

## **Initiation Ball – Lesson 1**

### **WARM-UP**

#### 1. Blob Tag (Whole Group Activity) 5 minutes

Skills - running, dodging, agility, co-operation

Organization – mark out boundaries of plying area desired. Two players are chosen to be "it" and the rest scatter.

Activity – on "go" the Blob chases, trying to tag others

- tagged players join hands with the blob
- when Blob becomes 3 only the outside players can tag
- when Blob becomes 4 split to make 2 mini-blobs

Split up into teams and go through the following stations in a clockwise rotation

#### **Station 1 : Diamond Orientation (5 minutes)**

Skills - Becoming familiar with diamond layout and ball terms

Location: Home Plate, First Base, Second Base, Third Base, Infield, Outfield

Organization: Put 1 adult in charge for every 2-3 players

Make sure players know names of other players in their group and adult in charge.

Activity: Familiarize players with diamond layout and terms Demonstrate as you speak. Start players at Home plate making them familiar with the name (Home) and that this is where the batter stands to hit. Let players pretend to hit and run to 1B, run to 2B, run to 3B, run back to home. Talk briefly about what outfield is.

#### **Station 2 : Catching - 5 minutes**

Location – right field

Skills – proper use of glove for catching

Equipment –1 beanbag and wooden glove for each player

Organization – each player has a glove and bean bag and space to work in where they won't bump into others. Objective I to get the kids to get under the ball to catch it

Activity – each player tosses the bean bag in the air for a self-catch coach emphasizes proper use of two hands

- 1) See if they can throw it higher each time
- 2) How many consecutive catches can they make?
- 3) Throw a little away from you and run to get under. – (a progression would be to have 1 adult toss it to every 2 kids - if skill level is high enough, players can throw to each other.)
- 4) Move to a ball once the kids are comfortable.

### **Station 3: Powerball - 5 minutes**

Location: left field

Skills: throwing, catching, cooperation

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

Activity: Coach teaches progression for learning proper throwing technique (grip, step and throw). Players start with no ball then progress to throwing the ball to an adult. To help make it fun emphasis should be on trying to "blast" the adult with the ball.

**The next three stations are as follows. You are at each station for 10 minutes. Rotate in a clockwise order.**

### **Station 1 : Hitting off a Tee**

Location : Tees are on the left field line. Skills: Hitting

Equipment : one bat, and tee for each player, balls for each player

Organization: Spread the kids out so that, there is lots of room between the kids so that no one will be hit with a bat.

Activity: QUICKLY review the skill of hitting according to the skills section. Have the kids put a ball on their tee and while trying to use proper technique, hit the ball. Simply repeat until the time is up.

### **Station 2 : Fielding Balls**

Location: Players are in left field

Skills: Fielding and throwing

Equipment : Gloves

Organization: Spread the kids out on the field.

Activity: Have the kids field ground balls and throw them back in to where the tees are.

### **Station 3: Beep Beep**

Location – infield

Skills –rounding the bases, speed development, conditioning Equipment – 4 bases

Organization – put bases down in proper order. One player starts at home plate and the extra players stand behind him.

Activity – on "GO" the fast player runs around all of the bases and returns to tag the next player in line. When all players have gone they all yell BEEP, BEEP. The coach can time either by a watch or by simply counting. Repeat, always trying to better the time. Emphasize proper rounding techniques including stepping on the inside corner and 'rounding' the bases.

### **Cool Down**

The head coach will take the kids for a slow jog around the diamond and end up in center field. Do a couple of stretches and explain why we cool down. Although at this age group there isn't a lot of stress on their bodies we are trying to establish good training technique.



## **Initiation Ball – Lesson 2**

### **WARM-UP**

#### **1. What Time Is It Mr. Wolf? -Whole Group Activity (5 minutes)**

Skills - running, dodging, agility

Organization – One player is Mr. Wolf, who starts at one end of the designated areas. Other players start at the other end.

Activity – players start moving toward Mr. Wolf calling "What time is it Mr. Wolf?"

- Mr. Wolf calls out various times

- When Mr. Wolf calls "Dinner Time" he runs after other players who try to get back across the safe line before being caught. - Those that are caught join Mr. Wolf to help do the catching for the next round

#### **2. Skill Knowledge (5 minutes)**

Hitting Progressions and Hip Action

Organization: Have the kids line up on the third and first base lines.

Action: Teach stance and hip action in skills section.

