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LACROSSE

DISCOVER LACROSSE

C U R R I C U L U M

An Introductory Lacrosse Program for Children Ages 4-6



Dear Educators and Coaches,

Whether you are new to the sport or you are already familiar with the “fastest game on two feet,” USA Lacrosse is excited to offer this multi-lesson physical literacy-based lacrosse curriculum for the Discover Lacrosse age group (generally Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten level children) that uses the history of the sport to come alive in lessons for the children. This curriculum consists of an introductory lesson that can be used as a singular clinic session or as the beginning of a series of sessions. The four lessons following the introductory lesson focus on specific skills and concepts needed for lacrosse.

We envision a world where young children have the opportunity to experience our exciting sport while learning fundamental movement skills and most importantly, have fun! By choosing to expose children to developmentally appropriate lacrosse in your program, classroom or educational space, you will expand their knowledge of the game and provide the foundation for them to participate in the sport at a competitive level as they continue to grow and mature.

Thank you for your dedication to working with young children and for your willingness to teach the sport of lacrosse. Please visit usalacrosse.com to learn more about our work, explore coaching resources, join our organization, or consider making a donation so we can continue to fuel the growth of the sport.

Sincerely,

USA Lacrosse



About the Curriculum Collaborators



USA Lacrosse (usalacrosse.com/about-usa-lacrosse)

As the sport's national governing body, USA Lacrosse provides national leadership, structure and resources to fuel the sport's growth and enrich the experience of participants. We envision a future that offers everyone a lifelong opportunity to enjoy the sport of lacrosse. USA Lacrosse aims to make the sport safer, train and certify coaches, train and certify officials, create opportunities to play, elevate the sport's visibility, pioneer national standards, and educate the lacrosse community.



First Steps Lacrosse

The mission of First Steps Lacrosse is to create positive self esteem and attitudes about physical play through the sport of lacrosse while children learn fundamental movements that provide building blocks for skills in the future as well as an appreciation and confidence for physical activity.



About USA Lacrosse Athlete Development

USA Lacrosse has developed the framework for long-term athlete development that uses six core values to help bring out the full potential in every player. When these values are embraced, players learn the sport better, love it more, and play it longer. This framework is designed to keep more players engaged in the sport longer and allows pathways for those players who choose to compete at higher levels, the opportunities to do so as they reach physical maturity.

The children taught using this curriculum are in the discovery stage of learning. They are interested in exploring different ways to learn using their imagination and movement. With a focus on our core values of physical literacy, inclusive and age appropriate, fun and player-centered, and trained coaches, we believe that children ages 4-6 will enjoy their first experience of lacrosse while building a strong foundation as they begin their journey to physical maturity—which is the purpose of this curriculum.

Working with Youth Ages 4-6

The lacrosse athlete development framework provides the lacrosse community with research-based guidelines to help caring adults understand the developmental benchmarks and general characteristics of children as they grow. Below are the hallmarks of children ages 4-6 what's best for them socially, cognitively and physically.

LEARN MORE ABOUT ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT AT

usalacrosse.com/athlete-development

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Coaching 4-6 Year Old Athletes

KEY OBJECTIVES FOR SUCCESS

Focus - Where we spend most of our time.	Fundamental Movement Skills
Goals - What we are trying to achieve.	To develop basic movement skills, body management, locomotor and object control skills that build ability, confidence and desire to play lacrosse. Getting as many touches with the ball as possible.
Player Centered Environment - What it should look like.	Fun, constant active engagement, relaxed, inclusive, positive with frequent changes of activity. Predictable routines. Games that build basic movement skills in the context of lacrosse. Lots of praise and reinforcement from coach and parents.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

Athletic Development	Running, jumping, hopping, twisting, turning, stopping, starting, static balance, catching a ball with two hands
Technical (Skills) Development	Introducing running with the ball, scooping, throwing. Exposure to all skills. Experimentation and terminology
Tactical (Strategy) Development	Experimentation with body, stick and ball in a defined space containing "special" areas (ie goal). Stopping, starting, and changing pace. Running to open space.
Psychological Development to support athletes in these areas...	Trying new challenges. Effort. Following simple instruction
Social-Behavioral Development -- Know that at this age they are ...	Learning to share. Learning to say Thank You. Enjoying friends. The center of their worlds. Parents are central for praise and approval; need balance and variety of new and familiar activities in short doses.

Working with Youth Ages 4-6

PRACTICE	
Practice to Competition & Competition Specific Training Ratio**	In-house instructional (embedded in activity sessions)
Primary Objective of Practice	To develop physical literacy and basic movement skills in context of lacrosse. Achieved through stations, games and activities; 1:1 ball to player ratio. Include self-directed play.
Mac Recommended Ratio (player : coach)	8:1
Frequency*	1x a week, 8-10 weeks
Multi-Sport Participation- Sport and physical activity diversification - Other sports and activities.	Physical activity every day. Lacrosse can be one of those activities; Gymnastics and movement education highly recommended



7 Tips for Working With 4 - 6 Year Old Children

1. If you have enough children for more than one group, select classes according to birth dates so as to try to match developmental ranges as closely as possible. A child who is nearly six has a lot more movement experience than one who has just turned four.
2. Children should play without parent assistance. Children will come to you with varying levels of physical literacy and independence. Some have experience and want autonomy (want to do things on their own) while others need more attention. It is important to meet every child where they are at individually.
3. Children this age will generally find success scooping, but catching is typically a challenge due to the variety of inputs that need to be processed to successfully catch a moving object with an implement.
4. Children this age are ready for more team play and light competition, but they can have difficulty "losing".
5. Your children will respond to dramatic play and are able to suggest their own games such as "Zombies" and "Kart Crash."
6. Encourage your children to play at home.
7. Make it kid-centered--listen to your class. Ask them what they like to do. Empower the children by encouraging participation in their learning.

If you are struggling with behavior management, consider making adaptations that are inclusive of children who may have a greater challenge finding success in this environment. There are tips in the appendix of this guide.

What is Physical Literacy?

Literacy is being able to read and write. Physical literacy is being able to move your body in a variety of movement situations so you can participate many different physical endeavors, such as sports, outdoor activities, dance, and other pursuits. Just like children learn letters and sounds before becoming fluent readers, they need to learn the building blocks of movement to ultimately become physically literate and successful at sports like lacrosse. Below are some of the fundamental motor skills that are necessary to be physically literate. Many of these are introduced to children through this curriculum.

