

Physical Literacy Observation for Youth



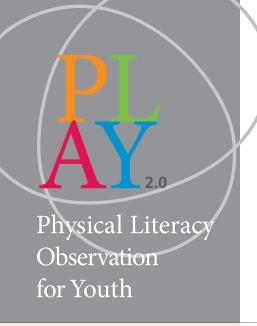




TABLE OF Contents

What is Physical Literacy?	4
What is PLAY?	5
What is PLAYfun?	
PLAYfun Workbook	
Running	
Framework	C
Task 1. Run a square	S
Task 2. Run there and back	11
Task 3. Run, jump, then land on two feet	12
Locomotor	14
Framework	14
Task 4. Crossovers	14
Task 5. Skip	16
Task 6. Gallop	17
Task 7. Hop	18
Task 8. Jump	2(
Object Control—Upper Body	22
Framework	
Task 9. Overhand throw	22
Task 10. Strike with stick	24
Task 11. One-handed catch	26
Task 12. Hand dribble stationary and moving forward	27
Object Control—Lower Body	28
Framework	28
Task 13. Kick ball	28
Task 14. Foot dribble moving forward	30

Balance, Stability & Body Control	32
Framework	32
Task 15. Balance walk (heel-to-toe) forward	32
Task 16. Balance walk (toe-to-heel) backward	34
Task 17. Drop to the ground and get back up	36
Task 18. Lift and lower	37
Scoring & Taking Action	38
PLAYfun Form	39
PLAYfun Physical Literacy Tracking Score	40
PLAYfun Tracking Sheet	41



What is Physical Literacy?

We know that today's children and youth are much less active than in the past. In the interests of their long-term health and wellness, we need to help them become more active and stay active.

The first step is to help them become physically literate.

The 2022
ParticipACTION Report
Card gives children and
youth a D for Physical
Activity and F for
Sedentary Behaviours.

People who are physically literate have the **competence**, **confidence and motivation** to enjoy a variety of sports and physical activities. As a result, they are more likely to stay active.

But what is physical literacy exactly? Like reading and arithmetic, which develop a literary or numerical vocabulary, physical literacy develops a "movement vocabulary" of fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills.

These skills are the basis for moving with competence and confidence in every kind of activity environment (on the ground, both indoor and outdoor; in and on water; on snow and ice; in the air).

But physical literacy is not just about learning basic fundamental movement skills. Physical literacy is also about having the competence, confidence and motivation to apply your fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills in new situations.

To make this happen, you need more than just a wide range of movement skills. You need a proper learning environment provided by a parent, coach or leader.

The environment should encourage free play, new activities, opportunities for working together, freedom to ask questions and a supportive sociomoral environment.

In schools, once children have begun to learn literacy and numeracy skills, they are tested and graded on their level of comprehension. Parents receive report cards so they can help improve their children's academic abilities.

Shouldn't we assess their physical abilities in the same way?

This is the purpose behind PLAY Tools. In order to improve physical literacy and increase physical activity in children and youth we must first observe the current state or starting point - and teach or coach accordingly as we do with other fundamentals such as literacy or numeracy.

What is PLAY?

Physical Literacy Observation for Youth is a collection of workbooks, forms and recording sheets, which comprise the tools designed to observe physical literacy in children and youth.



PLAY includes these tools:

PLAYfun

Used by a trained professional* to observe a child in 18 fundamental skills/ tasks, such as running, throwing, kicking and balance.

PLAYbasic

A simplified version of PLAY fun that can be administered quickly by a trained professional in movement analysis to provide a snapshot of a child's level of physical literacy.

PLAYself

Used by children and youth to observe their own physical literacy.

PLAYparent

Used by parents of school-aged children to observe their child's level of physical literacy.

PLAYcoach

Used by coaches, physiotherapists, athletic therapists, exercise professionals and recreation professionals to record their perceptions of a child's level of physical literacy.

PLAYinventory

A form used to record and track a child's leisure-time activities throughout the year.

PLAYself, PLAYparent and PLAYcoach are forms used to supplement the skill observations, PLAYbasic and PLAYfun.

The PLAY Tools were developed by Sport for Life with the expertise of Dr. Dean Kriellaars, of the University of Manitoba.

Use the PLAY
Tools to observe
individuals aged
seven and up, and to
track physical literacy
over time.

In this document we have use the words 'observation' in place of 'assessment' interchangeably to reflect the nature and intent of PLAY*coach*.

*Trained professionals: coaches, physiotherapists, athletic therapists, exercise professionals and individuals trained in movement analysis.

What is PLAYfun?

PLAYfun provides an assessment of key movement skills performed by the child. The tool itself is made up of 18 tasks that cover the child's physical abilities. Each ability is graded on a four-point rubric with the following categories: Initial, Emerging, Competent and Proficient.

Who can use PLAYfun: Since PLAYfun involves the observation of specific skills, the evaluator must have some education in movement and motion analysis. This could include trained physical education specialists and trained physical literacy observers, NCCP-certified coaches, exercise professionals, physiotherapists, athletic therapists or other sport and recreation practitioners. These individuals must have the knowledge to accurately assess the child's technique, and must be able to identify gaps in the child's development when observing each task.

As a coach, physiotherapist, athletic therapist, exercise professional or recreation professional: Observers may use PLAY fun in conjunction with the other PLAY Tools to create a baseline assessment of the child's current level of physical literacy. You and the child should mutually establish realistic goals (where the child wants to be) and a manageable process to reach them.

As a parent: PLAY fun provides a thorough observation of your child's skills and abilities. By having a trained professional assess your child using PLAYfun, you will gain insight into your child's physical literacy development. Use this information to create goals and track improvement.

Learn about the other PLAY Tools at: play.physicalliteracy.ca.

Directions

Physical Literacy Observation for Youth

- 1. Ask the child to perform each of the tasks listed in the first column of the PLAYfun form.
- 2. Observe the child performing the skill and rate each skill based on the four categories provided (Initial, Emerging, Competent and Proficient).
- 3. Take action: View a list of ways to take action in your PLAYfun workbook or on our website at: play.physicalliteracy.ca.
- 4. Remember to use the PLAYfun tool along with the other PLAY Tools to see all perspectives on your child's level of physical literacy.

Additional Information: Confidence

On the right hand side of the tool, you'll see a column labelled "Confidence." In this column, indicate whether the child had low, medium or high confidence when performing each task.

Comprehension

The comprehension boxes are used to track the child's knowledge of each task and confidence while performing them.