Focus only on these two actions (feet wider than shoulders and pivoting on the ball foot), as they are critical to a good swing.

They will be unable to handle too much information at once.

Have them practice the motion with an imaginary bat. Explain to them that they will be using a real bat at one of the stations coming up. You can use the term "squishing the bug" to teach the pivot of the back foot.

Split up into teams and go through the following stations in a clockwise rotation

#### **Station 1 : Sky Ball (10 minutes)**

Skills - proper use of glove and positioning when catching fly balls

Location: Infield

Organization: put 1 adult in charge for every 2-3 players

Make sure players know names of other players in their group and adult in charge.

Activity: Coach will demonstrate progressions as in skills section

Players will then practice catching high tosses from an adult using a tennis ball.

- 1) See if they can catch a progressively higher thrown ball?
- 2) How many consecutive catches can they make?
- 3) The adult can try to throw the ball a little distance away from the player and they run to get under it. If skill level is high enough, players can throw to each other.

### **Station 2 : Space Shuttle (5 minutes)**

Location — right field

Skills — throwing for distance

Equipment -1 ball and glove for each player Extra balls for markers

Organization — each player has a ball and space to work in where they won't bump into others.

Activity — players stand behind a line and see how far they can throw. The adult marks where the ball lands. Repeat and try to beat the marker. Teach the players to step towards the target and then throw. A three finger grip across the "C" is ideal.

### **Homing Device (5 minutes)**

Location — right field

Skills — throwing for accuracy

Equipment —1 ball and glove for each player, extra balls, jackets, shoes etc. for markers

Organization -each player has a ball and space to work in where they won't bump into others.

Activity — players stand behind a line and see how close to the group of markers or jacket or shoes etc. that they can throw. The adult throws the ball back. Repeat and try to get closer to the target.

### **Station 3 – Monster Bash (10 minutes)**

Location: left field

Skills: emphasis on stride and hip action of a good compact swing

Equipment: 1 bat per player, shoelace sticks

Organization : Players find a place where they are not going to hit anyone. Place the players an appropriate distance apart (1 adult for every 2 players).

Activity: The adult will hold the stick so that the end of the shoelace (pretend it's a monster or something else appropriate) is in front of the base at various heights. Players swing the bat to try and hit the shoelace. Alternate players every 5-10 swings. Other players can be taking practice swings. Emphasize the stance and pivot of the back foot.

### **Lead-up Game: Roadrunner (20 minutes)**

Location : 1 team in the infield, one team in left field and one team in right field. Each team will be playing this game on their own in their own area.

Skills: Learning about the game

Equipment : one bat, 1 tee, 2 bases, 3-4 balls

Organization: Work in partners. One group of partners (roadrunners) is at home plate. The other two sets (coyotes) are out in front of the tee in appropriate positions (same as an infield - without getting too concerned about actual positions), spread out. Establish a home plate and 1B

Activity: One of the Roadrunners hits the ball off the tee at Home Plate and runs to first and back before the coyotes get the ball back to the catcher. If the ball is caught in the air the batter is "out" and will be awarded no points. Fielders may not run with the ball – they must throw it. For every successful return to Home Plate the roadrunners get one point. The adult may have to help out at home. After each player has had three turns rotate in a new set of 2.

### **Cool-Down (5 minutes)**

The head coach will take the kids for a slow jog around the diamond and end up in center field. Do a couple of stretches and explain why we cool down. Although at this age group there isn't a lot of stress on their bodies we are trying to establish good training techniques. The head coach will review the practice and answer any questions. After fielding questions gather everyone in, tell them how great they are and give 3 cheers for them.

## **Initiation Ball – Lesson 3**

### **WARM-UP**

1. Shadows -Whole Group Activity (5 minutes)

Skills - chasing, dodging, co-operation

Organization – 2 players designated as chasers and others scatter within a given area.

Activity – on "go" players scatter, while chasers try to step on their shadow  
- change chasers often

Split up into teams and go through the following stations in clockwise rotation

### **Station 1 : Tee Hitting (10 minutes)**

Skills - hitting, hand-eye coordination

Location: Hitting into the backstop.

Equipment: 1 tee and bat for every player 6 balls per player.

Organization: place tees in front of and behind the backstop so that the players are hitting into the backstop. Make sure that there is enough room between them so that no one gets hit with a bat. If there is not enough room for everyone to bat at the same time then take turns.

