

Space Explorer Obstacle Course

PLAY

To celebrate the joy and importance of play by creating a Mars-themed obstacle course. Inspired by the energy and curiosity of the Red Planet, students will imagine they are space explorers jumping over craters, crawling through tunnels, and zooming across Mars. This activity connects movement with imagination, bringing play to life in an adventurous way.



Learning Intentions

I can explore using my body and imagination in a playful way:

This encourages creative movement and builds confidence through fun challenges.

I can work with others and take turns as we play together:

This supports social interaction, cooperation, and shared enjoyment.

I can pretend to be an astronaut exploring planet Mars:

This develops imagination, storytelling, and creative thinking.



Success Criteria

I can move through the obstacle course safely and have fun:

This helps students follow instructions and stay active while enjoying themselves.

I can use pretend play to imagine I'm on a Mars adventure:

This promotes creativity and role-play skills.

I can cheer on others and take my turn kindly:

This encourages positive peer interactions and teamwork.



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Objective:

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Players:

Ideal for 4–26 students in rotation through the obstacle course.

Materials:

- Cones or markers
- Tunnels (play tunnels or large cardboard boxes or chairs lined up together for students to crawl through the legs of the chairs)
- Hoops, soft mats, or balance beams
- Space-themed props (e.g. astronaut hats, flags, planets)(you could design these as a class prior to doing this activity).
- Music (optional, for background or countdowns)

Time Required:

15–20 minutes (including setup and reset)

Setup:

Create an imaginative obstacle course that winds around the outdoor space or classroom. Include a mix of crawling, jumping, balancing, and weaving stations. Use space-themed decorations or language to help students imagine they are on the rocky, red surface of Mars.

Examples:

- “Jump over the lava cracks!”
- “Crawl through the Mars caves!”
- “Spin past the space dust tornado!”
- “Collect a moon rock and race back to base!”

Before starting, read the Mars page from *The Playful Astronauts* and talk about how Mars reminds us that play is powerful, it helps us grow, learn, and connect with others.



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Gameplay:

Explain the Adventure:

Gather students and say: "Today we are astronauts on a mission to explore Mars! Your job is to travel through the obstacle course, using your astronaut moves and imagination. Ready for lift-off?"

Model each section of the course first and explain any rules (e.g. one person at a time, crawl through this section, etc.).

Begin the Mission:

Send students through in pairs or one at a time, depending on space. Encourage imagination and team work with phrases like:

- "Use your jetpack to hop across the rocks!"
- "Tiptoe through the meteor field!"
- "Plant your flag on a Mars mountain!"
- "You're doing really well!"
- "I've got your back!"

Rotate through the course as many times as desired.

Reflection:

After the game, bring students together and ask:

- "What was your favourite part of exploring Mars?"
- "How did it feel to play with your imagination today?"
- "Why is it fun to play and pretend?"

Winning the Game:

There is no winner. The reward is movement, imagination, and joyful connection through the life skill of play, celebrating what Mars teaches us about energy, adventure, and fun.

Additional Notes:

"Space Explorer Obstacle Course" is a perfect expression of the Mars theme, bold, energised, and playful. It shows that play is more than fun; it's a vital life skill that nurtures imagination, social growth, and emotional well-being. Just like the Playful Astronauts learn on Mars, movement and play help us feel alive, connected, and ready for anything.

