

Lachlan's Cricket Academy: Design a Team!

Materials Needed

- A soft ball (like a tennis ball or foam ball)
- A cricket bat, baseball bat, or even a sturdy pool noodle
- 3-4 pillows or cushions
- A small box or laundry basket (to be the "wickets")
- Paper, crayons, and markers
- An open, safe space (backyard or a large room)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, Lachlan will be able to:

- Identify and explain the jobs of a bowler, batter, and wicket-keeper.
- Demonstrate a basic bowling action and a proper batting stance.
- Apply creativity by designing a unique cricket team, complete with a name, logo, and team colors.

Lesson Plan (Step-by-Step)

Part 1: Warm-up - The Cricket Field Tour (5 minutes)

1. **Set the Scene:** Tell Lachlan, "Welcome to your very own cricket pitch! Before we play, every great player needs to warm up."
2. **Jog the Boundary:** Have Lachlan jog in a large circle around the play area. This is the "boundary rope."
3. **Dynamic Stretches:** While jogging, call out simple actions:
 - "High knees like you're running between wickets!"
 - "Arm circles like a bowler getting ready!"
 - "Side shuffles like a fielder moving to catch the ball!"

Part 2: The Players & Their Forts (15 minutes)

This activity helps Lachlan understand key player roles in a physical, memorable way.

1. **Build the Forts:** Use the pillows and cushions to create three distinct "forts" or stations in the play area.
2. **The Bowler's Mound:**
 - **What it is:** Place one pillow down as the starting point for the bowler.
 - **The Job:** Stand on the pillow and explain, "This is the Bowler's Fort. The bowler's job is to throw the ball very precisely to try and hit the wickets behind the batter. They can be fast or tricky!" Ask Lachlan: "What makes a good throw?"
3. **The Batter's Crease:**
 - **What it is:** Place another pillow down as the batter's spot. Place the box/laundry basket (the "wickets") a foot behind it.
 - **The Job:** Stand on this pillow and explain, "This is the Batter's Fort. Their job is to protect the wickets and hit the ball far away to score runs. They need great eyes and quick hands."
4. **The Wicket-Keeper's Zone:**
 - **What it is:** Place the last pillow directly behind the "wickets" (the box).

- **The Job:** Crouch down on this pillow. "This is the Wicket-Keeper's Fort. They are the catcher! Their job is to stop any ball the batter misses. They need to be brave and have super-fast reflexes." Ask Lachlan: "Why do you think the wicket-keeper squats down low?" (Answer: To see the ball better and be ready to move.)

Part 3: Special Delivery! (Bowling Practice) (15 minutes)

This turns a simple drill into a fun game.

1. **The Goal:** "You are a special agent bowler. Your mission is to deliver this 'secret message' (the ball) and hit the enemy headquarters (the wickets/box)."
2. **Teach the Action:** Break down the bowling action into simple steps:
 1. Stand sideways at the Bowler's Fort.
 2. Make a big circle with your bowling arm, keeping it straight.
 3. Step forward with your opposite foot as your arm comes over the top.
 4. Release the ball, aiming for the box.
3. **Practice:** Give Lachlan 10-15 chances to "deliver the message." Cheer for good form and near misses! Let him experiment with going faster or slower.

Part 4: The Power Hitter (Batting Practice) (10 minutes)

Now it's time to score some runs!

1. **Teach the Stance:** Have Lachlan stand at the Batter's Fort. Guide him through the stance:
 - Feet shoulder-width apart, standing sideways to the bowler (you).
 - Knees slightly bent. "Be ready to pounce like a tiger!"
 - Hold the bat with both hands, resting it near his back foot.
 - Keep your head still and eyes on the ball!
2. **Practice:** Gently toss the soft ball underhand towards Lachlan. Encourage him to swing and hit the ball. Focus on watching the ball and making contact, not hitting it hard. Do this for about 10-15 pitches. Count how many "runs" (hits) he gets.

Part 5: Create-A-Team Headquarters (15 minutes)

This is where Lachlan's creativity comes to life.

1. **The Mission:** "Every great player belongs to a team. Now you are the Team Captain and Designer! Your job is to create a brand new cricket team."
2. **Brainstorm:** Sit down with the paper and markers. Ask guiding questions:
 - "What would be a cool, strong name for your team? It could be an animal, something powerful, or named after our town." (e.g., The Coburg Cobras, The Lachlan Lions)
 - "What are your team's colors? What will their uniforms look like?"
 - "Let's design a logo! What symbol represents your team's name and spirit?"
3. **Design Time:** Give Lachlan time to draw his team's logo and a quick sketch of the uniform using the team colors he chose. He should write the team name proudly at the top.

Assessment & Wrap-Up: The Captain's Review (5 minutes)

This checks for understanding in a fun, low-pressure way.

1. **Show Me Challenge:** Say, "Captain Lachlan, show me..."
 - "...the stance a batter uses."

- "...the action a bowler makes."
 - "...the ready position of a wicket-keeper."
2. **Team Presentation:** Ask Lachlan to present his team design. "Tell me about your team. Why did you pick that name? What's special about your logo?" This assesses his creative application and engagement.
 3. **Positive Feedback:** End with praise. "Excellent work today, Captain! You've learned the key positions, practiced your skills, and designed an amazing team. You're a true all-rounder!"

Extension Activities (Optional)

- **Player Profiles:** For his new team, Lachlan can create profiles for a few fictional players, giving them names and special skills (e.g., "Max 'Flash' a super-fast bowler").
- **Watch the Pros:** Find a short (5-10 minute) cricket highlights video online. As you watch, ask Lachlan to point out the bowlers, batters, and wicket-keepers.
- **Scoring Math:** Introduce the basic concept of scoring runs (1, 2, 4, 6) and create a simple scorecard to track hits during the next practice session.