




(U7L7R1) Indigenous Activity Card – Mer Kai


BALL-HITTING GAMES



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

mer kai

'mer kai'



SCHOOL YEARS
4-6

SCHOOL YEARS
7-9

SCHOOL YEARS
10-12

Post-school age

Background

This is a version of a game from the Torres Strait Islands, using the thick, oval, deep-red fruit of the kai tree which is quite light when dry.

Language

Mer is the name of one of the islands in the Torres Strait. A kai fruit was often used for playing.

Short description

This is a hand-hitting (volley) game where players attempt to keep the ball in the air for as long as they can.

Players

- Groups of six players

Playing area

- Use a designated indoor or outdoor area. The centre circle of a basketball court with the line through the centre is ideal.

Equipment

- A tennis ball, small beach ball, *paketa* or a small, soft ball (such as a covered sponge ball)

Game play and basic rules

- Players form a circle. The ball is thrown into the air and each player passes it to another by striking the ball upwards with the palm of the hand.
- In this game, teams are presented with a set of activities that can be performed and after some practice develop a performance that highlights their ball skills, body handling and originality.

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Judging

The overall performance of groups can be judged on criteria related to skill, teamwork, elements of the routine, flow and movement, originality, and overall appeal.

Dropped balls, etc. are 'penalised' in the final assessment.

Comment

Different age groups will have different elements to include in their routines. For very young players it may be a case of compiling as many hits as possible in a set time, hitting in a set order, and basic 'tricks' or skill variations.

Teaching points

- Players in a circle. Palms of hand up.
- Ready and go.
- Well done. Keep going.

Suggestion

Players learn the basic aspects of the routine and then work out their routine. When this is mastered they look to include more creative aspects to the performance.

Performance considerations


- Introduce two or more balls as part of the routine (for advanced groups only).
- Show hits with both hands/arms up to the elbows.
- No gymnastic stunts such as handstands are allowed, but under the legs, high hits, kneel or sit down, behind the back, jumps into the air to hit the ball, turns, hand claps (individually or as a group) can help with a creative performance.
- For some stunts players may tap/block the ball in the air with one hand and hit it with the other.
- Players must not move more than 1 metre back from the marked circle.





(U7L7R1) Indigenous Activity Card – Marn-grook

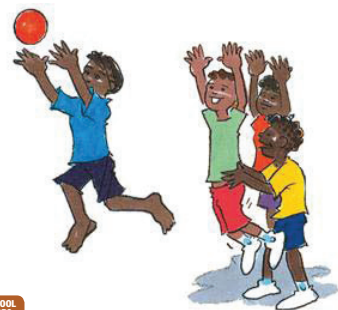
BALL GAMES



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marn-grook

'marn-grook'



SCHOOL YEARS
4–6

SCHOOL YEARS
7–9

SCHOOL YEARS
10–12

Background

The *marn-grook* or 'game of ball' was played by some Aboriginal groups in Victoria. The men and boys would joyfully assemble when the game was to be played. The ball was often made of twine formed using the twisted hair of the possum. It was of a good size, somewhat elastic but firm and light. The ball was given to the 'best' player or someone of 'note' to commence the game. The tallest players, and those able to jump the highest, had the best chances in the game. Some players would leap as high as 1.5 metres (or higher) from the ground to catch the ball. The game continued for hours and the players never seemed to weary of the exercise. Some people believe that the game of *marn-grook* influenced the development of Australian rules football, but the evidence is not conclusive.

Short description

A ball is kicked into the air and players attempt to catch it. This version is designed for younger players.

Players

- Groups of six to 12 players

Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity. If the ball goes outside the area the game is stopped.

Equipment

- A small soccer ball, gator skin ball or volleyball

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Game play and basic rules

- The ball is dropped and kicked high into the air using the instep of the foot. Players then attempt to secure the ball. The player who takes possession of the ball kicks it in the air and again a scramble for the ball ensues. Players may not dive on the ball on the ground to secure it and must try to avoid physical contact as much as possible. It is usual for the players to attempt to catch the ball, but if it is knocked or dropped to the ground by players it is still in play.

Variations

- Players are in groups 15–20 metres apart. When a player catches the ball he or she kicks it towards the other group of players, who attempt to catch the ball. This works very well as a lunchtime or physical education class skill activity.
- Fast play. Use a number of light balls. One or two designated players kick balls high into the air for other players to chase and gather. The balls are handed back to the kickers and play continues in this manner. Change around kickers and observe safety factors — the kickers should kick balls in different directions. If players catch the ball without it hitting the ground or after it bounces, they are acknowledged.

Safety

Restrict the amount of physical contact. Stop the activity immediately if safety is compromised.

Teaching points

- Spread out. Ready.
- Kick it high. Drop the ball to foot and kick.
- Call for the ball. No contact.
- Good catch. Let them kick.
- Keep going.

