

Obstacle Switcheroo - Levels A & B

STAY
ACTIVE

To support early adaptability by helping students experience small, predictable changes during a familiar movement activity. Inspired by Pluto from The Playful Astronauts, this activity helps students learn that when things change, they are still safe and can keep going with support.



Learning Intentions

Students aim to experience simple changes during movement activities.

Students aim to keep moving or re-engage when something changes.

Students aim to feel safe and supported while trying movement in different ways.



Success Criteria

I can move my body through the obstacle course in my own way.

I can pause, wait, or try again when something changes.

I can show calm, engagement, or enjoyment during the activity.



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Duration: 10 - 15 minutes

Objective

To support early adaptability by helping students experience small, predictable changes during a familiar movement activity. Inspired by Pluto from The Playful Astronauts, this activity helps students learn that when things change, they are still safe and can keep going with support.

Players

Small groups rotating through the course, or whole class with staggered turns
Suitable for 3–8 students at a time

What You Need

Soft mats
Cones or floor markers
Hoops or balance spots
Tunnels or low obstacles
Beanbags or soft objects
Clear indoor or outdoor space
Optional: simple visual cards (go, stop, wait)

Setup

Set up a short obstacle course with 2–3 stations only, for example:

- Walk to a cone and walk around it
- Step into or through a hoop
- Crawl or reach through a tunnel of chairs or tables

Ensure wide pathways and no clutter.

Model the full course slowly once.

Introduce the Pluto idea using very simple language:

"Pluto changes all the time, it can act and look different."

"We will keep going today and try new things."

Explain expectations clearly:

"We will go one at a time taking it in turns."

"We will wait for others."

"We will try again."

Confirm AAC devices are on and open to core words such as go, stop, again, finished.



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Gameplay

Step 1: First Turn (Same Course)

Students move through the obstacle course one at a time.

Adults support by:

- Modelling movements
- Giving gentle prompts
- Providing physical or emotional support

Focus is on participation, not completion.

Step 2: Switcheroo (One Small Change)

Before the next turn, change **one thing only**, such as:

- Move a cone slightly
- Change stepping to touching
- Add a pause at one spot

Say clearly and calmly:

"There is one new change to think about."

"You can now try the new way through the course."

Show the changed part once.

Step 3: Try Again

Students move through the updated course.

Adults reinforce positively:

"You kept going."

"You tried again."

Repeat the same structure for 1–2 more rounds only. Repeat step 2 as many times as you feel is right. Ask the students to help make a change to the course.

Debrief / Reflection

Keep reflection brief and concrete.

Offer one prompt:

"Did you like changing the obstacle course?"

Students may respond by:

- Gestures
- AAC
- Eye gaze or vocalisation
- Behaviour (re-engaging, calm waiting)



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Acknowledge with narration:

“That was different.”

“You stayed with it and tried something new.”

Winning the Game

There are no winners or losers.

Success is shown by engagement, re-engagement, and calm participation.

Sensory-Specific Learner Variation

Purpose: To support regulation and safety.

Adjustments may include:

- Heavy work stations (pushing a mat, carrying a beanbag)
- Slower pace and fewer turns
- Previewing the change before movement
- Sitting, rolling, or reaching instead of walking
- Short participation with breaks
- Observation-only participation is valid.

AAC-Specific Supports

Prepare AAC in Advance

Core words: go, stop, again, finished, wait, help

Model AAC Use

Adults model during play:

“Go.”

“Again.”

Accessibility and Inclusion Notes

All obstacles can be adapted for seated or upper-body participation.

Students may participate as:

- Movers
- Waiters
- Visual cue holders
- Helpers

Wide paths support wheelchair access.

Focus on experience, not performance.

Teacher Notes

“Obstacle Switcheroo – Levels A & B” introduces adaptability as a body experience, not a thinking task. By changing just one element at a time and keeping routines predictable, students learn that change does not mean stopping. Linked to Pluto, the activity reinforces that difference can be managed with support, repetition, and calm reassurance.