Tag Rugby
Year 5-6

LESSON 1: to be able to evade and tag opponents.
LESSON 2: to be able to pass and receive a pass at speed.
LESSON 3: to be able to pass and receive a pass at speed in a game situation.
LESSON 4: to refine attacking and defending skills.
LESSON 5: to develop tactics as a team.
LESSON 6: to apply learned skills in a game of tag rugby.

TAG RUGBY MATCH RULES

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:
- Fly Try
- Rugby Pass

Choose an activity from Striver to assess ability and progress before, during and after your lessons. The activities can be used as a warm up or run alongside these lessons, with groups taking time out from the main lesson to attempt the activity. Scores from these activities can also be used to run challenges between classes and house teams. Or you can easily create your own activities within Striver and even share them with the Striver community.

TEACHING TIPS:
- Always model the skills you are teaching.
- Assess whether certain pupils would benefit from more work on specific skills individually or in small groups before moving on to game situations where they have to apply these skills.
- Similarly, assess whether certain pupils would benefit from moving on to game situations sooner to apply their developed range of skills.

KLP = Key learning point  PT = Pupil talk  EXT = Extend
LESSON OBJECTIVES: to be able to evade and tag opponents.

KEY SKILLS: running at speed, changing direction at speed.

RESOURCES: class set of belts and tags, rugby balls, cones.

WARM UP...
Explain to pupils that the session will be a recap on some of the important evasion, tagging and ball handling skills which they learned in tag rugby lessons before. KLP When carrying the ball, it should be held in both hands where possible to make it really secure. Make sure that the fingers are wrapped around the ball, this will make it easier to make a quick pass. Set up a large rectangular area with a number of cone gates (half a metre wide) randomly placed on the inside. All pupils are on the inside of the area but only half have balls. The half with balls sprint between cone gates while the other half jog in the area. On the teacher’s command, the pupils with the balls put the balls down for a try outside of the whole area and the other half then retrieve the balls and carry out the same process while the others get their breath back with a jog. Point out the importance of keeping your head up to avoid other pupils.

EXT Pupils throw on their weaker side. Pupils must side-step through gates.

MAIN...
An important part of tag rugby is evading and tagging opponents. PT What could you do to avoid being tagged? Use the whole area, look for gaps between defenders, run at speed, change direction and speed, side step. Discuss these techniques and model to pupils. PT What tips could you give to those tagging? Keep your eyes on the tag. Play ‘Run the Gauntlet’. Set up a number of gauntlets, each containing 4 square areas (with sides 4 metres in length) in a line. Each square in the gauntlet should contain a defender who starts at the centre of the square and can only move when the attacker enters the square. The attacker, carrying the ball, must sprint through each box one after another, without being tagged. Remind pupils that when you tag someone, you must call out ‘tag’ and hand the tag back to their opponent, just like in a game. Pupils carry on in the gauntlet until they have lost both tags. Pupils take turns to be the attacker. EXT Pupils are out if they lose one tag. Make the size of the boxes smaller.

REFLECT AND EVALUATE (discussion during warm down)
Which of the tactics for attacking worked best for you? Which of the tactics for defending worked best for you? From watching and playing, which one do you think is the most important for attacking and which for defending?

KEY TECHNIQUE
Attacking: Run at speed, use the space and aim for the gaps, side step, change direction and speed.
Defending: Keep your eyes on the tag, call out when you have tagged someone and hand back their tag.
LESSON 2/6

LESSON OBJECTIVES: to be able to pass and receive a pass at speed.

KEY SKILLS: passing the ball, catching the ball, calling for a pass, opening up hands to give the passer a target.

RESOURCES: class set of belts and tags, rugby balls, cones.

WARM UP...

Explain that pupils will recap on their passing skills in this session. KLP When passing the ball, stand sideways on to your opponent, keep your hands on the side of the ball, swing your arms like a pendulum and release towards the receiver. KLP When receiving the ball, open out arms to create a target for the thrower. Set up a large rectangular area with a number of cone gates (half a metre wide) randomly placed on the inside. Have half the pupils standing on the outer line and the rest inside. The pupils on the outside have a rugby ball each. The pupils on the inside run and receive a pass from the outside. With the ball, they then sprint through a gate before passing the ball back to the person they received it from. They then look for another free pupil on the outside to repeat this process. Pupils then switch roles after a certain amount of time or a certain number of completed passes. EXT Pupils throw on their weaker side. Pupils side-step through gates at speed.