Prompt: If the child needed the observer to give them an additional prompt (e.g., "Go on. You can do it."), or to incite them to perform

the skill/task, place a tick in the "Prompt" column.

Mimic: If the child waited for one of their peers to perform the skill first, place a tick in the "Mimic" column.

Describe: If the child asked the assessor to describe the skill/task, place a tick in the "Describe" column.

Demo: If the child asked the assessor to demonstrate the skill/ task, place a tick in the "Demo" column.



and how to match your observation with the appropriate way to take action

To simplify things, we've broken down PLAYfun into four subsections:

- Running
- Locomotor
- Object Control (Upper Body)
- Object Control (Lower Body)
- 5 Balance, Stability & Body Control

For each subsection, the workbook provides a framework to use the PLAYfun form.

The framework will provide:

- equipment needed,
- instructions (how to administer),
- definitions of initial, emerging, competent and proficient, and
- examples of how an observer may have answered each question; Refer to these examples if you are looking for additional insight.

As you progress through this workbook, you will receive a score specific to each subsection. Match this score with the list of suggested actions you can take.

Each action determines helpful solutions to engage the child, and improve their level of physical literacy and overall well-being.

Please take out your PLAY fun form and follow along for the upcoming subsections.

Did you know? Some PLAY Tools can be filled out online at: play.physicalliteracy.ca.

Important

Important: Each question uses a 100mm scale so that the observer may place a mark anywhere along the scale within each box. This allows the observer to be more specific when defining the child's developmental level for each task.

Remember that the top score for proficient is the very best anyone could be at the skill, regardless of age.

Example: This assessor has placed a black mark on the left-most side of the "Competent" box to identify that Child A has only just acquired the skill. This score is worth 51/100.

An orange mark has been placed farther to the right side of the "Competent" box to indicate that Child B is more competent than Child A, who has just acquired the skill. This second score would be worth 63/100.

		Devel	oping					Acqu	uired		
	Initia	al	Em	nerging		C	ompet	ent	Pro	ficient	t
					>	<	X				
0	10	20	30	40	50	J	60	70	80	90	100



Framework

The Running Score is based on the following guestions and their scoring systems:

Equipment

For this task, you'll need 4 pylons (each 3 metres apart in a square formation).

Scoring System

Developing Acquired Initial: Presence of numerous major Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors: gaps during execution: • May partially round corners, taking • Mature running form not present one extra step to change direction Person is substantially overshooting • Most of the corners are consistent or undershooting pylon placements in lateral shifts in body direction Slipping, tripping and/or stumbling • Speed is at a jogging rate or faster is present **Emerging:** *Limited number of major* Proficient: Overall proficiency

gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task:

- Rounds corners with numerous steps
- While changing direction, shuffle or stutter-steps are present
- Mature running form present

is depicted by the quality of the movement:

- Accelerates rapidly
- Performs a controlled lateral shift at each pylon with minimal footwork
- All four corners exhibit controlled and powerful changes of direction and speed
- Speed is maximal

TASK 1

Run a square

"I want you to run a square around the pylons. I want you to run a square as best you can. Ready? Run now."

Josephine is a 10-year-old learning to play basketball. Her coach, Sylvain, wants to know how physically literate Josephine is, so they decide to use the PLAY fun tool to observe her fundamental skills. Sylvain asks Josephine to do the first running task: Run a square. As Josephine performs the task, Sylvain notices some weaknesses in her technique, and some gaps in development.

The first thing Sylvain notices is Josephine's acceleration. When Josephine accelerates, she moves with her head down and body leaning forward. She's not able to get off to a quick start because of her undeveloped starting technique. He also notices how her arms flap out to the sides.

By the time Josephine has reached the first pylon, her body has straightened up and she has picked up speed. Her speed causes her to overshoot the pylon, and as she comes back around to the next pylon, she overshoots that one as well. It is clear that Josephine lacks the control to round each cone with measured steps. The inconsistency in her pace, from a slow, staggered acceleration to a more lumbering run also takes away from her control and technique.

These signs are indications that Josephine's accelerating, running and turning abilities are at an "Initial" stage. Sylvain believes Josephine will show smoother technique when running in straight lines for a longer distance, as she does have the tendency to straighten out as she picks up speed, but for this activity Sylvain places a mark on the left side of "Initial."

		Devel	oping				Acq	uired		
	Initia	al	Em	erging		Comp	etent	Pro	oficient	t
	X									
0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

Equipment

For this task, you'll need 2 pylons (5 metres apart).

Scoring System

Developing

Initial: Presence of numerous major gaps during execution:

• Stumbles, slips or trips repeatedly

- Does not exhibit flow in transitions
- Movement is disjointed
- Oversteps lines
- Slow speed
- Running form missing key features

Emerging: Limited number of major gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task:

- Arm movements and leg movements only synchronized in some phases, not all
- Sliding stop or shuffle-step stop
- Basic features of mature running form observed
- Rounded turnaround is evident

Acquired

Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors:

- Motion is along a straight line there and back
- Good speed (jog to run)
- Pivoting turn that is not fluid or quick, but is successful
- Mature running form is evident

Proficient: Overall proficiency is depicted by the quality of the movement:

- Sprint speed
- Accelerates rapidly
- Decelerates in control to a momentary stop
- Pivots and changes direction in a continuous manner
- Arms and legs used purposefully for propulsion

TASK 2

Run there and back

"I want you to run a straight line to the pylon, stop, turn around and run back. I want you to run to the line, turn around and run back as best you can. Ready? Run now."

Observation Example

After running Josephine through the first task, Sylvain decides to see how she does at the second task: Run there and back. Sylvain sees that while Josephine still has some developing to do, her technique is stronger when she runs in a straight line for a longer distance.

As Josephine accelerates, she still tends to lean forward and flap her arms, but as she gets going she runs with a more upright posture and uses her arms more for propulsion than for flailing. However, Sylvain sees that as she approaches the pylon and begins to slow in preparation for turning, she comes to a stuttering stop and almost oversteps the line.

Sylvain recognizes that Josephine has some developmental areas that definitely need work and refinement, but they're also aware that she has some strengths in her technique as well. They place a mark near the halfway mark under "Emerging."

Run, jump, then land on two feet

"I want you to run a straight line to the pylon, stop, turn around and run back. I want you to run to the line, turn around and run back as best you can. Ready? Run now."

Equipment

For this task, you'll need 2 pylons (5 metres apart).