Activity: Coach will demonstrate progressions as in skills section. Players will then practice hitting the ball into the screen and repeating the drill for the duration. For those that this is easy to do use a soft toss from the side rather than using the tee.

### **Station 2 : Toss and Run (10 minutes)**

Location – right field

Skills – throwing for accuracy

Equipment –1 ball and glove for each 3 players

Organization – Split the group into 2 teams of three. Have the kids stand facing each other 10-15 feet apart with two players at one side and one at the other.

Activity – Starting at the end with 2 players the first player in line throws the ball to the person opposite them. As soon as they throw the ball they run and follow it so that now they are in the other line. They turn around to receive the ball. As soon as the player receives the ball they throw it and follow their throw. If the players are of a higher skill level they can be moved further apart.



### **Station 3: Fielding Grounders (10 minutes)**

Location: Players are in left field

Skills: Fielding and throwing

Equipment : Wooden Gloves

Organization: 2 groups of 3 single file with 1 adult per group.

Activity: The adult will throw the player a ground ball. Once the player has thrown it back they go to the back of the line. Stress the importance of the "next" in line backing up the person who is catching.

### **Lead-up Game: Semi-Circle Ball (15 minutes)**

Location : 1 team in the infield, one team batting and one team in right field.

Skills: Throwing, catching, cooperation, teamwork

Equipment : 4 bases, balls, markers

Activity: place a semi-circle of markers approximately at the edge of the infield  
Defensive team has 1 player at Home and the rest position themselves around the infield at approximately the same distance. Both markers and players can be adjusted according to skill level.

Offensive team tries to throw the ball over or through the markers and then runs through first base. Players get 1 point if ball goes past the markers. Defense throws the ball Home as quickly as possible. Change sides after each offensive player throws.

The team that is in the outfield can work on whatever the coach decides. There are tees and balls available (which is probably a good option as most kids like hitting more than they like fielding).

After five minutes – rotate. Defense goes batting, outfield becomes defense and the offense goes to the outfield for drills.

### **Cool-Down (5 minutes)**

The head coach will take the kids for a slow jog around the diamond and end up in center field. Do a couple of stretches and explain why we cool down. Although at this age group there isn't a lot of stress on their bodies we are trying to establish good training techniques.

### **Initiation Ball – Lesson 4**

## **WARM-UP**

### 1. Toes -Whole Group Activity (5 minutes)

Skills - chasing, dodging,

Organization – all players designated as chasers and all coaches as targets.

Activity – on "go" coaches scatter, while chasers try to step on the coach's toes

Split up into teams and go through the following stations in clockwise rotation

### **Station 1 : Tee Hitting (10 minutes)**

Skills - hitting, hand-eye coordination

Location: Hitting into the backstop.

Equipment: 1 tee, and bat for every player 6 balls per player.

Organization: place tees in front of and behind the backstop so that the players are hitting into the backstop. Make sure that there is enough room between them so that no one gets hit with a bat. If there is not enough room for everyone to bat at the same time then take turns.

Activity: Coach will demonstrate progressions as in skills section. Players will then practice hitting the ball into the screen and repeating the drill for the duration. For those that this is easy to do use a soft toss from the side rather than using the tee

### **Station 2 : Spell Your Name (10 minutes)**

Location – right field

Skills – throwing, receiving

Equipment –1 ball and glove for each 2 players

Organization – Split the group into 3 teams of two. Have the kids stand facing each other 10-15' apart . Try to pair up by ability.

Activity – Partners throw the ball back and forth overhand. They get a letter in their name every time they make a catch. When they complete their name they move back 2 steps. (An adult may have to be the thrower if the skill level is not advanced enough.)

### **Station 3: THE CREEP (10 minutes)**

Location: Players are in left field

Skills: Ready Position and Fielding

Equipment : Gloves, Balls

Organization: a 1:2 ratio of coach to player is preferred

Activity: Teach the proper ready position (feet shoulder width apart, knees bent and glove open with fingers down). Have the kids 'creep' in as if they were going to receive a ground ball., Practice getting the free hand to cover the ball. Once they have the idea Start throwing ground balls to them, having them return to a starting line and 'creeping'.

### **Lead-up Game: Hit and Run (15 minutes)**

Location: one team in the infield, one team in left field and one in right field.  
All teams are playing their own games.