MAIN...

Remind pupils of the importance of communication when it comes to passing and also the important rule of not being allowed to pass it forward. Explain that when receiving a pass on the move, the aim is to take it in your stride and not slow down. PT Why might you call for the ball in a game? You are in a good position to receive a pass. Why might you pass in a game? When you are tagged, cannot spot a gap for you to exploit or a teammate is in a better position. Play a game of 3v2 where the pupils can practice their passing skills and positioning. Set up small pitches with one try zone. Make the attacking team the team of 3 and switch pupils’ roles regularly. Switch the attackers to a team of only 2 pupils as they becoming more confident of scoring with a player advantage. EXT The attackers must complete a certain number of passes before they can score a try. Each attacker must touch the ball in a phase of play before they can score a try.

REFLECT AND EVALUATE (discussion during warm down)

How did your tactics change when you were an attacking team facing a larger number of defenders?

KEY TECHNIQUE

Passing the ball: Stand sideways on to your opponent, keep your hands on the side of the ball, swing your arms like a pendulum, release towards the receiver.

Receiving the ball: Open out arms to create a target for the thrower.
LESSON 3/6

LESSON OBJECTIVES: to be able to pass and receive a pass at speed in a game situation.

KEY SKILLS: passing the ball, catching the ball, calling for a pass, opening up hands to give the passer a target.

RESOURCES: class set of belts and tags, rugby balls, cones.

WARM UP...
In a rectangular area, which is to be used later in the session for a game, have half the pupils standing on the outer line and the rest inside with a rugby ball each. Pupils with the rugby balls pass to a free pupil on the outside and take their place. The receiver then enters the area and looks for another free pupil on the outside to pass to and take their place. Call out ‘Sprint’ and ‘Jog’ to set the speed of the activity. PT Why is it important to keep your head up in this activity and in tag rugby in general? To know where teammates and opponents are. EXT Pupils throw on their weaker side. Add gates within the area for pupils to sidestep through.

MAIN...
Play a full game of tag rugby with a focus on passing and movement. Recap the rules detailed in ‘Tag Rugby Match Rules’ on the last page with pupils beforehand and stop the game at different points to highlight best practice. Choose size of team based on pitch size. Teams of 8 (4 boys and 4 girls) are commonly chosen for competitive tournaments. Pitch sizes for competitive tournaments are often 60 metres in length (including a 5 metres try area) and 30 metres in width. Any measurements mentioned in the rules refer to this pitch size.

To help develop passing and moving skills, add new rules which encourage pupils to pass. Start off by disallowing any interceptions. Award a point for the completion of 5 passes anywhere on the pitch. Then play the rule that a try can only be scored if at least 5 passes have been made in the build-up. Then bring it back to normal tag rules by allowing interceptions and only awarding a point in the event of a try. EXT Add or reduce the numbers of players in teams to ensure all teams are challenged.

REFLECT AND EVALUATE (discussion during warm down)
What challenges did playing a full game bring?

KEY TECHNIQUE
Passing the ball: Stand sideways on to your opponent, keep your hands on the side of the ball, swing your arms like a pendulum, release towards the receiver.
Receiving the ball: Open out arms to create a target for the thrower.
LESSON OBJECTIVES: to refine attacking and defending skills.

KEY SKILLS: decision making, tactical awareness.

RESOURCES: class set of belts and tags, rugby balls, cones.

WARM UP...

In a rectangular area, which is to be used later in the session for a game, have half the pupils standing on the outer line and the rest inside with a rugby ball each. Set up cone gates (1 metre wide) spread out inside the area. Call out a number to start the warm up, this is the number of gates pupils must go through before finding a free pupil on the outside to pass to and take their place. When passing the ball, pupils then call a number to the receiver which is then the number of gates they must pass through before passing. Call out ‘Sprint’ and ‘Jog’ to set the speed of the activity and set a limit on the size of the number pupils can call. EXT Pupils throw on their weaker side. Make gates smaller. Make pupils side step through gates.

MAIN...

Play a full game of tag rugby with a focus on decision making and making the most of opportunities which arise. Add new rules to put the focus on making the most of possession and taking opportunities. Explain that if pupils have not scored a try after 8 passes then possession turns over. Keep reducing this number as the game progresses. Stop the game at certain points to pick out opportunities and how pupils might make the best of them. PT What should you do if the defence is bunched up? Spread it out to the wings, away from the bunch of opposition players. What should you do when the defence is spread out? Attack the gaps between defenders and make sure to support the player running with the ball. KLP Always look to see where the opposition are positioned and where the best opportunity to score may lie. EXT Add or reduce the numbers of players in teams to ensure all teams are challenged.