Scoring System

Developing Acquired Initial: Presence of numerous major Competent: Basic level of execution gaps during execution: with minor sequencing errors: • Not able to sequence the leap Able to leap from one foot to land from one foot during the run on two feet Very tentative in all sequencing Limited distance travelled of movements Slow running speed (jog) • Twists trunk or performs a • Transition from jog to leap may twirling action not result in loss of speed • Lands on a single foot Upper body remains vertical during Low speed and distance travelled entire task to ensure landing **Emerging:** *Limited number of major* Proficient: Overall proficiency is depicted by the quality of the movement: • Segmented action between the Able to accelerate to a good speed run, jump and landing

gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task:

- Exhibits offset landing or multiple contacts on landing
- and shift from a single leg (hop) with smooth transition
- No loss of speed
- Powerfully drives body upward with hip action of opposite leg and toe off of planted foot
- Aerial phase shows re-orientation of body for landing with arms moving forward
- Very good distance travelled
- Well-controlled landing on two feet

Running

Observation Example

Janice coaches the athletics team at a local elementary school. She wants to know how physically literate the children are, especially those who plan to participate in the upcoming track and field meet, so she decides to use the PLAY fun tool to observe their movement skills. Janice has a group of eight-year-olds do the third running task: Run, jump, then land on two feet.

Janice is immediately impressed by Peter's technique. They are not tentative during their run, and leap off one foot well. Though they sometime land on one foot slightly before the other, Peter is pretty coordinated in terms of getting both feet involved in the landing.

One thing Janice notices, however, is that while Peter does have a fast run up, they don't get as much distance on the jump as Janice thinks they should. She sees that, though they land fairly square, Peter tends to twist their trunk a bit when in the air before they land. Although Peter's technique is developed in certain areas, the twisting, the lack of distance and the fact that they don't land with two feet every time causes Janice to put a mark under "Competent," but close to the "Emerging" line.



2 Locomotor

developed movement skills and greater competence will be more likely to participate in

Framework

The Locomotor Score is based on the following questions and their scoring systems:

TASK 4

Crossovers

"I want you to perform crossover steps from this pylon to the next. I want you to perform a crossover, or grapevine, step from here to there. Please do the best you can. Ready? Go now."

Scoring System

Developing Acquired Initial: Presence of numerous major Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors: gaps during execution: • Able to show front and rear • Does not perform crossover steps crossover steps for the entire (side shuffles, or other incorrect distance travelled movement) • Speed is moderate and does • Performs half the crossover step not falter (front leg crossing over, or rear, but not both) • Evidence of upper body coordination present **Emerging:** *Limited number of major* Proficient: Overall proficiency gaps, but able to execute basic is depicted by the quality of the sequencing of the task: movement: • Crossover steps are inconsistent • Demonstrates fluid crossover steps but evident

- Speed of progression is slow
- Upper body isn't participating
- Coordinated upper and lower body actions
- Excellent speed of progression

Equipment

For each task in this section, you'll only need 2 pylons (5 metres apart).

Observation Example

Scott is nine and he has never played baseball before. He's really excited, and his mom wants him to have the best experience possible. She asks her brother, Dan, who coaches baseball, what she should do to help make sure Scott is ready. Dan has been watching Scott since he was a baby and knows his nephew is fairly athletic, but he wants to know just how physically literate Scott is, so he offers to take him out to the park.

At the park, Dan has Scott run through a number of PLAY fun locomotor activities, including crossovers. Scott takes to the activity with good speed, and for the most part he's able to display front and rear crossovers. However, Scott sometimes misses a rear step, and when he does it throws off his whole motion and instead of adjusting in mid-stride, Scott usually has to stop and start fresh.

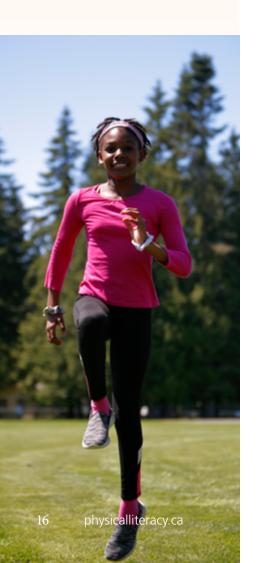
Dan also sees that Scott's upper body coordinates well with the movement of his lower body, but again, when Scott stumbles, it takes him a moment to realign his coordination. Dan places a mark under "Competent," but he places it close to "Emerging."

		Devel	oping					Acqu	uired			
	Initia	al	Em	erging			ompe	tent	Pro	oficient		
						X						
0	10	20	30	40	5	0	60	70	80	90	100)



Skip

"I want you to skip step from this pylon to the next. Skip as best you can. So, I want you to skip from here to there. Ready? Go now."



Scoring System

Developing

Initial: Presence of numerous major gaps during execution:

- Fails to perform skip action
- Upper limb action is disconnected with lower body
- Speed highly variable or very low
- Shuffle-like motion of legs
- Poor lower and upper body control

Acquired

Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors:

- Has basic skipping action with limited but consistent arm action
- Low amplitude and speed
- May exhibit ramp-up in form
- Body is tall

Emerging: Limited number of major gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task:

- Leg action consistent with a skip
- Arms at side or slightly reciprocating
- Synchrony of arms to legs may be limited, but not flailing
- Initiation of skip takes a few steps and skip is inconsistent or lost in stopping
- Trunk angle variable

Proficient: Overall proficiency is depicted by the quality of the movement:

- Uses arms and legs in a reciprocal pattern with good limb excursions (elbow bent)
- Exhibits fluid and consistent skip action from first to last step
- Good speed

Observation Example

After having him go through the crossover task, Dan asks Scott to try skipping. Dan sees right away that Scott is able to perform the basic skip action. His leg action is consistent with a skip, and though his arm action isn't fully developed and somewhat limited, it is consistent also. Scott keeps his body tall, for the most part. He doesn't get his feet particularly high off the ground, and his speed isn't tremendous, but his motions are steady. He slows when he prepares to turn at the cone, but he doesn't falter.

There is certainly room for Scott's technique to develop, but because he is consistent throughout the task, Dan places a mark at roughly the halfway mark under "Competent."

Scoring System

Developing Acquired Initial: Presence of numerous major Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors: gaps during execution: Consistent aerial phase with • Lift off or aerial phase not present synchronized upper limbs • Body faces sideways rather than Speed may be slow and forward amplitude low • Flow of gallop steps may be intermittent **Emerging:** Limited number of major Proficient: Overall proficiency gaps, but able to execute basic is depicted by the quality of the sequencing of the task: movement: • Lift off or aerial phase present but Fluid action of upper and lower inconsistent body in synchrony

• Immediate transition from start to

Trunk facing forward entire distanceAmplitude and speed are very good

gallop action

TASK 6

Gallop

"I want you to gallop from this pylon to the next. Front gallop as best you can. So, I want you to perform a gallop from here to there. Ready? Go now."