LOCOMOTOR	MANIPULATIVE	STABILIZING
Walk	Throw	Balance
Run	Catch	Twist
Jump	Kick	Turn
Hop	Strike	Bend
Skip	Trap	Stretch
Roll	Bounce	
Leap		
Dodge		
Slide		
Crawl		

5-Week Curriculum Overview

Scope and Sequence:

WEEK	LESSON	OBJECTIVE	DURATION	NOTES
Week 1	Exploration	Exposure to all general lacrosse concepts using fun games and analogies	60-75 minutes	This can be a stand-alone clinic or be the intro to a multi-week unit using the rest of the lessons.
Week 2	Scooping	Focus on ball on ground skills in the context of other games and activities	45-60 minutes	
Week 3	Catching and Throwing	Focus on balls in the air skills	45-60 minutes	
Week 4	Team Defense	Focus on lacrosse skills using activities that involve teamwork	45-60 minutes	
Week 5	Putting it All Together	Activities that reinforce all the skills worked on in weeks 1-4	45-60 minutes	
Week 6 (optional)	Putting it All Together Part 2	Extend week 5 activities or add your own end-of session fun.	45-60 minutes	

Overarching Objective:

To introduce children to lacrosse while building physical literacy.

Goals:

- » Develop physical literacy and lacrosse literacy through age appropriate activities.
- » Create interest and curiosity about lacrosse.
- » Model for parents how children respond to the program activities so they may participate at home.

5-Week Curriculum Overview (continued)

Staff

- » Ideally, there should be a 1:6 ratio of adults to children. If you have more children, you will need more helpers.
- » One lead instructor and two helpers
 - » The Lead instructor directs the lesson.
 - » Everyone gives individual attention.
 - » Like referees, watch all the action and work to maintain safe play.

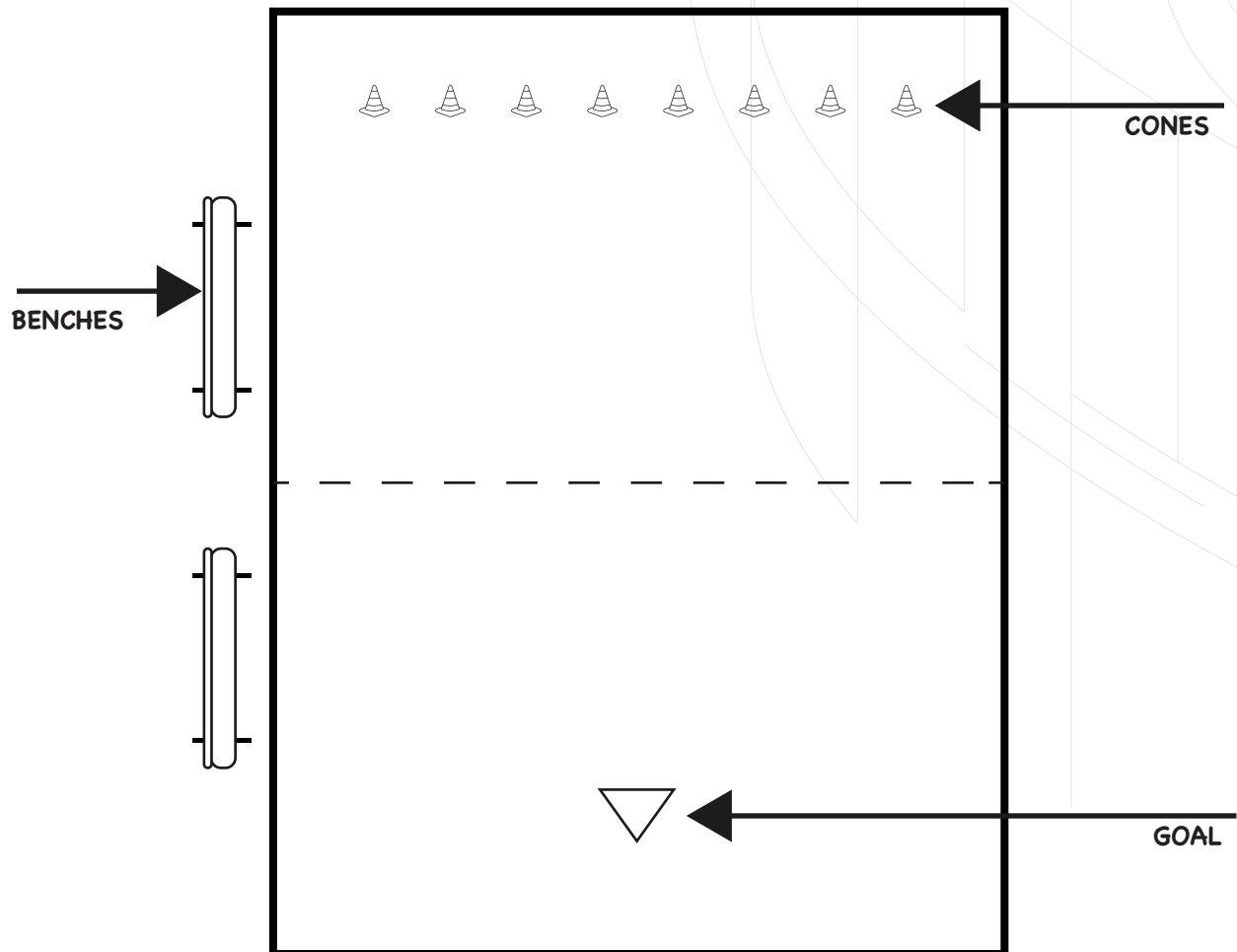
Equipment:

- » Half pool noodles
- » Sticks and ball combinations as recommended in this guide.
- » 50 foot rope
- » Goal and cones
- » Stuffed toy
- » Broom
- » Stickers
- » Large exercise balls



General Floor Plan

- » Set cones about 4 feet apart just out from the wall or end line.
- » Set a goal at the other end.
- » Children stand between floor spots to start throw and scoop activities.
(Floor spots can slip)
- » The goal is light and moveable
- » Parents sit on benches at the side
- » If you're playing on a field, try to get close to a wall you can use for Free Play wall ball.



Equipment Recommendations

Sticks should generally be about x long. Only use a soft, pliable ball—no regulation lacrosse balls should be permitted as we do not recommend requiring pads, helmets, eyewear or protective equipment for this curriculum.

