



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

wana

'wan-a'



SCHOOL
YEARS
K-3

SCHOOL
YEARS
4-6

Background

The young Noongar girls in the southwest of Western Australia played many skill games. In one of these a short stick was placed on the ground and girls attempted to hit the stick while one girl defended it using her wana (digging stick).

Language

A wana (or wanna) is a digging stick in the language of some Noongar people.

Short description

Players use an underarm throw to hit a target, which is defended by the player with a wana (bat). This game version is suitable for younger students.

Players

- Groups of six to eight players

Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

Equipment

- A number of fleece balls, sponge balls or soft tennis balls
- A paddle bat or small Kanga cricket bat as the wana
- A large bin or container as the target

Game play and basic rules

- Place a bin or storage cube in the middle of a large hoop or marked circle with a 1–2-metre diameter. Mark a circle or use cones to mark a larger circle with a diameter of 5–8 metres depending on the age and ability of players.

- Throwers with a ball each stand with one foot on the line/marker and in turns attempt to lob/underarm throw a ball into the bin. One player with a bat stands next to the bin but outside the hoop (or 1–2-metre circle area).
- The player with the *wana* blocks the ball but is not allowed to hit it away hard. As soon as the ball is blocked or missed by the batter the next player with a ball may throw at the bin.
- The game is continuous and all the balls are retrieved when every player in the group has had a turn. Count the number of balls that land in the bin. Change the player with the bat and continue the game until all players have had a turn.

Variations

- Players throw in a numbered order to make it more difficult for the batter to react to throws from different directions.
- Change the player with the bat after a set time or number of hits.
- Players roll the ball to contact the bin.
- Swap over the batter when a ball goes into the bin.

Safety

For safety reasons players are not allowed to retrieve a ball from inside the circle until all players have had a turn. Stop the game and retrieve the balls.

Suggestion

This game could be used as a warm-up activity for Kanga cricket or as a hitting and throwing activity in physical education classes.

Comment

Slightly different versions of this traditional activity were observed. One version had this as a game that taught girls to look after their possessions.

Teaching points

- Form a circle. Player in the middle.
- Thrower ready. Go.
- Good throws. Watch the ball batter.
- Tap the ball away.
- Field the ball. Next thrower. Next.
- Catch the ball if you can. Hands towards the ball.
- Keep going.