REFLECT AND EVALUATE (discussion during warm down)

Can you think of a time during that game where the wrong decision was made? Why was it the wrong decision and on reflection, what should you have done differently?

KEY TECHNIQUE

Decision making: Always look to see where the opposition are positioned and where the best opportunity to score may lie.
LESSON 5/6
LESSON OBJECTIVES: to develop tactics as a team.
KEY SKILLS: decision making, tactical awareness.
RESOURCES: class set of belts and tags, rugby balls, cones.

WARM UP...
Explain to pupils the importance of communicating with your team mates in Tag Rugby. In a rectangular area, which is to be used later in the session for a game, give 4 pupils the role of defenders. The other pupils must get into pairs with tags on and link arms, starting at either end of the rectangle. They must get to the opposite end without breaking their arm link and without getting tagged. If they do this, they have to the count of 10 to leave this area and get to the opposite end. Attacking pairs must talk to each other and work together to decide on the best route available to be successful. The game continues until only one pair remains. EXT Add wide gates to the area and ask pupils to pass through at least one when going from one end to the other. Alternatively, awards points for each gate passed through, with the winning team being those with the most points.

MAIN...
Explain that pupils will again be playing a full game of tag rugby but they will be working on their attacking tactics for different situations in a game. The first will be direct from the start of the game where attackers have possession in the middle of the pitch (same as after a try is scored). PT How will the defenders be positioned? What will be the best tactic in this situation? Play out this scenario giving the pupils the opportunity to be both attackers and defenders before giving them some tactical discussion time and a chance to play the scenario again. Give pupils the opportunity to play out other game scenarios such as starting possession 7m in front of the opposition try line and starting deep in their own half. Ask them the same pupil talk questions mentioned above but also discuss the different opportunities and dangers in these areas. EXT Increase/decrease the numbers of attackers/defenders.

REFLECT AND EVALUATE (discussion during warm down)
What would you do differently if you were starting off possession 7m from your own try line as opposed to 7m from the opposition try line? What different factors do you have to take into account?

KEY TECHNIQUE
Decision making: Always think about your position on the pitch and avoid risky decisions.
LESSON 6/6

LESSON OBJECTIVES: to apply learned skills in a game of tag rugby.

KEY SKILLS: evading, tagging, passing, positioning, decision making, tactical awareness, communicating.

RESOURCES: class set of belts and tags, rugby balls, cones.

WARM UP...
Choose the teams for a class tournament and assign captains. Captains choose a warm up for their team from those covered in the previous sessions and lead the rest of their group.

MAIN...
Run a tournament giving pupils the opportunity to apply the skills which they have been learning in a competitive environment.

REFLECT AND EVALUATE (discussion during warm down)
If you could now go away with your team and work on one thing in particular, what would it be? Individually, what would you work on?
TAG RUGBY MATCH RULES:

- The match is started with a free pass from the centre of the pitch.
- The object of the game is to score a try by placing the ball with downward pressure on or behind the opponent’s try line while the ball carrier is on their feet.
- The ball can only be passed sideways or backwards through the air and cannot be handed to another player. If there is a ball handed to another player or passed forward then a free pass is awarded to the defending team.
- A knock-on occurs when a player, attempting to catch the ball, fumbles it and knocks it forward. A free pass is awarded to the defending team unless advantage can be played.
- Only the person with the ball can be tagged and they are not allowed to fend off opponents with their hands or guard their tags. Players must have two tags on whilst taking part in the game.
- When a player is tagged they are allowed 3 seconds/3 strides to pass to a teammate. Players are only allowed one step after being tagged if it is to score a try. Once they have received the tag back from the tagger, they can rejoin the game.
- When they have tagged someone, a tagger should call out ‘Tag‘ to make the attacker and referee aware. Once they have handed the tag back to the owner, they can rejoin the game.
- When a tag is made, all defending players must retreat towards their own try line until they are behind the ball. If they do not do this and cause the attackers to lose possession or slow their attack, then a free pass should be awarded to the attackers.
- Any breaches of the rules should result in a free pass in line with where the infringement happened. If this is within 7 metres of the opponent’s try line, then the free pass is moved back to 7 metres from the opponent’s try line.