Stick and Ball Combinations:

Combination One: Traditional youth stick and softer balls:

Tennis ball



Pinkie Ball-This the same size as a standard lacrosse ball but is a softer and springier.



Use either ball with youth sticks, which are shorter in length. Pictured below is a boys' youth stick and a girls' youth stick sample. The sticks are about 36" in length and may need to be cut down before starting your program. At 6U, genders are not required to use a gender-specific stick. The children will probably have more initial success with the boys' stick which has a deeper pocket off the shelf. The girls stick would need to have the pocket loosened, but there is no maximum depth for girls sticks at this age (girls sticks are manufactured more tightly out of the package).



Equipment Recommendations (continued)

Combination Two: Soft-Stick and Soft-Stick Ball



The soft-stick ball is larger than a standard lacrosse ball and will only fit in the soft stick above or a mini-goalie stick. Soft sticks may be too long for your athletes and may need to be cut down before starting your program. This equipment is only viable for exploratory programs such as this curriculum guide.

Combination Three: Mini-Goalie Stick with Foam Tennis ball



The STX mini Eclipse goalie stick is a very effective stick for this curriculum but is the least like what the players will experience when they pursue lacrosse as they get older. For immediate success, this combination is very effective when combined with the foam tennis balls sold by Penn or Gamma as pictured. These are larger than a lacrosse ball and work with the mini-goalie stick.



LESSON PLANS

Lesson One: Exploration

Note: The details in italics are what you say when teaching. Details in regular text are directions/actions for you to follow.

Equipment Needed:

Stuffed toy, lacrosse sticks, balls, pool noodles, rope, and cones.

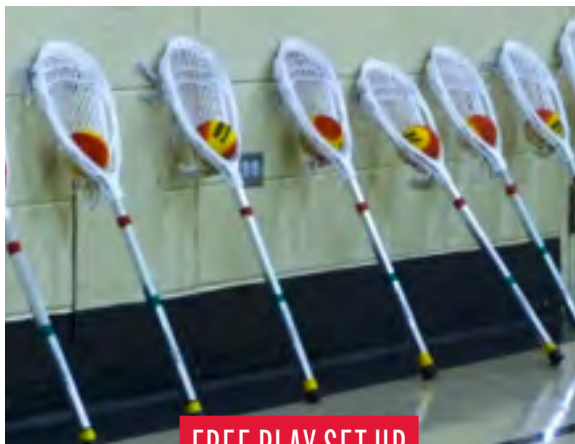
Warm Up: Free Play:

Put sticks and balls out and ask children to play with them. Move around and engage with each child. Demonstrate and encourage. Get children spread out and supervise safe play. (5 to 10 minutes)

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Cradle the Baby	Hold a ball in the pocket	Stick and ball movement	Demonstrate a cradle: Circle around with a ball in your stick like this. We call this a cradle. Who do we cradle? The baby. That's right, and we can't drop the baby.
Carry the Baby	Walk and run with a ball in the stick	Stick and ball agility	Let's go for a walk with the baby, follow me, BUT, don't drop the baby. Increase speed and alter direction with older players.

Tell the first part of the first Game Story.

We are going to learn about the game of lacrosse. Lacrosse is an old, old game. No one knows when it started, but we do know about the first game. The first game was between animals with teeth and animals without teeth. What is an animal with teeth? Tiger, Bear, and Wolf... They are strong and can run fast. What can animals without teeth do? (Give hints by flapping your arms.) They can fly. This is a very good lesson about lacrosse. We have to play on the ground, like a bear; and we have to play in the air like a hawk. Who do you think won the first game? One animal has teeth and wings and that animal made all the difference. I'll tell you the rest of the story later...



FREE PLAY SET UP



DON'T DROP THE BABY

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Whack the Noodle	Two-Hand Swing	Throwing Movements	<i>Everyone get a pool noodle and stand in your alley between the spots. Alleys keep you safe from getting hit with a noodle or a stick. Hold the noodle with two hands over your head. Take a big step and WHACK it! Demonstrate this.</i>
Red Light, Green Light Whacking	Run and Whack the Noodle	Throwing and Listening	<p><i>Listening is very important. When I say, "green light," you run. When I say, "red light," you stop and whack the noodle once. ONLY once!</i></p> <p>Play and repeat. Change the rules. If you have a wall let kids whack the wall. Change levels. Follow the leader and whack other stuff, chairs, doors, walls. Reset control remind players to only whack with two hands.</p>

To play in the air we have to learn how to throw. Everyone get your stick and a ball and stand in your alley.

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Stick Parts	Identify Stick Parts	Knowledge	<i>This is a lacrosse stick. This is the head, the pocket, the handle, and the BUTT! Point to the parts.</i>
Throwing Position	Position Stick, Hands, and Body to Throw	Biomechanics	<i>Set your stick on your shoulder and point the butt of the stick at me. Put one hand at the butt and your top hand at the green tape. Demonstrate. Lift the stick off your shoulder, take a big step, and swing it just like the pool noodle. Demonstrate and correct hand/stick position. Repeat as needed.</i>
Throw	Send the Ball from the Stick	Skill	<i>Load your stick with a ball. Point the butt of the stick at me, lift, take a big step, and FIRE! Repeat as needed. Use helpers to help players start in the right position.</i>



FIRST GAME STORY



WHACK THE NOODLE

We need to get the ball in the air where the birds are. This time we're going to fire our spaceship to the moon.

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Throw to the Moon	Throw a High Ball	Release Skill	Hold a rope in front of the floor spots about a foot over the children's heads. <i>This time you have to throw the ball up over the rope, but don't let your stick hit the rope. There's the moon. Look up and throw your rocket to the moon.</i> Repeat.
Run and Throw Over the Rope	Carry, Stop, Throw	Combine Movements	Move the rope 10 yards forward. Children run, carry, and throw the ball over the rope. <i>Aim at the goal.</i> Make the run longer.



THROWING POSITION & THROW



THROW TO THE MOON



RUN AND THROW OVER THE ROPE

Take a quick water break.

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Rescue	Dodge and Shoot to the Goal	Combine Movements/ Challenge	<p>We've got a problem. Billy the bunny (the stuffed toy) has been captured by the old Ogre and he's trapped in his cave. Point to the stuffed toy you've put in the goal.</p> <p>Only the magic ball can save him. You have to get the magic ball to the cave. But first you have to get past the Ogre; That's me!</p> <p>You can start with lines of 3 players at a time before you try one on one. Encourage children to keep running! Let the winner give the stuffed toy a hug and start again. (Use a pool noodle. Let kids win. Create tension.)</p>
Variations			For variety change the dodge to a chase. When the player picks up a ball he wakes up the Ogre who then gives chase.

