



Irish Heart  
Foundation

# Action for Life

Physical literacy through PE and SPHE

JUNIOR  
INFANTS

SENIOR  
INFANTS

FIRST  
CLASS



Head



Heart



Hands



## LESSON PLANS

**PDST**  
Professional Development  
Service for Teachers

An tSeirbhís um Fhorbairt  
Ghairmiúil do Mhúinteoirí

**HE**

**hi**  
Healthy  
Ireland

### **Irish Heart Foundation Overview**

The Irish Heart Foundation is the national charity dedicated to saving lives by eliminating premature death and avoidable disability from heart disease and stroke. We campaign and advocate to change the public policy environment, improve services for heart health and stroke and are the driving force behind national awareness campaigns such as the Act F.A.S.T. campaign on the signs of stroke.

The Irish Heart Foundation promotes health in communities, workplaces and schools across Ireland and gives vital patient support through a nurse support line, high-quality information materials, and support groups for stroke, heart failure, ICD, Long QT, SADS and cardiomyopathy.

We are a registered charity supported by donations from the public and rely on the goodwill and generosity of our supporters to fund life-saving and life-changing work in prevention, patient support, CPR and campaigning.

Every donation helps more people in Ireland to live longer, healthier lives.

### **About Irish Heart Foundation's work in schools**

The Irish Heart Foundation supports teachers and schools across Ireland in their wellbeing mission to create healthy schools. Our core programmes are evidence-based and co-designed ensuring they meet the needs of schools and align to the curriculum. We advocate for policies that promote healthy school environments and prevent childhood obesity. 80% of premature heart disease and stroke is preventable through healthy lifestyles, which is why the Irish Heart Foundation is committed to promoting lifelong healthy habits from an early age.

The Irish Heart Foundation's dedicated Children and Young People team is available to support schools. For more information, visit [www.irishheart.ie](http://www.irishheart.ie) or contact [schools@irishheart.ie](mailto:schools@irishheart.ie).

**Visit**  
**[irishheart.ie/schools](http://irishheart.ie/schools)**  
**for the full**  
**Action For Life**  
**programme**



# Irish Heart Foundation

## Learning Outcomes

Through this lesson, pupils should be enabled to...



**Describe** how to move like different creatures.



**Practise** being brave and attempting different movements that they might not have tried before.



**Demonstrate** movement actions (such as crab walk and cat walk) and body awareness using a variety of body parts.

## WARM UP - Linking Lines

**Set-up:** Use masking tape or skipping ropes to create two or more straight lines. Place disc markers at the beginning of, and halfway along, the first line.

- ➡ Pupils line up behind first disc marker.
- ➡ Teacher (or a nominated pupil) demonstrates walking carefully along the tape with arms out. Teacher emphasises touching the back of the heel of one foot to the tip of the toe of the other foot (pretend the floor on either side of the tape is lava).
- ➡ Pupils go up one line and down the other until they arrive back at the start.
- ➡ Pupils wait until the pupil in front of them is halfway along the first line (at second disc marker) before taking their turn.

**MODIFICATION:** For pupils who are wheelchair or mobility device users, assign an alternative action or task, such as keeping a beanbag balanced on the head while moving along the line, or estimating how many pushes of the wheels it will take to get to the end of the line.

**STRETCH**  
before moving to Activity 1  
(see Warm Up stretches)

**MORE ACTION:** Use different movements: side stepping, hopping, taking big steps, jumping with two feet from side to side over the line. Add a wiggly or zig-zag line in addition to the straight lines to increase challenge.



**TOP TIP**

Teacher provides expert **demonstration** highlighting components of skill that pupils 'typically' forget (heel touches toe of the other foot for every step). Provide **verbal cues** to support pupils with performing the movement.

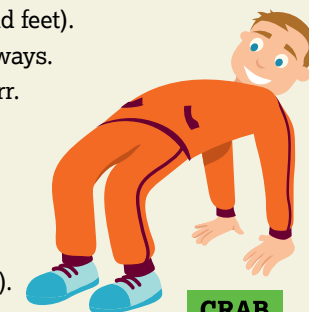
## ACTIVITY 1 - Shapes and Animals

**Set-up:** Use cones to create a large square playing area. Ask pupils to spread out around the square. Demonstrate the direction to move in (clockwise or anti-clockwise).

- ➡ Pupils walk around inside the playing area.
- ➡ When prompted, pupils move like a cat (walking on hands and feet).
- ➡ Teacher instructs the cats to walk forwards, backwards, sideways.
- ➡ Teacher prompts cats to show one paw, wag their tail and purr.