Observation Example

reacquire step)Body may twist

• Upper arm motion not fluidly

• Unable to have consistent flow

connected to lower limbs

• May falter in speed (slow to

Before Dan takes Scott back home, he decides to run him through one more task. He already has a sense of Scott's level of competence in terms of doing crossover steps and skipping, but he wants to know how developed Scott is at the gallop.

At first, Scott struggles to lift off the ground. Once he gets the motion going, the aerial phase of his gallop is present, though inconsistent. Scott also has a tendency to twist his body with each gallop. With the twisting of his trunk, Scott also struggles to keep his upper arm motion fluidly connected to his lower limbs.

One area that Scott shows consistency is in his speed. He moves through each gallop quickly, and Dan knows that once Scott addresses the weaker areas of his technique, his tendency toward speed will be more of an asset. For now though, Scott might want to think about going through the movements at a slower pace until he gets it down. Dan places a mark a little less than halfway along the "Emerging" line.

Нор

"I want you to hop from this pylon to the next. I want you to hop as best you can. Please hop from here to there. Ready? Hop now."

Note: Left/right symmetry is important for physical literacy. Ask the participant to complete this movement with both legs.

Scoring System

Developing

Initial: Presence of numerous major gaps during execution:

- Fails to maintain single leg support and touches down opposite foot
- Performs a jumping action
- Upper body and lower body in asynchrony

Acquired

Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors:

- Able to hop on one leg from start to end with medium distance hops
- Evident aerial phase
- May not employ opposite leg to assist
- Distance may vary from hop to hop in mid-range
- Start and stop control may be limited

Emerging: Limited number of major gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task:

- Inconsistent distances and low amplitude of displacement (horizontal or vertical)
- Balance control problems evident during progression
- Starting is stutter-like
- Stopping is sloppy and possibly over-hopping or premature ending

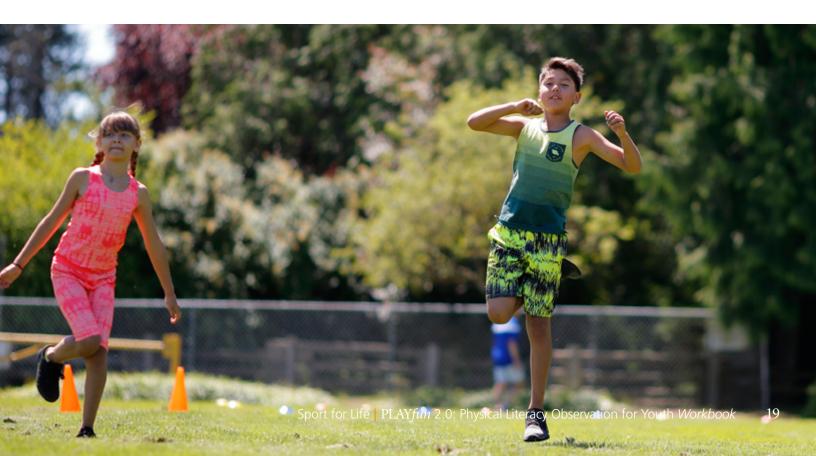
Proficient: Overall proficiency is depicted by the quality of the movement:

- Substantial hopping distance that is consistent in distance in mid-range
- Immediate transition to hopping and immediate hop to stationary position at end
- Continuity in motion
- Good horizontal and/or vertical speed
- Uses opposite lower limb and upper body in synchrony with the other lower limb

Geri is a lifeguard at the community pool. She has agreed to run swimming lessons for seven-year-olds. Because she knows how important physical literacy is for swimming, she has requested that the kids show up early to each lesson so that she can assess the participants' fundamental skills.

Today, she is leading them through PLAY fun's "hop" task. Jennifer takes their turn and Geri can see the gaps in development as well as the potential in their technique. When Jennifer hops, their movement is fluid, but after doing a couple of hops they begin to lose balance. Sometimes they have to step down with their opposite leg to keep from falling.

Although their pacing is erratic as she moves between the cones, Jennifer does well to maintain a fairly consistent medium-range distance from hop to hop. They set up to reach the cone each time without coming up short or landing beyond. For the most part, Jennifer displays synchrony between their upper and lower body, though when their balance falters, so too does their coordination. Geri places a mark under "Emerging" edging on the side of "Competent."



Jump

"I want you to jump from this pylon to the next. I want you to jump as best you can. Please jump from here to there. Ready? Jump now."

Scoring System

Developing Acquired Initial: Presence of numerous major Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors: gaps during execution: Performs a continuous jumping • Does not perform a two-foot jump action from start to finish • Performs an offset landing or Limited arm action takeoff with staggered feet Lower body triple flexion • Unable to perform more than one (hip, knee, ankle used for jump in a row propulsion) • Distance travelled is limited (less than one full step) • Speed may be limited due to limited jump distance Proficient: Overall proficiency **Emerging:** *Limited number of major*

gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task:

- Able to jump but exhibits inconsistent distances each jump
- Upper body may be rigid
- Arms not participating in jump motion
- May show balance control problems during task

is depicted by the quality of the movement:

- Jumping distance is substantial (length of body)
- Evident lower body triple flexion (hip, knee, ankle used for propulsion)
- Arm swing evident and propulsive
- Fluid start and stop
- Speed of transport is very good

Barry coaches a youth football team that consists mainly of 12-year-olds. One of the participants playing this year, Kyle, is an accomplished track athlete and swimmer, so Barry imagines Kyle's physical literacy will be well developed. Even still, Barry makes a point of gauging all his athletes' levels of physical literacy at the start of the season by using PLAY fun. He has Kyle perform the jump task.

The first thing Barry notices is how well balanced Kyle is. Kyle is able to perform a continuous jumping action from start to finish, leaving with and landing on both feet evenly. They use their arms well to help propel their jump. As well, Kyle's body appears to be relaxed and not rigid at any point during the task.

One weakness in Kyle's technique is the way they tend to jump for height instead of distance. Barry figures Kyle travels less than one full step per jump, and because of the amplitude of the jump, Kyle's speed is also hindered. Barry places a mark under "Competent" near the halfway mark.

		Devel	oping					Acqu	uired		
	Initia	al	Em	nerging			ompet	tent	Pro	ficient	
							X				
0	10	20	30	40	5	0	60	70	80	90	100



2 Object Control— Upper Body

Framework

The Object Control – Upper Body Score is based on the following questions and their scoring systems:

TASK 9

Overhand throw

"I want you to overhand throw the ball at the wall and make it bounce back over the top of your head. I want you to throw the ball as best you can. Please try to throw the ball against the wall as best you can. Ready? Throw now."

