

A retrievable object is balanced atop the center or highest pole of a side-stepping fitness climber (or alternative climbing apparatus). One child at a time climbs to the critter, rescues it, and then tosses it through a hula hoop that is either held by a peer below or placed directly on the playground surface floor. The critter is returned to its original position by the second child, and a third child becomes the retriever. Alternate roles.

Play Elements: Climbing, balancing

NASPE Standards

#1, #2, #3, #4, and #5

Equipment Needed: Retrievable objects that balance easily (beanbags, rubber critters), hula hoops

Benefits

- Develops upper- and lower-body strength and endurance
- Provides tossing accuracy practice from varying heights and distances
- Promotes body control and awareness along with teamwork

Teaching Tips

Emphasize the assistance provided by the target holder, if there is one, as much as the tossing and climbing skills of the climber.

Safety Tips

- Remind kids to be careful not to lose their balance on the climber when tossing the object through the hoop.
- Require kids to hold on to the equipment with one hand while throwing with the other hand.
- Ensure that there is sufficient playground safety surfacing under and around the equipment.
- Spot as needed.

Did You Know?

There are about 1.1 million firefighters in the United States! Most (800,000) volunteer their time to help their communities. Organized firefighting is believed to have originated in Egypt.

Variations

Easier | a) Target is moved closer; b) Object is balanced at a lower point on the apparatus.

More Challenging | a) Target is moved farther away with every successful toss; b) Kids retrieve two objects positioned at different locations; c) Kids toss with their non-dominant hand.

Adaptation | Children in wheelchairs might be able to catch or throw.