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Free Play	Experiment with Stick and Ball	Player Centered/Cool Down	As time permits children will want to experiment and demonstrate new knowledge



DODGE THE OGRE



RESCUE THE BEAR

Rewards: Teach the group to bring sticks in for a final cheer. Encourage their suggestions and offer stickers. Give each child a sticker and say something complimentary such as 'I saw you make that big high throw' or 'You are a fast runner.' (I like animal stickers. I let kids pick the animal they relate to. This takes a little time, but it is vital to the building productive relationships.)



STICKS IN FOR A CHEER

POST LESSON REFLECTION

SAFETY CONCERNS:

WHAT WENT WELL?

WHAT COULD BE BETTER?

GOING FORWARD, WE SHOULD...

PARENT AND CHILD CONCERNS:

ABSENT:

NAME	PHONE	RESPONSE

STAFF:

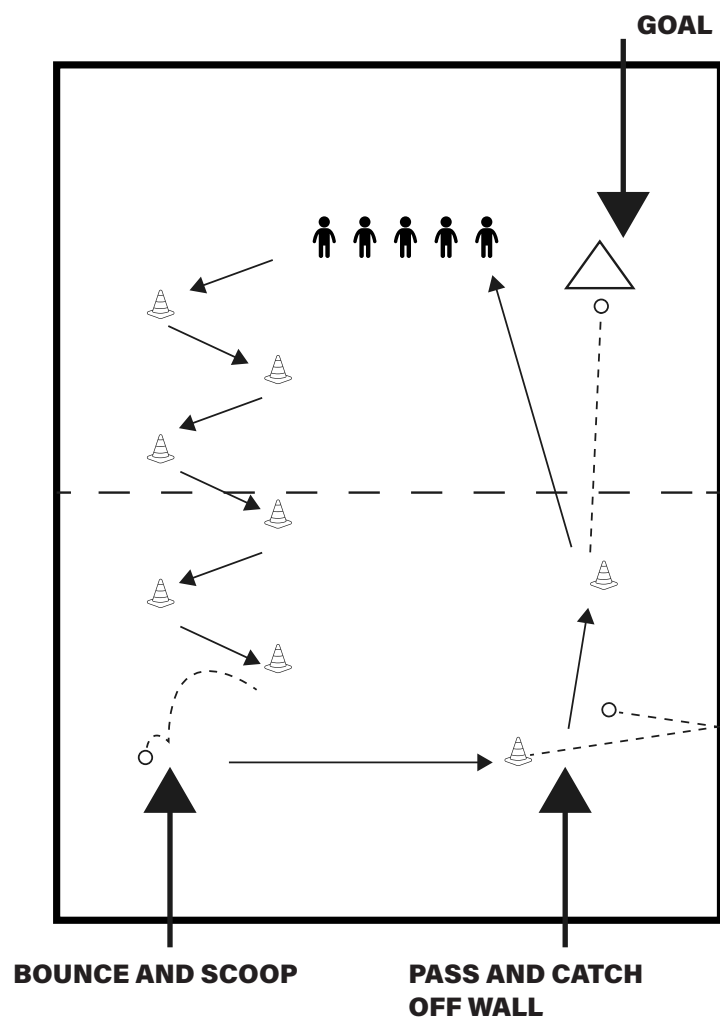
Lesson Two: Scoop

Note: The details in italics are what you say when teaching. Details in regular text are directions/actions for you to follow.

Equipment Needed: Straw/floor broom, lacrosse sticks, lacrosse goal, and balls.

Warm Up: Free Play

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Through the Woods	Follow the leader around cones	Ball control and agility	Set up cones in irregular positions. Follow the leader. Weave around parents (the trees) and cones while carrying the ball in the stick. Remember, don't drop the ball!
Throw and Go	Throw balls and go get them	Aim, throw, and run	Set up allies: Review throw positions. Throw as high and as far as you can!



Through the Woods:

Follow the leader warm up. C is for cones. Players carry a ball, face dodge, stop, and change direction at each cone. Bounce and scoop to the corner; pass and catch off the wall, then shoot at goal. Repeat.

Bring it in: We have a problem? The FIRST RULE of lacrosse is YOU CAN NOT TOUCH THE BALL WITH YOUR HAND! So, we have to learn how to scoop. Demonstrate. This is the most important skill in the game of lacrosse. Why? Because now you have the ball. Demonstrate again. (This can be frustrating for some.) Don't persist! Let them use their hand and work on it at home.

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Scoop	Bend, trap, rake, pinch, and scoop	Skill	<i>In a circle practice trap, rake, scoop technique. Bend your knees. Bring both hands down to the floor. Get your top hand on the red tape.</i>
Trap the Mouse	Track and trap bouncing ball	Hand/eye coordination and stick control	<i>Trap the mouse and bring him back.</i> In allies; toss balls out. Players trap, scoop, and return.
Scoop Relays	Run, scoop carry	Competition, skill	Make teams. <i>What animal is your team? What noise does it make? Let's hear you!</i> (Ducks and Geese work) Roll balls out. Players trap scoop and return.