Note: Left/right symmetry is important for physical literacy. Ask the participant to complete this movement with both hands.

Equipment

For this task, you'll need:

- A large wall (target area)
- 1 pylon (2 metres away from the wall)
- Tennis ball (or similar)

Scoring System

Developing

Initial: Presence of numerous major gaps during execution:

- Throw fails to produce ball motion in the desired direction
- Insufficient distance/velocity
- Limb motion restricted to a single joint or upper limb
- No coordination with trunk or lower limbs
- No weight shift
- Trunk rotation absent

Acquired

Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors:

- Trajectory and speed of ball is adequate
- Sequencing of lower body, trunk and upper body is present but limited
- Weight shift is minimal
- Follow-through present but limited
- Trunk rotation present but limited

Emerging: Limited number of major gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task:

- Ball is sent with poor speed or trajectory (one of the two)
- Basic sequencing of lower body to trunk to upper limb action is evident
- Weight transfer limited
- May appear disjointed in sequencing of limb motion
- Very limited follow-through

Proficient: Overall proficiency is depicted by the quality of the movement:

- Velocity of ball is good
- Trajectory of ball is well controlled
- Upper and lower body sequencing is present
- Weight shift is pronounced from trail to lead leg
- Follow-through is present and fluid
- Very evident trunk rotation

Becky just turned 10. She wants to play a whole bunch of sports this summer, which pleases her mom, Beth. Beth is a physiotherapist and knows how important it is to be physically literate. She decides to use the PLAY Tools with Becky to see if there are any gaps in her daughter's development of physical literacy. As Becky works through the overhand throw task in PLAY fun, Beth sees a number of things that Becky does well, and a few that will need some work.

The first thing Beth notices is the consistency with which Becky throws the ball at the wall so that it bounces back above Becky's head. She manages to get enough trajectory and velocity on the ball almost every time, and her accuracy with where the ball lands is pretty steady as well. Becky also displays a smooth follow-through. Not only does she bring her hand well behind her head, she extends her arm through in a fluid motion.

From there, Beth pays attention to Becky's trunk rotation and stance. When Becky begins the motion, she is too square to the wall, which cuts down on her trunk rotation. This lack of trunk rotation in turn diminishes the appropriate weight shift from trailing leg to front leg.

Beth sees that Becky's power, accuracy and arm movement are all well-developed areas of strength, but that Becky really needs to focus on her stance and trunk rotation. Once Becky has refined her technique in this regard, Beth believes her daughter's weight shift from trailing leg to front leg will develop more naturally as well, as she already has the tendency to shift weight when she throws. Because of this, Beth places a check in the "Competent" box close to "Emerging."

		Devel	oping					Acqu	uired			
	Initia	al	Em	erging			ompe	tent	Pro	ficient		
						X						
0	10	20	30	40	5	0	60	70	80	90	10	0(

Strike with stick

"I want you to strike the ball. I want you to strike the ball as best you can. Please try to strike the ball as best you can. Ready? Strike now."

Note: Left/right symmetry is important for physical literacy. Ask the participant to complete this movement with both hands.

Equipment

For this task, you'll need:

- A baseball tee (adjustable height)
- A baseball bat (or similar)
- Tennis ball (or similar)

Scoring System

Developing

Initial: Presence of numerous major gaps during execution:

- Grasp of implement inappropriate (cross-over hands, uses a single limb to swing, etc.)
- No coordination between upper and lower body
- No weight shift
- Swinging action is weak and trajectory of implement wavers
- Limited wind-up and follow-through

Acquired

Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors:

- Swinging action evident with good speed
- · Limited weight transfer
- Wind-up and follow-through limited but present
- Sequencing of weight transfer, to trunk rotation, to arm swing is present but may be modest and slightly disjointed

Emerging: Limited number of major gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task:

- Elements of the swinging action present but not all the sequences of weight transfer, trunk rotation and arm swing are evident
- Dominance of one arm relative to the other
- Upper limbs don't work together

Proficient: Overall proficiency is depicted by the quality of the movement:

- Powerful swinging action with good speed of implement
- Strong stepping action and weight transfer from trailing to leading leg
- Synchronized and sequenced weight transfer, to trunk rotation, to upper limb rotation
- Implement trajectory is well controlled with excellent wind-up and follow-through

Max played professional lacrosse for years. Now that he's retired, he coaches and runs clinics and camps for kids. Part of his philosophy is for kids to be comfortable and capable of performing other sports skills aside from just those that relate to lacrosse. Max understands that this is all part of being physically literate, which he tries his best to develop in each of his practices.

Twelve-year-old Laura hasn't played too many sports, so their parents decide to register them for private lessons with Max. They run and swim and love to hike, but haven't done much in the way of team stuff. They think lacrosse looks like fun. Max understands that from their other physical activities, Laura will be competent in a range of fundamental skills. Since lacrosse requires the hand-eye coordination that comes from using a stick, Max decides to have Laura strike with a stick

Laura has a good grasp of the bat when they pick it up and swing it, but Max can see this is an unfamiliar technique for them. Although there is some weight shift from their back leg to the front, their trunk doesn't rotate much and their motion is almost entirely in their arms. They lean forward as they swing as opposed to rotating through the action.

Despite Laura's obvious gaps in development, neither arm seems to dominate the other, and they display coordination between their upper limbs – likely developed during swimming, Max figures. He places a mark not quite at the halfway mark of "Emerging."

		Devel	oping					Acqu	uired		
	Initia	al	Em	nerging		C	ompe	tent	Pro	ficient	-
			Х								
0	10	20	30	40	5	0	60	70	80	90	100

One-handed catch

"I want you to catch the ball that I throw to you with only one hand. You can use whichever hand you like, but only one hand. I want you to catch the ball with one hand the best you can. Please try to catch the ball the best you can. Ready? Catch now."

Note: Left/right symmetry is important for physical literacy. Ask the participant to complete this movement with both hands.