Skills: Hitting and dropping the bat rather than throwing it

Equipment : For each group: batting tee, 6 balls, each team needs a flat home plate or base to act as home plate plus a marker or base to be 1B

Organization: Set up a Tee in front of home plate or base. Draw a circle on the ground where the bat should be dropped before running. Place first base 30-40 feet from where the tee is set up.

Players are divided as follows: 1 batter, 1 on deck, 1 at first base and the others spread in the infield.

Activity: First player hits off tee, drops their bat in the marked circle, and runs to the base. Then he returns to be an on deck batter. Fielders retrieve the ball and try to throw it to first. An adult should be backing up first. If the first baseman catches the ball he tosses it to the adult who is backing him up and the adult throws it to the adult that is replacing balls on the tee. While the ball is being retrieved the on deck batter prepares to hit. After each batter has had 3 turns they rotate out and a new set of batters comes in.

### **Base running: Squash the Mosquito (5 minutes) Whole group activity**

Skills: Rounding the bases

Equipment: 4 bases

Organization: Put the bases down in their proper location on the diamond.

Activity: Have all players at home plate. Pretend there is a mosquito on the INSIDE corner of each base. The players take a swing with an imaginary bat and runs as fast as possible to the next base, stepping on the mosquito as they round it. Remind players that it is easier to step on the "mosquito" if they run a little to the outside of the base line as they approach the base. It would be helpful to put a marker down that they would have to run to the outside of.

### **Cool-Down (5 minutes)**

The head coach will take the kids for a slow jog around the diamond and end up in center field. Do a couple of stretches and explain why we cool down. Although at this age group there isn't a lot of stress on their bodies we are trying to establish good training techniques.

## **Initiation Ball – Lesson 5**

### **WARM-UP**

#### 1. SIMILES -Whole Group Activity (5 minutes)

Skills - original movement by children , exercise body and imagination, flexibility

Activity – Try not to demonstrate unless there is no response from the players.

Wobble like jello on a plate

Skip like a giant with big boots

Pop like a bursting bubble

Walk like a giant with a stiff neck

Fly like superman

Move you legs like a pair of scissors

Hop like a frog

Shake like a wet dog

Hop like a hammer has been dropped on your foot

Jump like cheerleaders who have won a game

Melt like an ice cube in the sun

Stretch like a puppy waking from a nap

Split up into teams and go through the following stations in clockwise rotation

### **Station 1 : Tee Hitting (10 minutes)**

Skills - hitting, hand-eye coordination

Location: Left field

Equipment: 1 tee, bat for every player 6 balls per player.

Organization: place tees on the third base line. Make sure that there is enough room between them so that no one gets hit with a bat. If there is not enough room for everyone to bat at the same time then take turns.

Activity: Coach will demonstrate progressions (grip, stance, pivot). Players will then practice hitting the ball into left field.

### **Station 2: Fielding (10 minutes)**

Location – right field

Skills – fielding ground balls and fly balls

Equipment – balls and gloves

Organization – Split the group into 3 teams. Have the kids stand facing the coach 15' apart.

Activity – Coach throws the ball into the air or on the ground. Make sure that the players are in the ready position (feet shoulder width apart and knees slightly bent) before the ball is thrown. Have the non-receiving player practice backing up their partner.

### **Station 3: Soft Toss (10 minutes)**

Location: At the backstop

Skills: Batting

Equipment : 3 bats and 6 balls per bat

Organization: a 1:2 ratio of coach to player is preferred. Spread out along the backstop or use the other side if there is not enough room

Activity: Have the player stand at the backstop so that their lead shoulder is pointing at the backstop ( normal batting position) . The coach from the side will toss a ball slightly in front of the batter and they will hit it into the backstop. After 10 hits change batters. The players not batting can shag balls for the coach.

### **Lead-up Game: Bucket Ball (15 minutes)**

Location: Split the three teams into 2 teams so that each 'new' team has approximately 9 players. Split this up again so that there are 4-5 players per team. One is set up in the infield and one is set up in the outfield.

Skills: Throwing, fielding, base running, co-operation, teamwork

Equipment: For each group: 6 balls, 1 plastic bucket and 4 bases

Organization: One team of 4-5 players is batting. The other team of 4-5 is in the infield with one player at home plate with the bucket and the rest spread out over the infield.