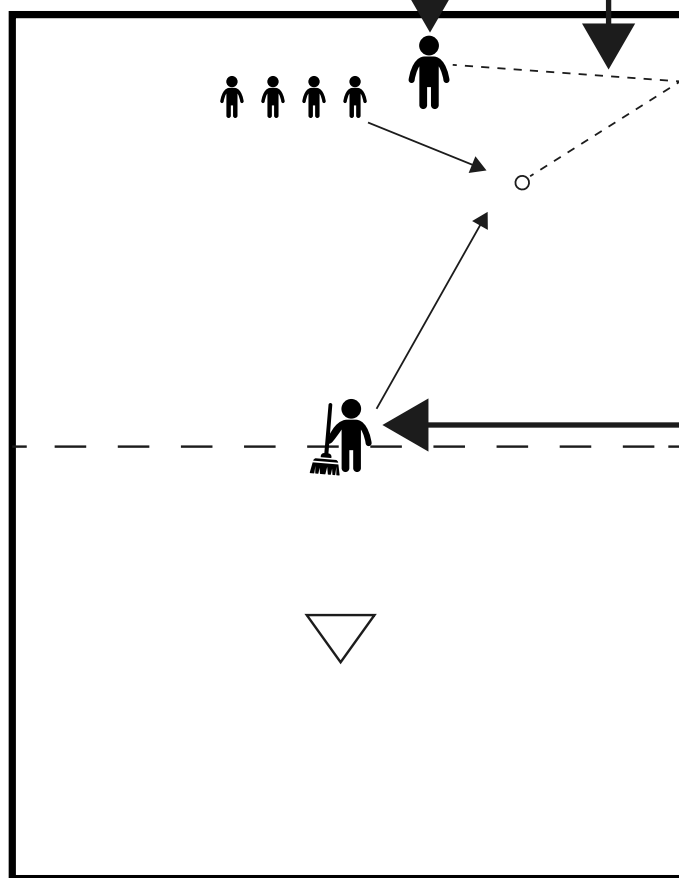
ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Scoop and shoot	Track, scoop and throw	Combination	Instructors roll ball to center. The player runs along the center line facing the pass, scoops and goes to goal. <i>Make two lines along the wall. When I roll the ball out, you will scoop it, and take a shot at the goal.</i>
The Grumpy Janitor	Scoop and pass	Tension and skill	<p>The grumpy janitor wants to sweep the floor clean. The instructor gets out a big straw broom, turns his hat around, and makes a mean face.</p> <p><i>I'm the Grumpy janitor. I'm going to roll the ball to the wall. As soon as you touch it, I'm coming to sweep it away. You have to scoop and pass to your teammate before I get the ball. Scooping is not so easy when you hear footsteps!</i></p> <p>Give each player a couple of turns. Play for their success</p>



SCOOP AND SHOOT



TRAP THE MOUSE



The helper rolls or bounces a ball off the wall. When the player touches the ball, the Grumpy Janitor pounces to sweep the floor clean.

Sticks in, No hands on 3. 1, 2, 3,
"No Hands!" Who wants a sticker?
Congratulate good play.

GRUMPY JANITOR



POST LESSON REFLECTION

SAFETY CONCERNS:

WHAT WENT WELL?

WHAT COULD BE BETTER?

GOING FORWARD, WE SHOULD...

PARENT AND CHILD CONCERNS:

ABSENT:

NAME	PHONE	RESPONSE

STAFF:

Lesson Three: Catch

Note: The details in italics are what you say when teaching. Details in regular text are directions/actions for you to follow.

Equipment Needed: Lacrosse sticks, balls, and cones.

Warm Up: Free Play

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Follow the Leader	Run, carry, throw, scoop	Combine skills	This is Follow the Leader. Watch what I do, and you try to do it.

Bring it in: Who played the game on the ground? Right, the animals with teeth; Who played the game in the sky? Right, the animals without teeth, the birds; To play the game in the sky the birds had to pass and CATCH. Catching looks easy, but it's tricky. Demonstrate. Let's start without sticks.

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Hand Catch	Catch with your hands	Skill	<i>Can you catch? Toss the ball and catch it with two hands. Toss to a friend.</i> <i>Now let's try it with a stick!</i>
Flat Catch	Catch the ball with stick in a horizontal position.	Stick control and hand/eye coordination	Start in allies. Instructors or parents toss the ball into the stick pocket.

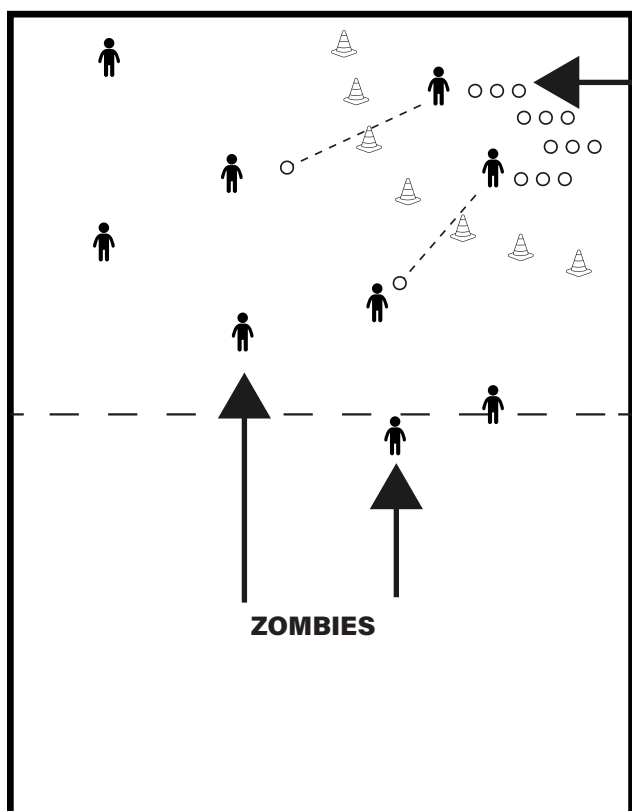


CATCHING



FOLLOW THE LEADER

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
High Catch	Catch with stick in an upright position	Skill	Not all balls drop down, so we have to catch a ball that comes at us. Demonstrate: Repeat toss and catch games.
Zombies	Throw and catch	Video game simulation	<p>We're going to play Zombies. On Halloween all sorts of people dress up as Zombies. To be a Zombie you have to walk around slowly, dragging your leg, and drooling like this. Demo holding your stick.</p> <p>So, there are two normal people left in the house (half circle of cones) Everyone else is a Zombie. Oh yeah, the Zombies want to eat the people in the house. The people try to shoot the Zombies as they advance. Zombies who get hit freeze until the game is over, but if the Zombie catches the ball the shooter becomes a Zombie.</p> <p>Add more shooters according to numbers. Give shooters all the balls. Play short games and change roles. Don't let it drag.</p>



SHOOTERS AND BALLS



ZOMBIES

Zombies:

Put all of the balls and two survivors in the corner. Set up a semi-circle of cones as the house. Zombies slowly move to the house as survivors shoot the ball.

Rewards:

Sticks in. What's our cheer today? Zombies on 3! 1, 2, 3, "ZOMBIES!" Who needs a sticker?

POST LESSON REFLECTION

SAFETY CONCERNS:

WHAT WENT WELL?

WHAT COULD BE BETTER?

GOING FORWARD, WE SHOULD...