Equipment

For this task, you'll need:

- 2 pylons (3 metres apart child at one, assessor at the other)
- Tennis ball (or similar)

Scoring System

Scoring System	
Developing	Acquired
 Initial: Presence of numerous major gaps during execution: Unable to track the incoming ball Does not move hand to ball purposefully Shows an elbow-flexion-style of a clutching catch Bats at ball to only make contact 	 Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors: Tracks incoming ball well Moves hand to ball and receives the ball well Minor fumbles No bobble or loss of contact (no double catch) Does not exhibit clasping or clutching grasp
Emerging: Limited number of major gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task: Tracks incoming ball poorly Moves hand to ball but fumbles	 Proficient: Overall proficiency is depicted by the quality of the movement: Fluidly moves to intercept ball in the air with positive hand reception
or bobbles during catch and/or drops ball	Capable of snatching the ball out of the air

Observation Example

catch

• Uses "stiff" limb motion during

Jamal is one of the facilitators of a fundamental skills camp for youth at the local fitness centre. Today, the kids are practicing their one-handed catching, as per the PLAY fun tool. Jamal lines up across from Jody, who just turned eight years old.

The first thing Jamal notices is that, while Jody tracks the ball well and moves their hand toward it purposefully, they have trouble catching it. They tend to swat at it, and even when they "cheat" and try to catch it using both hands, they still fumble it or bobble it. Jamal also notices how stiff Jody's arm is when they go to catch it.

Jamal knows that eventually Jody will begin catching the ball, and that at that point their tracking and purposeful movement will aid them, but for now he places a mark under "Emerging" near the "Initial" line.

Equipment

For this task, you'll need:

- 2 pylons (4 metres apart)
- Basketball (or similar)

Scoring System

Developing Acquired Initial: Presence of numerous major Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors: gaps during execution: • Able to control the ball when • Unable to control the ball when stationary and moving stationary or moving • Lacks fluid changes from stationary • Hand-eye coordination is to moving and moving to stationary non-existent • Hand-eye coordination is adequate **Emerging:** Limited number of major Proficient: Overall proficiency is depicted by the quality of the gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task: movement: • Able to control the ball when either • Well-controlled dribble in place for stationary or moving (one or the each repetition other, but not both) • Exhibits a fluid change from

Observation Example

Hand-eye coordination is limited

Frank coaches a junior basketball team. He works on skill development all through the season, but he believes it's particularly important to find out early on where the students are strong or weak in terms of their development so that he can structure practices accordingly.

stationary to moving

are synchronized

• Body, lower limbs and upper body

Hand-eye coordination is strong

On the first day, Frank always has his kids focus on dribbling. He has started following the PLAY fun tool, and now does the hand dribble stationary & moving forward task. As the players go through the activity, Frank is shocked by how developed Kaz's dribbling skills are.

Whether stationary or moving between pylons, Kaz controls his dribble well. His shift from stationary to moving is smooth, and he keeps the ball close, even when he picks up speed. The ball never gets away from him, and he hardly ever has to reach for it. He dribbles between hands equally, and when in motion his whole body moves as one. Frank places a mark under "Proficient" near the "Competent" line.

TASK 12

Hand dribble stationary and moving forward

"I want you to dribble the ball three times at the first pylon, and then I want you to dribble from the first pylon to the next. Dribble the ball as best you can. So, dribble three times at the first pylon and then dribble the ball to the next pylon and stop. Ready? Dribble now."

Framework

The Object Control—Lower Body Score is based on the following questions and their scoring systems:

TASK 13

Kick ball

"I want you to kick the ball at the wall. You can kick the ball with one foot - whichever foot you like. I want you to kick the ball with one foot as best you can. Try to kick the ball above the marker on the wall. Please try to kick the ball as best you can above the marker. Ready? Kick now."

Note: Left/right symmetry is important for physical literacy. Ask the participant to complete this movement with both legs.

Equipment

For this task, you'll need:

- A large wall (target area)
- 1 pylon (4 metres away from the wall)
- Soccer ball (or similar)
- Marker on wall placed 1 metre above the ground

Scoring System

Acquired Developing Initial: Presence of numerous major Competent: Basic level of execution gaps during execution: with minor sequencing errors: • Misses the ball due to a lack of • Ball is directed appropriately coordination and timing Speed of ball is good • No synchrony between upper and lower body • Support leg and foot are poorly planted • Whip-like kicking action with no follow-through • No speed or ball control Kicks with toe Proficient: Overall proficiency

Emerging: *Limited number of major* gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task:

- Speed of ball is slow
- Some evidence of directional control is present
- Foot contact reasonably solid

is depicted by the quality of the movement:

- Ball is powerfully propelled in a controlled direction
- Upper body leads lower body
- Strong follow-through is present

Betty coaches a U11 girls' soccer team. Based on the PLAY fun tool, she decides to have them all kick a ball over a one-metre line on the wall as a way to gauge their kicking skill.

One of the girls, Vanessa, lacks coordination and often misses the ball. When she does kick the ball, she rarely gets reasonable contact. Betty sees that a big part of the issue is due to the poor placement of Vanessa's support leg, and also because Vanessa lacks synchrony between her upper and lower body.

When Vanessa does connect with the ball, she is not able to get it above the one-metre mark on the wall, and though the rebound sometimes comes back in Vanessa's direction, it is not consistent. Betty doesn't think Vanessa has played before, but she knows that with practice she'll get better. Betty places a mark halfway under "Initial."



Foot dribble moving forward

"I want you to dribble the ball from one pylon to the next. I want you to dribble the ball as best you can. Please try to dribble the ball as best you can from here to there. Ready? Go now."

Note: Left/right symmetry is important for physical literacy. Ask the participant to complete this movement with both legs.

Equipment

For this task, you'll need:

- 2 pylons (5 metres apart)
- Soccer ball (or similar)

Scoring System

Developing

Initial: Presence of numerous major gaps during execution:

- Ball control is absent or rudimentary
- Ball is lost for majority of movement
- Foot-eye control is disjointed

Acquired

Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors:

- Ball in control through most of the distance
- Starts and stops at lines
- Body and ball separation varies through movement
- May exhibit some control limitations during initiation and stopping of ball
- Body may twist to allow the contact leg to lag and maintain contact with the ball
- May not face forward the entire distance

Emerging: Limited number of major gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task:

- Able to exhibit some ball control in a stuttering manner
- Initiation and stopping of ball may be absent or very limited (ball travels past the second pylon)

Proficient: Overall proficiency is depicted by the quality of the movement:

- Ball trajectory is in control for the entire distance
- Body and ball separation is well maintained during each step
- Ball start and stop is fluid and well controlled
- Trunk faces forward the entire distance

Now that Coach Betty has spent an adequate amount of time on their players' kicking, she wants to see how capable they are of dribbling the ball forward using their feet. Kim is one of the first players to collect a ball and step up to the first pylon. She's confident to try the activity, and it doesn't take long for Betty to see why.