Activity: The batter' throws out two balls in quick succession and runs around the bases and tries to make it home before the fielding team gets both balls in the pail. The runner stops at whatever base he is at when both balls are in the bucket and continues on running the bases when his teammate throws the next two balls. If the ball is caught in the air the batter is 'out'. The fielding team fields the ball and throws it to the catcher who puts it in the bucket. Fielders may not run with the ball. It must be thrown home. Relay the ball if necessary. Remind players to make sure catcher is looking. An adult may have to help the catcher out at home.

If a ball is thrown through the infield, simply toss another one in and keep playing. After each player has gone once, switch the offense and defense around. Make sure to change catchers every time so that everyone gets a chance to play there.

### **Throwing for Accuracy: Hit the Coach (10 minutes)**

Skills: Rounding the bases

Equipment: 2 balls per player and some parents to help shag balls

Organization: Have the players stand in the infield, looking out at the grass line where the infield and outfields meet. That is their line and they cannot cross it. The coaches stand out about 20 feet or so, use your own judgment. The players try to hit their coach and their coach only with the ball. The coach may want to wear a glove. Have extra parents shag the balls and toss them back to the players. You can play so many points/hit to help the kids stay focused.

### **Cool-Down (5 minutes)**

The head coach will take the kids for a slow jog around the diamond and end up in center field. Do a couple of stretches and explain why we cool down. Although at this age group there isn't a lot of stress on their bodies we are trying to establish good training techniques.

## **Initiation Ball – Lesson 6**

### **WARM-UP**

1. What Time is it Mr. Wolf? -Whole Group Activity (5 minutes) Same as Lesson 2 Warm-up

Split up into teams and go through the following stations in clockwise rotation

#### **Station 1 : Tee Hitting (10 minutes)**

Skills - hitting, hand-eye coordination

Location: Left field

Equipment: 1 tee, bat for every player 6 balls per player.

Organization: place tees on the third base line. Make sure that there is enough room between them so that no one gets hit with a bat. If there is not enough room for everyone to bat at the same time then take turns.

Activity: Coach will demonstrate progressions *as in* skills section Players will then practice hitting the ball into left field.

#### **Station 2: Shagging Balls (10 minutes)**

Location – left field

Skills – fielding ground balls and fly balls

Equipment –balls and gloves

Organization – Shag the balls that are being hit by the team at Station 1 and throw them back in .



### **Station 3: Home Run (10 minutes)**

Location: At the backstop

Skills: Throwing Accuracy

Equipment : 3 round plastic targets and lots of balls

Organization: 1 group at each target. Mark out 4 lines at various distances from the target. Distances can be according to ability of the group. A high success rate is wanted.

Activity: The line closest to the target is a 'single' if the target is hit. The second line is a 'double' etc... up to a home run. The players stand at the various lines to see if they can hit the target. Points are awarded as follows:

Single: 1 point

Double : 2 points

Triple: 3 points

Home Run: 4 points

The objective can be to see if each player can get more points on each consecutive throw or it can be made competitive with other groups by totaling each group's points.

### **Lead-up Game: Tee Ball (15 minutes)**

Location : Split the three teams into 2 teams so that each 'new' team has approximately 9 players. Split this up again so that there are 4-5 players per team. One is set up in the infield and one is set up in the outfield.

Skills: Throwing, fielding, batting, base running, co-operation, teamwork

Equipment : For each group: 2 balls, 1 tee, 1 plastic bucket and 4 bases

Organization: One team of 4-5 players is batting. The other team of 4-5 is in the infield with one player at home plate with the bucket and the rest spread out over the infield.

Activity: The ' batter' hits a ball off of a tee and runs around the bases and tries to make it home before the fielding team gets the ball in the pail. The runner stops at whatever base he is at when the ball is in the bucket and continues on running the bases when his teammate hits the ball. If the ball is caught in the air the batter is 'out'. The fielding team fields the ball and throws it to the catcher who puts it in the bucket. Fielders may not run with the ball. It must be thrown home. Relay the ball if necessary. Remind players to make sure catcher is looking. An adult may have to help out at home.

After each player has gone once, switch the offense and defense around. Make sure to change catchers every time so that everyone gets a chance to play there.

**Cool-Down (5 minutes)**

The head coach will take the kids for a slow jog around the diamond and end up in center field. Do a couple of stretches and explain why we cool down. Although at this age group there isn't a lot of stress on their bodies we are trying to establish good training techniques.

## **Initiation Ball – Lesson 7**

### **WARM-UP**

1. Partner Tag -Whole Group Activity (5 minutes)

Skills - running, chasing

Activity –Partners face each other from opposite ends of designated playing area

On "GO", one partner tries to tag the other. When the partner is tagged, the roles are reversed.