This is followed by a change of animal:

- ➡ Travel as **jumping frogs** by (bending knees and putting both hands on the floor, push off with hands and feet into air).
- ➡ Return to the **cat walk**.
- ➡ Flip the cat! Now pupils are a **crab** (hands pointing towards feet).
- ➡ Walk around like crabs (sideways, forwards and backwards).



**CRAB**

**SAFETY!** Ensure that all pupils are travelling in the same direction within the square. Emphasise that everyone needs to be aware of the space around them to not bump into their classmates when moving around the playing area.

**MORE ACTION:** Travel up and down the lines from the Warm Up activity using different animal movements. Teacher prompts pupils to walk like a three-legged cat (two hands and one leg, or one hand and two legs) and travel keeping head up. Extend the lesson by introducing music e.g. 'Carnival of the Animals'. Ask pupils to guess which animal the music represents, and to show you which animal it is by using their movements. Flick through a number of movements from this suite of music which includes elephants, lions, swans etc.



**TOP TIP**

Provide **visual prompts** (such as pictures of frogs jumping) to guide knowledge and understanding of the way different creatures move. Use **terminology** referring to different parts of the animal's body (paws, claws, shell etc.) allowing pupils to identify what part of their body it most closely resembles.

## SPHE

**Strand:** Myself  
**Strand Unit:**  
Self-identity;  
Developing  
Self-Confidence



## PE

**Strand:**  
Gymnastics  
**Strand Unit:**  
Movement

### Equipment for Lesson:

Masking tape (or similar,  
or skipping ropes),  
Disc markers,  
Cones, Hula hoops,  
Beanbags, Music

## Action for Life

LESSON

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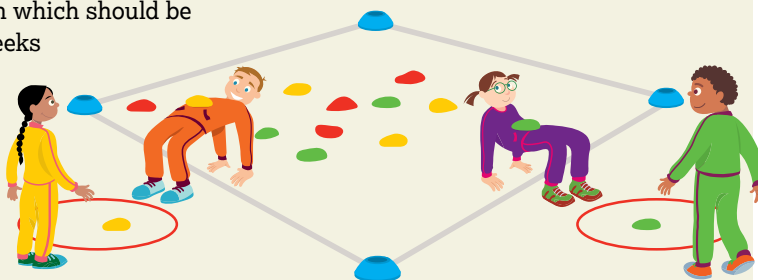
### ACTIVITY 2 - Hungry Crabs

**Set-up:** Place a hula hoop outside each edge of the square playing area and scatter beanbags around the inside area. Divide pupils into 4 groups and ask each group to stand behind a hoop.

- ➔ The area inside the cones is the 'sea' and the bean bags are 'crab food'.
- ➔ Pupils from each group take turns to travel one by one by crab walking (or crawling, if preferred) forwards, backwards or sideways inside the boundaries.
- ➔ Pupils collect one piece of crab food (beanbag) at a time.
- ➔ Pupil places the beanbag on their stomach (or in their pocket, or hood) and crab walks back to the team's hula hoop.
- ➔ When the beanbag is placed in the hula hoop, the next pupil in the group goes off to collect more crab food.
- ➔ Each team tries to collect enough crab food to have a big dinner.

**MODIFICATION:** Place beanbags on a raised surface to allow pupils who have difficulty reaching the ground to retrieve the beanbag. Demonstrate variations of the crab (Easy – low back arch, bum close to the floor; Hard – straight back, bum high off the floor). The activity requires upper body strength which should be built up over a number of weeks rather than in one lesson.

In the early stages, consider adapting the crab walk to a 'kangaroo jump' or a 'horse gallop' which are more focused on the lower body.



**TOP TIP**

Allow pupils the **choice** to use a variation of the crab walk. Tell pupils that every crab is different and so are we. **Encourage** pupils to use the crab walk that is most comfortable for them and to attempt the task with courage.

### COOL DOWN - Action Song

**Set-up:** Ask pupils to assist in removing the beanbags, cones and hula hoops from previous activity to create a clear playing area. Put on music ('The Birdie Song') and tell pupils to find space around the playing area.

Teacher demonstrates the actions of the song:

- ➔ "Make your hands look like bird beaks".
- ➔ "Flap your arms like wings".
- ➔ "Wiggle your back".
- ➔ "Skip around in a circle".

Choose willing pupils to lead.

### STRETCH

at the end of the lesson  
(see Cool Down stretches)

## Assessment of / for learning



### Questioning

Ask pupils to describe the movements they did for 2 different animals. Discuss the parts of the body we use when walking like crabs. Introduce the term 'muscle' into the class's vocabulary.