PARENT AND CHILD CONCERNS:

ABSENT:

NAME	PHONE	RESPONSE

STAFF:

Lesson Four: Team Defense

Equipment Needed: Sticks, balls, pool noodles, cones, and a table.

Warm Up: Free Play

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Follow the Leader	Carry, dodge, throw, and catch	Combination warm up	<i>Follow me but try to get around these cones quickly. Throw, catch, and scoop.</i>

Put your sticks down.

We're going to make an airplane. Who's going to be the captain? Set up lines of three. The Captain is in the middle holding a pool noodle in both hands. The wings hold the other end of the pool noodle. Lacrosse is a team game, so we have to learn to play together.

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Airplane	Move together	Teamwork	<p><i>The Captain is the leader and he must follow light. The wings must stay straight and not break off or the plane goes down. You must move together. Let's start slowly. Captains follow the light!</i></p> <p>Instructor leads teams around the room. Make turns tighter and quicker. <i>Don't drop your wing or you'll crash!</i></p>
Trappers	Work as a group to catch a runner	Agility and teamwork	Demonstrate Trapping holding a noodle in horizontal position with two hands and wrapping around the fox.
Shadow	Mirror movements	Agility	<p>Set up in allies holding pool noodles in the trapping position.</p> <p><i>When we play defense, we have to "shadow" our person. We have to go where they go. When I move left, you move left. When I move right...keep your eye on me and move with me.</i></p>

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Protect the Fort/ Castle	Dodge, shoot, and defend	React and agility	<p>Make a castle of cones (alternate tall cones and flat cones).</p> <p><i>The pirates are going to attack the castle, but they must get by the palace guards. You have to dodge the guards and get a shot at the castle. You can't knock it down with your stick because there is a moat around the castle. You have to hit the castle with a cannon ball!</i></p> <p>Split into guards and pirates. Help the guards to model shadowing.</p>

Rewards:

Sticks in! What's today's cheer? Ok, "Shadow" on three; 1, 2, 3, "SHADOW!"



AIRPLANE



TRAPPERS



SHADOW



PROTECT THE FORT/CASTLE

POST LESSON REFLECTION

SAFETY CONCERNS:

WHAT WENT WELL?

WHAT COULD BE BETTER?

GOING FORWARD, WE SHOULD...

PARENT AND CHILD CONCERNS:

ABSENT:

NAME	PHONE	RESPONSE

STAFF:

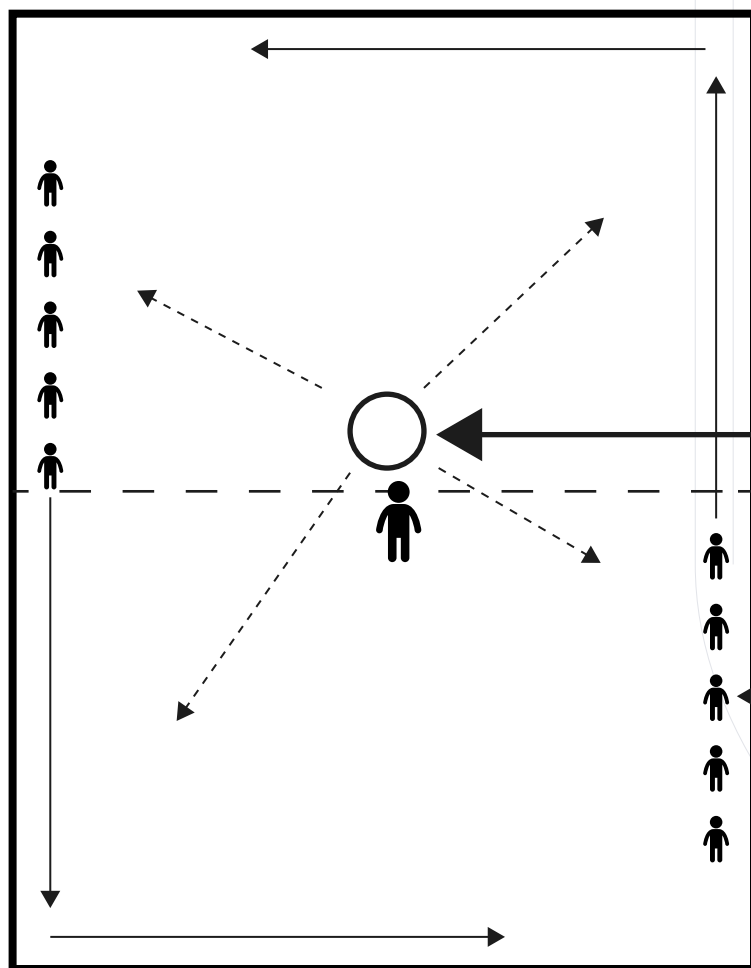
Lesson Five: Put It All Together

Rewards:

Sticks in! What's today's cheer? Ok, "Shadow" on three; 1, 2, 3, "SHADOW!"

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Follow the Leader	Carry, dodge, throw, and catch	Combination warm up	<i>Follow me but try to get around these cones quickly. Throw, catch, and scoop.</i>
Fingers	Manipulate stick with fingers	Fine motor	<i>Put your sticks down and do this! Make it rain. Hold your hands over your head a wiggle your fingers.</i> <i>Why are we doing this? To be a better passer and catcher we need to use our fingers. Twirl your stick in your fingers.</i>
Magic Wand	Stick moves	Fine motor	<i>Demonstrate, twirling, faking, and loading moves. Show how you use your fingers. Let players try it.</i> <i>Can you go all the way around without dropping the ball?</i>

Younger children grip a stick tightly, but to become a better passer and catcher you must learn to use your fingers. Practice this.



Kart Race:

Teams run an Australian Pursuit race carrying a ball in their stick. Coach rolls or bounces a large fitness ball at the players. They must dodge to retain possession. When one team catches the other the game ends.

ACTIVITY	ACTION	OUTCOMES	DETAILS
Aim, Fire	Body and hand movements of passing	Throw movement	<p><i>Line up in an ally. Let's learn how to aim. Set the stick on your shoulder, point the butt at the target. Hold your top hand at the green line and hold the stick in your fingers. Lift it away from your ear. Take a big step towards the target and FIRE! Aim at me.</i></p> <p>Demonstrate the position of the top hand as it brings the butt to the elbow. <i>Aim. Fire.</i></p>
Play Catch	Pass and catch	Skills	<p><i>One of the basic skills of many games is to play catch. Sports like football, baseball, and hockey are also games where we must send and receive something. Teammates must work together.</i></p>

If time permits play two on one with the instructor in the middle.

