

Space Explorer Obstacle Course – Levels A & B

PLAY

To support students to experience joyful movement and imaginative play through a simple, Mars-themed obstacle course. Students build confidence, body awareness, and shared attention while exploring movement in a safe, supported environment. Inspired by the energy and curiosity of Mars in the Playful Astronauts journey, students explore adventurous movement challenges that promote confidence, creativity, and joyful participation.



Learning Intentions

Students aim to experience movement through simple, playful actions.



Students aim to participate in a shared play routine with adult support.

Students aim to explore imagination by pretending to move like a space explorer.



Success Criteria

I can move my body or part of my body through the space with support.

I can follow a simple movement routine with help.

I can take a turn or watch others take a turn.

I can show enjoyment or interest during the activity.



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Duration: 10 - 15 minutes

Objective

To support students to experience joyful movement and imaginative play through a simple, Mars-themed obstacle course. Students build confidence, body awareness, and shared attention while exploring movement in a safe, supported environment. Inspired by the energy and curiosity of Mars in the Playful Astronauts journey, students explore adventurous movement challenges that promote confidence, creativity, and joyful participation.

Players

Whole class or small groups

Suitable for 3 - 16 students

Students move through the course one at a time or with an adult

What You Need

Cones or markers

Soft mats or floor markers

Low tunnels, arches, or chairs arranged safely

Hoops or stepping spots

Optional: space-themed props (scarves, soft balls as "space rocks")

AAC devices, switches, or communication boards as required

Setup

Set up a short, clear obstacle path with 3 - 4 simple obstacles.

Ensure all pathways are wide, flat, and free of clutter.

Arrange students in a small waiting area where they can see the course.

Introduce the activity using simple, enthusiastic language:

"We are going to be space explorers."

"We will move like astronauts."

"We will take turns."

Briefly connect to the Mars theme in accessible terms:

"Mars is full of energy."

"Play helps our bodies feel good."

Model each station slowly and clearly before beginning.

Confirm AAC devices are switched on and open to basic movement or turn-taking words.



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Gameplay

Step 1: Adult Modelling

The teacher or adult models the full course first.

Move slowly through each station while naming the action, for example:

“Step.”

“Crawl.”

“Reach.”

“Duck.”

“Finished.”

Use gestures and clear body movements.

Activate or point to matching AAC symbols while modelling.

Step 2: Student Exploration



Invite one student at a time to enter the course with adult support.

Students may participate by:

- Walking, crawling, or stepping through the course obstacles
- Reaching or touching objects along the course route
- Moving arms or upper body only as they reach an obstacle
- Being guided alongside an adult

Adults narrate each action clearly and positively:

“You are stepping over”

“You are exploring!”

Students complete as much of the course as is comfortable.

Observation-only participation is always acceptable.

Step 3: Turn-Taking and Rotation

When the student finishes, guide them back to the waiting area.

Use consistent language:

“You’ve finished.”

“Next turn.”

“Well done!.”

Repeat until all students have had an opportunity, or stop earlier if students show signs of fatigue or dysregulation.



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Debrief / Reflection

Keep reflection brief and concrete.

Ask one question at a time with wait time:

“Did you like moving through the course?”

“Do you want to go again?”

“What felt fun?”

Accept responses through eye gaze, gesture, AAC, facial expression, or movement.

Reinforce the message:

“Play and movement help our bodies feel good.”

Winning the Game

There are no winners or losers.

Success is shown through participation, exploration, and shared enjoyment.

Sensory-Specific Learner Variation

Purpose: To support regulation, predictability, and sensory engagement.

Adjustments may include:

Offering a choice between two stations only.

Using the same course layout each time for predictability.

Including sensory exploration, such as touching textured “space rocks.”

Reducing noise and removing music if overstimulating.

Allowing students to observe first and join when ready.

AAC-Specific Supports

Prepare AAC in Advance

Ensure access to symbols such as: go, stop, my turn, finished, step, crawl, fun.

Use single-message switches if appropriate.

Model AAC Consistently

Adults activate AAC symbols while narrating movement and turns.



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Accessibility and Inclusion Notes

Adapt all obstacles for seated or upper-body participation.
Ensure wheelchair-accessible pathways and alternatives.
Offer alternative roles such as touching props, choosing the next explorer, or pressing “go” on AAC.
Allow flexible pacing and partial completion of the course.
Celebrate all attempts equally.

Teacher Notes

“Space Explorer Obstacle Course – Levels A & B” supports early physical development, joint attention, cause-and-effect understanding, and joy through play. The activity is not about completing obstacles independently, but about experiencing movement, imagination, and shared fun in a safe, supported way. Linked to the Mars theme, it reinforces that play is a powerful way for students to feel confident, connected, and energised.