### Teacher-designed Task:

Discuss favourite animals and prompt pupils to think about what they like most about them. Ask pupils to draw pictures which show what they like about their favourite animal.



### Observation

Record observations of pupils' abilities to follow movement prompts, and any movement types where they have particular difficulty.



# Irish Heart Foundation

## Learning Outcomes

Through this lesson, pupils should be enabled to...

HEAD



### Demonstrate

an understanding of ordering and sequencing through correct movement responses (first, next, last).

HEART



### Demonstrate

persistence and resilience by making mistakes and trying again.

HANDS



**Practise** moving in a variety of directions, shapes and speeds.

## WARM UP - Late for School

**Set-up:** Ask pupils to spread out and find a space of their own.

- ➡ Teacher asks pupils to perform actions as they tell this story.
- ➡ Use exaggerated movements and expressions for each action.

Pupils pretend they are asleep and suddenly wake up –

*“Oh no - you are late for school! Brush your teeth, wash your face, put your clothes on, run downstairs, run back upstairs you forgot to put on your socks!*

*Back downstairs, drink juice, eat cereal and toast, get your lunch, put on school bag, open front door, shut door, run down the street, jump over the hedge, look both ways, cross the road. Finally you arrive at school. Slow down to catch your breath,*

*Stop – the gates are shut – it’s Saturday!”*

## STRETCH

before moving to Activity 1  
(see Warm Up stretches)

**MORE ACTION:** Narrate different sequences (preparing for bed, going to the beach etc.), mimic books the class are working on (e.g. *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt*), call upon pupils to narrate. Alter the pace of the movement sequence, performing it first slowly and then as fast as possible.



## TOP TIP

Outline the **sequence** using first, next and last. Use first, next and last to guide effective movement throughout PE. This can be extended to the classroom by using **visual prompts**. Use pegs to hang pictures of things that pupils might do in the morning on a piece of string in the classroom and challenge pupils to hang them in the order of first, next, last.

## ACTIVITY 1 - Teacher Says

**Set-up:** Ask pupils to line up side-by-side along one edge of the playing area.

The aim is to reach the other side of the playing area.

- ➡ The teacher uses the phrase, “*Teacher Says..*” followed by the name of an action (see below) which pupils complete to move forward.
- ➡ When the teacher says “*Teacher Says stop!*” pupils stop performing that action and wait until the next one is called.
- ➡ Actions to use include:

**Crab walk:** Crawl on hands and feet with stomach facing up.

**Kangaroo:** Jumps with feet together.

**Tiger:** Low crouching crawl.

**Duck:** Move forward in a squat with elbows bent and hands on waist.

**Tight rope walker:** Walk with arms extended outwards for balance.



If teacher calls out an action without saying “*Teacher Says*” and a pupil moves forward, they must return to the start line.

**MORE ACTION:** Call out consecutive actions quickly to add to the challenge. Introduce ‘Freeze!’ instruction for pupils to hold the movement position until given a new instruction. Play game several times, allowing different pupils to act as ‘teacher’.



## TOP TIP

Use **instructions** that do not refer to actual skills or body parts (e.g. crab walk, rabbit etc.) to support attention and retention.



## SPHE

**Strand:** Myself  
**Strand Unit:**  
Self-identity;  
Developing  
Self-confidence



## PE

**Strand:**  
Gymnastics  
**Strand Unit:**  
Movement

## Equipment for Lesson:

Hula hoops,  
PE Agreement poster  
(from resource pack)

## Action for Life

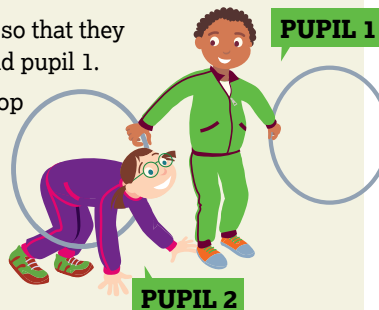
LESSON

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### ACTIVITY 2 - Silly Goggles

**Set-up:** Put pupils into pairs and give each pair two hoops. Pupils spread out so that each pair has enough space.

- ➔ Pupil 1 holds both hoops at their sides (as pictured) so that they look like spectacles or goggles. Pupil 2 stands behind pupil 1.
- ➔ On teacher's signal, pupil 2 moves through one hoop (moving from behind to in front of pupil 1) then moves through the other hoop (moving from in front of to behind pupil 1).
- ➔ When pupil 2 has completed the course, pupil 1 gives them the hoops. Pupil 2 then holds the hoops like goggles, as pictured, for pupil 1.
- ➔ When pupils are confident in this movement, try moving at different speeds, moving through hoops without touching the edges, or lifting one or both hoops higher.