Rewards:

Sticks in: What can we cheer? OK, Fingers on three. 1, 2, 3, "FINGERS!"

POST LESSON REFLECTION

SAFETY CONCERNS:

WHAT WENT WELL?

WHAT COULD BE BETTER?

GOING FORWARD, WE SHOULD...

PARENT AND CHILD CONCERNS:

ABSENT:

NAME	PHONE	RESPONSE

STAFF:



For more coaching resources from USA Lacrosse visit
[USALACROSSE.COM/COACHING-RESOURCES](https://usalacrosse.com/coaching-resources)



APPENDIX

Physical Ability Milestones Prior to Puberty

Jumping and running patterns emerge

2

YEARS OLD

3

YEARS OLD

Number of sweat glands is established

Only produce 40% of an adults'

Standing stability complete

4

YEARS OLD

5

YEARS OLD

Auditory sense is matured for most frequencies

Maculae of retina matures, close up focus
Walking pattern matures
Ability to identify and discern rhythm emerges
adipose tissue in girls
Phase 2 of accelerated brain maturation begins
Neural connections to major muscles are formed (6-8 years)
Asynchronous movement control (6-8 years)
Endurance (6-7 years)
Kinesthetic control (6-7 years)
Intermediate "juvenile" growth spurt (6-8 years)
Eyeball achieves round shape (6-9 years)

6

YEARS OLD

7

YEARS OLD

Movement speed (7-9 years)
Identification of right and left fully develops (7-8 years)

Neurological tissue is fully developed
Myelination is largely complete
Balance
Reaction time (8-10 years)
Spinal mobility reaches normal limits (8-10 years)

8

YEARS OLD

9

YEARS OLD

Strength gains in girls (9-13 years)
Boys rhythm (9-10 years)
Pace of movement efficiency development (9-12 years)

Balance matures
Phase 3 of accelerated brain maturation (10-12 years)
Power capacity (10-11 years)

10

YEARS OLD

11-12

YEARS OLD

Lymph system tissues = mature immune system (11-13)
ability to gain strength (boys) (11-15+)



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COACHING

Facilitate player-centered coaching

Modify your teaching style to suit the needs of each player.
[Instructions, demonstrations, feedback]

HOW TO SCORE

Vary how to score so everyone can be included

AREA

Modify the playing area to:

Make the exercise easier/harder

Make it safer

Change the intensity of play

Highlight tactical plays

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Highlight tactical plays

Use CHANGE IT to make activity more inclusive

GAME RULES

Vary to:

Change the game experience

Make it easier/harder

Make it more inclusive

Highlight a skill or tactical aspect

EQUIPMENT

Make it easier/harder

Broaden range of playing experience

Suit abilities of all the players

INCLUSION

Player-centered coaching using CHANGE IT

TIME

Vary the duration to impact on the volume and intensity of the drill or exercise



PARENT HANDOUTS

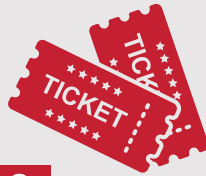


5 WAYS

to introduce your kids to

NEW SPORTS/ACTIVITIES

1 Look for programs that are in the age and ability range of your child's development.



2 Ask your kids what they want to play and then go watch it being played.

3 Ask them what sports their friends are playing, then ask them if they want to try it too.



4 Seek low-cost or entry-level programs at clubs and multi-sport organizations like the Y or Boys/Girls Clubs.



5 Try new sports together in the backyard or park by riding bikes, swimming, making up games or activities.

TEAM USA

TEAMUSA.ORG/ADM

The following organizations contributed to the creation of these resources for use by all sports organizations in the U.S.





5 WAYS

to help your child become

PHYSICALLY LITERATE

- 1** Expose your child to activities in a variety of environments (land, snow, ice, in water, in air).



- 2** Expose them to swimming for water safety and ambidextrous movements.

- 3** Encourage free play outside, tree climbing, jungle gym and backyard games.



- 4** Play catch with your child using different balls and objects.

- 5** Provide opportunities to develop striking skills with bat and ball, racquets, sticks.



TEAM USA

TEAMUSA.ORG/ADM

The following organizations contributed to the creation of these resources for use by all sports organizations in the U.S.





5 WAYS

to know if your child's sport experience is

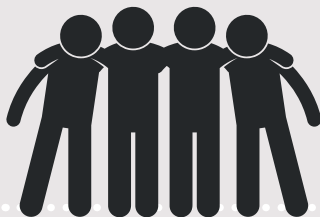
PLAYER/KID-CENTRIC

1 The program administrators ask kids what they want.



2 The program offers an action-oriented environment.

3 It gives kids freedom to experiment.



4 The program offers a social connection with friends.

5 The child has input into the experience with coaches/teammates throughout the season.



TEAM USA

[TEAMUSA.ORG/ADM](https://teamusa.org/adm)

The following organizations contributed to the creation of these resources for use by all sports organizations in the U.S.





5 WAYS

to help your child develop an

ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

1 Limit your child's screen time each day.



2 Expose them to lifetime sports that can be played now and as an adult.

3 Discuss the benefits of being active for life.



4 Provide access to equipment, space and programming.



5 Encourage trying lots of sports (sampling) and free play.

TEAM USA

[TEAMUSA.ORG/ADM](https://teamusa.org/adm)

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Opportunities to Start a Discover lacrosse Program

USA Lacrosse Grants

USA Lacrosse offers qualifying member programs the opportunity to apply to be considered for the offerings of the PE/Soft Stick grant and Starter Kit Grant. Teachers and Program Administrators are encouraged to visit and learn more at usalacrosse.com/grants-and-scholarships

Connect with a Provider

Contact First Steps Lacrosse Gord Watt at firststepslacrosse@gmail.com about implementing their early childhood programming in your area.

LESSON ONE: EXPLORATION

PARENT HANDOUT

Lesson Overview

- The history of lacrosse (ask the instructor and your child to share more)
- How to cradle, or carry, the ball
- How to throw
- How to dodge

Movement and/or Skills of the Lesson

Cradle

Cradling is a rocking action that keeps the ball in the stick with centrifugal force when the player is running.

Throw

Throwing involves lifting the stick (it looks like a catapult), shifting weight, and stepping towards the target. A pass just involves stepping with the opposite foot while a shot involves that plus taking a bigger step to open up your hips for a more powerful throw.

