Seal Hop See how far you can Seal Hop?	8
9	EXERCISE 60 seconds each: <ul style="list-style-type: none">High knee marchJumping jacksPlank.	10 EXERCISE Dead Bug Game Teacher comands: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Here/there–point in direction.Where–run on spot.Dead Bug–lie on back arms and legs up.	11 YOUTUBE Trolls Band Together	12 EXERCISE Repeat 3 times: 2 Pencil jumps 4 Frog jumps 6 Jumping jacks 8 Skater jumps.	13 YOUTUBE Valentine’s Day Floor is Lava	14
16	FAMILY DAY No School	17 EXERCISE 50 catches: Using a paper ball, throw and catch with a partner.	18 YOUTUBE Just Dance Waka Waka	19 EXERCISE Balance Challenge Who can stand on 1 leg the longest?	20 YOUTUBE Tabata Cardio Fun	21
23	EXERCISE 4 x 30 seconds Foot Taps Facing a partner, tap right then left, feet together. How many taps can you do? How fast can you go?	24 YOUTUBE Bring Sally Up Squat Challenge	25 EXERCISE Using a water bottle: 10 biceps curls 10 triceps extension overhead 10 side shoulder raises.	26 YOUTUBE Jumanji Brain Break	27 EXERCISE Plank Challenge Who can hold the plank the longest?	28

Physical activity is critical to the development and maintenance of student and teacher mental well-being.

Being physically active, even for short amounts of time throughout the day, has been shown to have positive effects on students’ academic abilities, attention spans, physical health and mental well-being.

Physical activity helps students to build mental capacity, manage emotions and develop adaptive coping strategies for the classroom and throughout their lifetime. Supporting student mental well-being leads to more positive learning environments, as well as fostering well-adjusted and more engaged members of the school and local community.