**MODIFICATION:** Use extra large hoop to allow pupils with balance or mobility difficulties to complete the activity.

### COOL DOWN - Hello/Goodbye

**Set-up:** Instruct pupils to place their hoops on the floor and sit down beside them with legs and arms stretched out in front.

Teacher demonstrates the positions for saying Hello and Goodbye with hands and feet (pictured)

**Hello Position:** Fingers and toes all pointing upwards.

**Goodbye Position:** Fingers and toes pointing forward.

Demonstrate positions with feet first, then arms/hands, before doing both together.

- ➔ Alternate between hands and feet saying Hello and Goodbye.
- ➔ Hand and foot on left side say Hello and on right side say Goodbye.
- ➔ Opposites: Left hand and right foot say Hello while right hand and left foot say Goodbye, then alternate.
- ➔ Switch back and forth between positions slowly, then at a more challenging speed.
- ➔ Finish by stretching out flat on floor, turning onto hands and knees and standing up.



GOODBYE

HELLO

## STRETCH

at the end of the lesson  
(see Cool Down stretches)

**MORE ACTION:** Form groups of 4 from the pairs, with 3 lining up behind a leader who is holding the 'silly goggles' (hoops) as above. One pupil moves through one hoop and runs to the far end of the activity area and back again, returning to their team through the other hoop. The next teammate repeats this. After the third teammate returns, the pupil holding the 'silly goggles' drops the hoops, runs to the far end of the play area and back again. Groups stand inside the hoops to signify that they have finished.



TOP  
TIP

Remind pupils of the PE Agreement, use WILF (What I'm Looking For) to emphasise working together and encouraging one another. Ask a willing pair to demonstrate the task (**peer demonstration**). Use and reinforce 'encouraging' language (e.g. "You're doing a great job", "I like how careful you are being" etc.).

## Assessment of / for learning



### Teacher- designed task

Back in the classroom, task pupils with sequencing (first, next and last) a selection of physical activities e.g. riding a bike (put on helmet, get on bike, pedal).



### Self- assessment

Ask pupils to share encouraging language that they or their partner used during the lesson. Record this language on a chart. Discuss how encouraging language makes us feel.



### Observation

Record pupils' abilities to follow movement prompts.

# PE Agreement

- The PE Agreement is like a class contract, created with input from all pupils in the class.
- The PE Agreement helps to clarify what sort of atmosphere the class wants to create for PE (e.g. inclusive, cooperative, respectful, friendly) and what pupils can do to make this happen.
- Working with pupils, choose the 5 most important points for the class that they can count out on fingers to allow for easy recall during PE.

The PE Agreement template can be found overleaf. Poster-sized versions for printing are also available at [irishheart.ie/schools](http://irishheart.ie/schools).



## Creating the PE Agreement

- 1 Share with pupils that they are going to create their own agreement for things we should keep in mind during PE. Discuss what it means to “value” each other and show “respect” and give examples of what this might look like (e.g. listening to each other, making sure everyone is included, speaking positively to each other etc.)
- 2 Ask pupils to close their eyes and think about what a great PE class looks like, feels like and sounds like.
- 3 Pupils could work in small groups and discuss this with each other.
- 4 Ask pupils or groups to volunteer some words or descriptions that they came up with and note these on the whiteboard (or a large sheet of paper, or post-its).
- 5 Generate discussion around each of the points and give all pupils a chance to contribute or ask questions.
- 6 When all points are on the board, the class will vote for which ones they think are the most important for your class PE Agreement.
- 7 Each pupil chooses the 3 points that they think are most important (give each pupil 3 small circle stickers to place beside the words on the sheet, or invite pupils to use a whiteboard marker to draw 3 circles or ticks beside their favourite points).
- 8 Count up the votes until there are 5 main points for the PE Agreement.
- 9 Write these onto the PE Agreement poster, or onto sheets of paper to blu tack onto the **numbered** boxes. Additional points could also be added in the white space around the poster. Add pictures if desired.
- 10 Pupils then sign the agreement at the bottom with their names, or a thumbprint.
- 11 These points can be changed or adapted throughout the year as necessary, if all pupils are in agreement.



# Our Class PE Agreement



We will value each other and show respect by....





## **My Notes**

*Action for Life*



For more information on the suite of supports  
for schools and training programmes for CPD,  
contact [schools@irishheart.ie](mailto:schools@irishheart.ie)