After being tagged, the player performs a task ( i.e. 3 jumping jacks, etc..) to give the other player time to get away

Split up into teams and go through the following stations in clockwise rotation

### **CIRCUS TIME !!!**

#### **Ring 1: Performing Seal (5 minutes)**

Skills - fielding fly balls

Location: Left field

Equipment: gloves and balls

Activity: The "Ring Master" throws the ball up in the air to one "seal" at a time, who catches it. See how many balls the seals can catch in the time allotted. Two groups of three would work best if there are 2 'Ring Masters" available.

#### **Ring 2: Hungry Lions (5 minutes)**

Location – right field

Skills – fielding ground balls

Equipment – balls and gloves

Organization – Split the group into 3 teams of two. Have the kids stand facing the coach 15 feet apart.

Activity – The 'Ring Master' throws grounders to one 'lion' at a time, who gobbles it up. See how many 'lions' can eat without dropping the food.

### **Ring 3: Prancing Ponies (5 minutes)**

Location: At home plate

Skills: Baserunning

Equipment : 4 bases put out in regular infield position

Activity: "ponies" take turns taking a swing at an imaginary ball, dropping the bat, and rounding bases as fast as they can.

\*\* At this time someone will have to help rearrange the equipment *as we* want to keep this moving quite quickly

### **Ring 4: Throwing Elephants (5 minutes)**

Skills - throwing for accuracy

Location: Backstop

Equipment: gloves and balls and plastic targets

Activity: "Elephants" use their trunks (arms) to throw balls at targets. Vary the distance according to ability

### **Ring 5: Fireworks (5 minutes)**

Location – left field

Skills – hitting off tees

Equipment – 3 tees, three bats and lots of balls

Organization – Split the group into pairs.

Activity – One partner has a bucket of balls with about 10 balls in it. The other partner is the batter. The idea is to hit the ten balls off the tees as quickly as possible. As the batter hits the ball, an adult replaces it with another ball. Once all of the balls are hit they switch and help each other gather another ten balls in the bucket for the next hitter. Try to make the balls 'pop' off the bat.

### **Ring 6: Dancers (5 minutes)**

Location: At home plate

Skills: Agility and "quick feet"

Equipment : 4 bases put out in regular infield position

Activity: Dancers will perform the following agility skills:

HP –1B Run

1B-2B - Run backwards

2B-3B – Grapevine facing the outfield (Right foot in front of left, step, right foot behind left step)

3B-HP - Grapevine facing the infield (reverse of 2B-3B)

HP –1B – Skip

1B-2B – Hop

2B- 3B - Shuffle step sideways

3B – HP - Knees high march

HP – HP run the bases

### **Lead-up Game: Grand Slam (15 minutes)**

Location : One team each in the infield, left field and right field

Skills: Throwing, fielding, batting

Equipment : For each group: 1 bat, several balls, gloves, tee

Activity: One batter hits to the others who are fielders (off a tee). When a fielder catches 1 fly ball OR 3 grounders, they become the new batter. Players can't bat a second time until everybody has batted. Explain to the players that the job of the batter is to hit the balls to the players rather than hitting it over their heads, to the side of them etc...

### **Cool-Down (5 minutes)**

The head coach will take the kids for a slow jog around the diamond and end up in center field. Do a couple of stretches and explain why we cool down. Although at this age group there isn't a lot of stress on their bodies we are trying to establish good training techniques.

## **Initiation Ball – Lesson 8**

"\* Remind all players to wear older clothing next practice as we will be practicing our dive backs.

### **WARM-UP**

#### 1. Leap Frog Tag-Whole Group Activity (5 minutes)

Skills running, dodging, body awareness

Organization - Designate 2 or 3 frog catchers. The rest are frogs that try to avoid being caught.

Activity- when tagged the frog is frozen in frog position. Frozen frogs can be unfrozen by another leap-frogging over top of them.

Split up into teams and go through the following stations in clockwise rotation

#### **Station 1 : Bull's Eye (10 minutes)**

Skills - throwing, fielding

Location: Backstop area

Equipment: several balls and the plastic targets hung up on the backstop.

Organization: Split the team into two groups of three (each group in front of their target).