Dodge

A dodge is combination of movements players use to get around the defense/another player.



Try it at Home

- Ask your child to teach and demonstrate the parts of the lessons they remember.
- Review the lesson with the instructor and take on some of the roles (i.e. the Ogre).
- Practice naming the different parts of the stick.
- Use a pool noodle to practice cradling—tell your child to remember to “carry the baby”.
- Use a tennis ball or some other soft ball to practice throwing with your child.

****Note:** Throwing a ball with lacrosse stick is almost like throwing a baseball

Helpful Tips and Hints

- Doing a low cradle (closer to the ground) helps children remember to hold the stick with their fingers and less in the palm of their hands.
- You may need to help your child with hand positions, shifting weight, and releasing the ball high.
- Use your imagination and creativity—use your child’s imagination with a lacrosse twist on what they come up with.
- Ask questions, encourage active play, encourage free play, and encourage experimentation.

LESSON TWO: SCOOP

PARENT HANDOUT

Lesson Overview

- Review throwing and cradling
- How to scoop the ball (also known as a ground ball)

Movement and/or Skills of the Lesson

Scoop

Hold the stick gently in your fingers, trap the ball, and rake. Bend down, hold the handle flat to the floor, and push the pocket under the ball. Lift the stick, stand taller, and bring the stick toward your body. Cradle to keep the ball in your stick.

Cradle

Cradling is a rocking action that keeps the ball in the stick with centrifugal force when the player is running.

Throw

Throwing involves lifting the stick (it looks like a catapult), shifting weight, and stepping towards the target. A pass just involves stepping with the opposite foot while a shot involves that plus taking a bigger step to open up your hips for a more powerful throw.



Try it at Home

- Ask your child to teach and demonstrate the parts of the lessons they remember.
- Review the lesson with the instructor and take on some of the roles (i.e. Toss the ball and play "Trap the Mouse" or play "Grumpy Janitor").
- Practice scooping a ball with different objects (i.e. a cup, a shovel, etc).
- Use a tennis ball or some other soft ball to practice throwing with your child.

****Note:** Scooping can be very difficult and frustrating. Most 5-year-olds are able to do this easily while younger children may reach frustration to the point of tears.

Helpful Tips and Hints

- Remind your child that we can't touch the ball with our hand; however, if they do need to use their hands, let them.
- Key words from the lesson are: trap, rake, and scoop.
- Use your imagination and creativity—use your child's imagination with a lacrosse twist on what they come up with.
- Let your child win—we want them to be successful (just provide tension and excitement during play).
- Ask questions, encourage active play, encourage free play, and encourage experimentation.

LESSON THREE: CATCHING AND THROWING

PARENT HANDOUT

Lesson Overview

- Review throwing and scooping
- How to catch the ball

Movement and/or Skills of the Lesson

Scoop

Hold the stick gently in your fingers, trap the ball, and rake. Bend down, hold the handle flat to the floor, and push the pocket under the ball. Lift the stick, stand taller, and bring the stick toward your body. Cradle to keep the ball in your stick.

Catch

Give with the stick (or with two hands without a stick) as if catching an egg or a water balloon. Usually, the arms give a little and knees bend to accommodate this movement. Anticipate that the ball is coming. Track the ball with your eyes and see the ball go into the pocket of the stick.



Try it at Home

- Ask your child to teach and demonstrate the parts of the lessons they remember.
- Review the lesson with the instructor and take on some of the roles.
- Toss the ball so that it makes an arc or "rainbow" so that your child can see the ball from your hand to their stick.
- Use a tennis ball or some other soft ball to practice catching with your child (even if the ball bounces first).

****Note:** Catching is the most complex/challenging skill for children to master because they must develop hand-eye coordination in addition to predicting speed and direction of the ball.

Helpful Tips and Hints

- Encourage your child to hold their top hand at the throat of the stick for more stability.
- Use your imagination and creativity—use your child's imagination with a lacrosse twist on what they come up with.
- Do a consistent toss to your child's stick to help your child catch more easily.
- Be patient and help your child be patient.

LESSON FOUR: TEAM DEFENSE

PARENT HANDOUT

Lesson Overview

- Review previous skills (throw, catch, scoop, dodge, and cradle)
- How to work together as a team
- Basic team defense

Movement and/or Skills of the Lesson

Teamwork

Working together to accomplish a task or goal.

Defense

Trapping someone or stopping another team from scoring.



Try it at Home

- Ask your child to teach and demonstrate the parts of the lessons they remember.
- Review the lesson with the instructor and take on some of the roles.
- Give your child a pool noodle to defend a castle (or fort) as well as to try to trap you.
- Try playing with other family members and friends to practice the games from class.

****Note:** Being a “team player” and learning to cooperate can be difficult for children this age—especially if each child is used being the center of attention.

Helpful Tips and Hints

- Mirroring/shadowing movements will help children learn to read and react to the movements of others.
- Use your imagination and creativity—use your child’s imagination with a lacrosse twist on what they come up with.
- Use dancing and games like “Simon Says” to help your child practice reading and reacting to the movements of others.

LESSON FIVE AND SIX: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

PARENT HANDOUT

Lesson Overview

- Review previous skills (throw, catch, scoop, dodge, and cradle)
- How to work together as a team

Movement and/or Skills of the Lesson

Teamwork

Working together to accomplish a task or goal.

Throw

Throwing involves lifting the stick (it looks like a catapult), shifting weight, and stepping towards the target. A pass just involves stepping with the opposite foot while a shot involves that plus taking a bigger step to open up your hips for a more powerful throw.

Catch

Give with the stick (or with two hands without a stick) as if catching an egg or a water balloon. Usually, the arms give a little and knees bend to accommodate this movement. Anticipate that the ball is coming. Track the ball with your eyes and see the ball go into the pocket of the stick.



Try it at Home

- Ask your child to teach and demonstrate the parts of the lessons they remember.
- Review the lesson with the instructor and take on some of the roles.
- Try playing with other family members and friends to practice the games from class.
- Practice throwing and catching.

****Note:** ****Don't forget to encourage your child, repeat movements, and be patient as your child learns.**

Helpful Tips and Hints

- Children should be motivated to improve because it means they are helping and playing with their team.
- Use your imagination and creativity—use your child's imagination with a lacrosse twist on what they come up with.
- Encourage teamwork as much as possible—being a “helper” is usually a good motivator for children this age to participate in an activity.