From the moment Kim pushes the ball forward for the first time, she keeps it well under control. She uses both feet so as to keep the ball at an appropriate distance from her body as she moves, and only rarely does she need to lunge forward or step out of line to control the ball. Even when she approaches the pylon and turns, she keeps the ball at a controlled distance.

Betty notices minor turning in Kim's body throughout the drill. Sometimes Kim twists so that she's no longer facing forward, and once or twice the leg with which she is dribbling the ball lags, causing the rest of her body to pull ahead. However, these moments are few, and Kim always seems able to pull the drill back together before she has fully lost control of the ball. Betty places a mark a little past the halfway mark under "Competent."

		Devel	oping					Acqu	uired		
	Initia	al	Em	nerging			Compe	tent	Pro	ficient	
								X			
0	10	20	30	40	5	0	60	70	80	90	100



4 Balance, Stability & Body Control

Framework

The Balance, Stability & Body Control Score is based on the following questions and their Scoring Systems:

TASK 15

Balance walk (heel-to-toe) forward

"I want you to walk 'heel-to-toe' from one pylon to the next while keeping your balance. Walk as quickly as you can while keeping your balance. Walk from here to there while keeping your balance. Ready? Walk now."

Equipment

For this task, you'll need:

• 2 pylons placed 2 metres apart (or a 2-metre line on the floor)

Scoring System

Scoring System	
Developing	Acquired
 Initial: Presence of numerous major gaps during execution: Loses balance repeatedly Does not use arms to balance Poor or inconsistent placement of feet from step to step 	 Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors: Able to maintain balance through all steps Shows good foot placement, but may be slow Exhibits minor balance control problems through some of the steps Upper limb wavering may be evident
 Emerging: Limited number of major gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task: Able to demonstrate features of balance control Tentative stepping action Non-fluid Major balance control problems during stepping May lose balance once or twice in all steps 	 Proficient: Overall proficiency is depicted by the quality of the movement: Quickly walks along the line in a fluid continuous motion Very minor balance adjustments may be evident at ankles May be slight upper limb wavering

Stacy, a former high-performance gymnast, owns a gymnasium where she runs various introductory gymnastics classes. She enjoys watching the young participants who come to her classes and experience the various gymnastics skills while developing their physical literacy. Her current group is all seven- and eight-year-olds, and today she's observing their balance by having them walk forward from heel-to-toe.

As Rudy steps up to the first pylon and begins walking heel-to-toe toward the other pylon, he starts out tentatively and his first couple of steps are unbalanced and lack fluidity. However, as he gets moving, Rudy maintains balance and a composed body posture.

Stacy sees that as Rudy's confidence in the activity builds, so too does his speed. However, as he goes faster, he's also more prone to wobble. Rudy does a pretty good job of using his arms for balance, but when he begins to wobble, he tends to flail.

Stacy places a mark under "Competent" but closer to "Emerging" because when Rudy takes his time and goes slow, he handles the task well and displays fairly well-developed technique.

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		Devel	oping				Acq	uired		
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						X				
0	10	20	30	40	50) 60	70	80	90	10

Balance walk (toe-to-heel) backward

"I want you to walk backward 'toe-to-heel' from one pylon to the next while keeping your balance. Walk backward as quickly as you can while keeping your balance. Walk backward from here to there while keeping your balance. Ready? Walk now."

Equipment

For this task, you'll need:

• 2 pylons placed 2 metres apart (or a 2-metre line on the floor)

Scoring System

Developing	Acquired
 Initial: Presence of numerous major gaps during execution: Loses balance repeatedly Doesn't use arms to balance Poor or inconsistent placement of feet from step to step 	 Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors: Able to maintain balance through all steps Shows good foot placement, but may be slow Exhibits minor balance control problems through some of the steps Upper limb wavering may be evident
Emerging: Limited number of major gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task: • Able to demonstrate features of balance control • Tentative stepping action • Non-fluid • Major balance control problems during stepping • May lose balance once or twice in all steps	 Proficient: Overall proficiency is depicted by the quality of the movement: Performs a "cat walk" along the line in a fluid continuous motion Very minor balance adjustments may be evident at ankles May be slight upper limb wavering

Once Stacy has the class go through the forward task, she then has them walk backward between the pylons by going toe-to-heel. When Rudy begins he again starts tentatively and with some balance issues, but this time he does not work through them as quickly as when he walked forward. Stacy sees weaknesses in his technique.

As Rudy walks backward, he loses his balance often. Even when he slows right down, he struggles to get through the steps without wobbling. His actions lack fluidity and, although he gets his arms out to help him balance, more often than not they are flapping in the air. She does note, however, that Rudy places his feet in the right places each time, even if he loses his balance shortly thereafter.

Stacy finds it interesting that Rudy showed good technique and balance moving forward, but not so much when he moves backward. She places a mark under "Emerging," slightly closer to the "Initial" side.

		Devel	oping					Acqu	uired		
	Initia	al	Em	nerging		C	ompe	tent	Pro	ficient	
			Х								
0	10	20	30	40	5	0	60	70	80	90	100

Drop to the ground and get back up

"I want you to drop to the ground and come right back up. I want you to drop to the ground and get back up as best you can. Ready? Go now."

Equipment

For this task, you'll only need floor space.

Scoring System

Developing	Acquired
 Initial: Presence of numerous major gaps during execution: Sits down tentatively one limb at a time Kneels first, then slowly sequences limbs to ground 	 Competent: Basic level of execution with minor sequencing errors: Performs a "burpee-like" movement without fluid control May show a longer pause on ground and lack fluidity between drop and coming back up
Emerging: Limited number of major gaps, but able to execute basic sequencing of the task:	Proficient: Overall proficiency is depicted by the quality of the movement:
Places each limb down in succession but smoothly	Person performs a controlled fall to a momentary stop on the ground
Doesn't drop to floor	 Rapidly and fluidly returns to standing position

Observation Example

Dustin is a ski instructor who loves helping young kids who come through his program. When they first join, most of them are not able to stay up on the skis and spend most of their time sliding along the snow on their bodies. He takes great pleasure in seeing these kids get in control of their skis as well as their bodies. A big part of skiing is being physically literate, so Dustin has his students drop to the ground and get back up as part of their physical literacy warm-up.

Sarah is one of the smaller kids in this week's group, and he can tell she's shy. This is probably her first time skiing, and maybe she's not used to skills like these. He watches as she tentatively lowers herself to a sitting position, one limb at a time, with jerky movements. The next time she drops to her knees and pauses there before slowly standing back up.

