

Obstacle Switcheroo - Levels C - D

STAY ACTIVE

To support students to build adaptability, emotional flexibility, and perseverance through physical play, by navigating an obstacle course that changes in small, predictable ways. Students learn that when things change, they can pause, adjust, and keep moving forward.



Learning Intentions

Students aim to practise adaptability by responding calmly and flexibly when physical challenges change.

Students aim to move their bodies safely through an obstacle course, developing coordination and problem-solving skills.

Students aim to keep going and try again when the pathway or rules change.



Success Criteria

I can move through the obstacle course safely, using my body in different ways.

I can keep going or try again when something changes or feels tricky.

I can show enjoyment, effort, or calm behaviour when the course is different.



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Duration: 15 - 20 minutes

Objective

To support students to build adaptability, emotional flexibility, and perseverance through physical play, by navigating an obstacle course that changes in small, predictable ways. Students learn that when things change, they can pause, adjust, and keep moving forward.

Players

Small groups rotating through the course, or whole-class participation with staggered turns.

Materials

Cones, mats, hoops, beanbags, tunnels, balance lines, soft obstacles

Classroom or outdoor space with clear boundaries

Optional: music

Optional: visual cue cards for actions (jump, stop, spin, reach, throw)

Setup

1. Prepare a clear obstacle course with 3–5 stations or obstacles, ensuring safe spacing and wide pathways.
2. Clearly demonstrate the course once before students begin.
3. Use simple, consistent language and visual cues to explain each station.
4. Revisit the Pluto concept verbally and visually:
 - “Sometimes paths change.”
 - “We can stay calm and figure it out.”
5. Explain expectations clearly:
 - “We go one at a time.”
 - “We watch and wait.”
 - “We try our best.”



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Gameplay

Step 1 – First Run (Original Course)

- Students move through the obstacle course as demonstrated.
- Adults support with modelling, gestures, or physical prompts as required.
- Focus on safe movement and completion rather than speed.

Step 2 – Switcheroo (Small Change)

- While students are waiting or finishing, change **one element only**, such as:
 - Swap a jump for a step-over
 - Change a direction arrow
 - Add a simple action (clap hands, touch a cone)
- Clearly announce:
 - “The course has changed.”
 - “Pluto switched the path.”
- Demonstrate the changed part again before restarting.

Step 3 – Repeat and Adapt

- Students complete the updated course.
- Repeat for several rounds, making only small, manageable changes each time.
- Adults verbally reinforce flexibility:
 - “You noticed the change.”
 - “You tried again.”
 - “You kept going.”

Debrief / Reflection

Pause briefly between rounds or at the end. Ask one question at a time:

- “What changed this time?”
- “How did your body feel when it changed?”
- “What helped you keep going?”

Accept responses through speech, gesture, pointing, AAC, or behaviour (e.g. calm waiting, re-engaging).



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Sensory-Specific Learner Variations

Purpose: To support regulation, body awareness, and engagement for students with sensory needs.

- Offer **heavy work stations** (pushing a mat, carrying a beanbag, wall pushes).
- Use predictable routines with visual schedules showing “run → change → run.”
- Allow students to preview changes before participating.
- Reduce noise by removing music or using quiet signals.
- Provide movement choices at each station (step, reach, roll, tap).
- Allow sensory breaks between turns if needed.

AAC-Specific Supports

1. Prepare Core Vocabulary

2. Include or model:

- go
- stop
- again
- finished
- help
- different
- my turn / wait

3. Model AAC During Play

4. Adults model language while speaking:

- “Different.”
- “Go again.”
- “You did it.”

5. Choice and Control

6. Students can indicate:

- readiness to start
- need for help
- preference for an action
- via AAC, eye gaze, or partner-assisted scanning.

7. Reflection with AAC

8. Prompt simple responses:

- “Like / don’t like”
- “Easy / hard”
- “Again / finished”



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Accessibility and Alternative Participation

- Design wide, clear paths with no tight turns.
- Replace lower-body actions with upper-body or visual tasks where needed.
- Students may participate as:
 - path guides
 - rule changers
 - visual cue holders
- Seated versions of stations are always acceptable.
- Emphasise participation and decision-making over physical movement.

Inclusion Notes

- Focus on effort, flexibility, and regulation rather than performance.
- Celebrate calm responses as much as active movement.
- Offer choices for how students adapt to changes.
- Pair students with peers or adults for emotional or physical support.
- Model positive responses to mistakes or confusion.

Additional Notes

Obstacle Switcheroo provides a powerful physical metaphor for change. For Levels C–D learners, the activity builds confidence in trying again, adjusting expectations, and staying regulated when things shift. Through repetition, clear structure, and playful movement, students learn that change can be managed and even enjoyed.