Activity: An adult will throw either a fly or ground ball to the first person in line, who fields it and throws it at the target. After the throw the player moves to the back of the line and the next player takes a turn. Score 1 point for fielding and 1 point for hitting the target

#### **Station 2: BEEP BEEP (10 minutes)**

Location – infield, but further out so as to not interfere with Station 1

Skills –rounding the bases, speed development, conditioning Equipment – 4 bases

Organization – put bases down in proper order. One player starts at home plate and the extra players stand behind him.

Activity – on "GO" the fast player runs around all of the bases and returns to tag the next player in line. When all players have gone they all yell BEEP, BEEP. The coach can time either by a watch or by simply counting. Repeat, always trying to better the time. Emphasize proper rounding techniques including stepping on the inside corner and 'rounding' the bases'.

### **Station 3: Soft Toss or tee hitting (10 minutes)**

Location: left field

Skills: Batting

Equipment : 6 bats and 6 balls per bat

Organization: Spread out along the left field line

Activity: Hit from the tees or if some players are too advanced for this soft toss the ball from the side so that it is in front of the batter slightly.

### **Lead-up Game: Freeze the Runner – Hitting off the Batting Tee (25 minutes)**

Location : 1 team in the infield, one in left field and one in right field

Skills: Throwing, fielding, baserunning, co-operation, teamwork

Equipment : For each group: 2 balls, 1 bat and 4 bases

Organization: 1 team member is batting and the others are spread out over the infield.

Activity: the batter hits the ball off the batting tee INTO (not over) the playing area and runs around the bases until FREEZE is shouted. FREEZE may have to be shouted more than once at this age. The ball is fielded, then thrown so that every fielder catches the ball. The last fielder to touch the ball then yells FREEZE. Score points by counting the number of bases touched. After the batter has had two consecutive turns he rotates to the infield and a new batter comes in. Continue to rotate until all of the players have had a turn. Emphasize proper rounding technique.

### **Cool Down**

The head coach will take the kids for a slow jog around the diamond and end up in center field. Do a couple of stretches and explain why we cool down. Although at this age group there isn't a lot of stress on their bodies we are trying to establish good training techniques.

## **Initiation Ball – Lesson 9**

### **WARM-UP**

#### 1. Tunnel Tag-Whole Group Activity (5 minutes)

Skills running, dodging, body awareness

Organization - Designate 2 or 3 players who are it.

Activity- When player are caught, they stand with their legs apart. Other kids can set them free by crawling through their legs. If needed, switch player who are it.

Split up into teams and go through the following stations in clockwise rotation

#### **Station 1 : Leonardo (10 minutes)**

Skills - throwing, grounders

Location: infield

Equipment: several balls

Organization: Adult helper for every two players, standing an appropriate distance from the players.

Activity Coach throws grounders to each player one at a time. Every time the ball is picked up cleanly and thrown back accurately the pair gets a letter in "LEONARDO". Partners can compete against each other OR other teams.

#### **Station 2: Slugger (10 minutes)**

Location –left field

Skills –hitting, fielding

Equipment – 6 bats and lots of balls, tees for those who need them

Organization – 3 groups of two with an adult with each group

Activity : Using a live pitch, starting underhand then progressing to overhand if the players are ready for it, each player takes 7 hits then switches with his/her partner. If a tee is still needed then feel free to use it.



### **Station 3: Shagging (10 minutes)**

Location: left field Skills: Fielding

Equipment : gloves

Organization: Spread out in left field

Activity: field and throw in the balls from the group that is hitting.

### **Lead-up Game: Field (15 minutes)**

Location : 1 team in the infield, one in left field and one in right field

Skills: Throwing, fielding, hitting, catching

Equipment : For each group: 2 balls, 1, bat and 4 bases

Organization: 1 team member is batting and the others are spread out over the infield.

Activity: One batter at a time bats off an adult pitcher. When a fielder has successfully fielded two ground balls or caught 1 fly ball they become the batter. If, after 10 hits, the batter is still the same just rotate another player in. Players rotate positions. Make sure all players get an opportunity to bat.

### **Round – Jam – Dive Back (10 minutes)**

Instruct the players on the proper way to round the base – jam on the brakes – dive back to the base. Let them try it, in the grass only, not in the infield.

### **Cool-Down (5 minutes)**

The head coach will take the kids for a slow jog around the diamond and end up in center field. Do a couple of stretches and explain why we cool down. Although at this age group there isn't a lot of stress on their bodies we are trying to establish good training techniques.