Dustin hopes that as Sarah gets more comfortable with her surroundings and being around the group, she will explore her movements with a little more rigour instead of holding back. But at the same time, if it is a lack of skill development that's holding her back, he wants to make sure that she gets the adequate amount of time and instruction to help her learn these movements properly. For now, he places a mark under "Initial."

Equipment

For this task, you'll need:

- Floor space
- 1 ball

Scoring System

Developing Acquired Initial: Presence of numerous major Competent: Basic level of execution gaps during execution: with minor sequencing errors: • Has difficulty reaching the object • Able to control ball during lift and lower • Fumbles in the lift or lower Transition between lift and lower • Drops the object segments is slightly choppy • Exhibits right-to-left shifts in lift Some sway or substantial body twisting **Emerging:** *Limited number of major* Proficient: Overall proficiency gaps, but able to execute basic is depicted by the quality of the sequencing of the task: movement: Transition between lift and lower • Fluid and controlled reach with segments is broken and not fluid momentary pause at lift • Exhibits swaying or minimal Secure grasp and synchronized body-twisting lifting action from all body parts • May be a stoop or squat lift Well-controlled descent and

TASK 18

Lift and Lower

"I want you lift up the ball above your head and then lower it back down to the ground. I want you to lift and then lower the ball as best you can. Ready? Go now."

Observation Example

Luke is a physician who is coaching a U12 volleyball team. Admittedly, Luke is not an expert in volleyball, but he does know physical literacy. As long as he helps the girls become as physically literate as possible, he's confident their success in volleyball will follow.

low-impact contact with ground

He has each player take a ball and spread out around the gym floor. Using his PLAY fun tool, Luke asks that they all lift the ball above their heads and lower it back to the ground. The girls begin the task and Luke watches as Carly performs the drill with a high degree of competence.

She lifts and lowers the ball confidently with a secure grasp. She maintains control the whole time. The transition from lift to lower is smooth, and all her movements appear to be fluid. Also, her body is controlled and neither her limbs nor her trunk sways during the activity. Without having seen Carly playing volleyball on the court, he has a feeling she'll be competent when she does. He places a mark under "Proficient."

Scoring and Taking Action

Scoring

To score the PLAY fun tool, measure the distance between the beginning of the "Initial" box (left-most side of the box) and the assessors mark in one of the four categories. This distance will be a score out of 100 (i.e., 1 point per millimetre).

Do this for all 18 tasks to obtain the child's PLAYfun Physical Literacy Score.

Taking Action

- Continue to routinely observe the child's skills using PLAY fun or PLAY basic to ensure they are developing physical literacy.
- Use the PLAY fun tracking sheet located at the back of the workbook to keep track of these scores for your reference in future observations. This will allow you to see how much the child has improved, and also how quickly. Both of these indications will help identify problematic areas in need of improvement.
- Ensure that the child has many different opportunities to develop ALL fundamental skills. This could be in the home, at school, in organized sport, in community recreation and/or during leisure time.

For a list of quality sports and activities that will help the child develop their locomotor, object control and balance skills, visit: play.physicalliteracy.ca.

- Ensure that the child can be active in a fun and safe environment. This will allow them to advance in competency, which will in turn make them more confident. Without confidence, the likelihood of performing a task in front of people is dramatically reduced. This will limit the child's desire to participate in activities with a group, on a team, and even with friends and family.
- Ensure that the child understands words that describe movement. What is a hop versus a jump? Visit our website for a glossary of movement terms.
- Gain additional insight into a child's physical literacy by using the other PLAY Tools at your disposal.

For more information, visit: play.physicalliteracy.ca.

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Physical Literacy Observation for Youth

 $\operatorname{PLAY} \mathit{fun}$ is intended for children aged five and up.

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Age:

Comprehension		Mimic Describe Demo																		
		Prompt																		
Confidence		Confidence																		
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tence	Acquired	Competent																		
Competence	Developing	Emerging																		
	Devel	Initial																		
		Task	1. Run a square	2. Run there and back	3. Run, jump, then land on two feet	4. Crossovers	5. Skip	6. Gallop	7. Нор	8. Jump	9. Overhand throw	10. Strike with stick	11. One-handed catch	12. Hand dribble stationary & moving forward	13. Kick ball	14. Foot dribble moving forward	15. Balance walk (heel-to-toe) forward	16. Balance walk (toe-to-heel) backward	17. Drop to ground & back up	18. Lift and lower

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Participant's Name	
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Add up the section totals to obtain the Subtotal.

Next, divide the subtotal by 18 to obtain the PLAYfun Physical Literacy Score.

Running		Score
1. Run a square		
2. Run there and back		
3. Run, jump, then land on two feet		
	Total	
Locomotor		
4. Crossovers		
5. Skip		
6. Gallop		
7. Нор		
8. Jump		
	Total	
Object Control—Upper Body		
9. Overhand throw		
10. Strike with stick		
11. One-handed catch		
12. Hand dribble stationary and moving forward		
	Total	
Object Control—Lower Body		
13. Kick ball		
14. Foot dribble moving forward		
	Total	
Balance, Stability & Body Control		
15. Balance walk (heel-to-toe) forward		
16. Balance walk (toe-to-heel) backward		
17. Drop to the ground and back up		
18. Lift and Lower		
	Total	
PLAYfun Physical Literacy Score		
Running		
Locomotor		
Object Control—Upper Body		
Object Control—Lower Body		
Balance, Stability & Body Control		
Add up the section totals to obtain the Subtotal.	Subtotal	
Divide the subtetal by 19 to obtain the DI AV fun Physical Literacy Score	Total	

Physical Literacy Tracking Sheet

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Name												
Date												
Observation #	_	2	\sim	4	2	9	7	∞	0	10		12
Task												
Running												
Locomotor												
Object Control – Upper Body												
Object Control – Lower Body												
Balance, Stability & Body Control												
Total												
Name												
Date												
Observation #	<u></u>	2	3	4	5	9	7	∞	6	10	11	12
Task												
Running												
Locomotor												
Object Control – Upper Body												
Object Control – Lower Body												
Balance, Stability & Body Control												
Total												



Acknowledgements

Version 2.0 – January 2023

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PLAYfun 1.0: Physical Literacy Assessment for Youth Workbook

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References:

The information presented in this PLAY basic Workbook is based on the research done by Dr. Dean Kriellaars, and the content of several Sport for Life resources including Canadian Sport for Life Resource Paper; Developing Physical Literacy; Physical Literacy Concept Paper; An Introduction to Physical Literacy; and Mental Fitness for Long-Term Athlete Development. These Sport for Life resources can be found at sportforlife.ca/resources.

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