

# U5/6 Training Session – Week 1

Theresa Echtermeyer – Coach and Player Development

**4:45** – Coach arrives, surveys the field and sets up playing grid. Grid can range from 10x15 to 15x20 yards depending on the size of your team. Remember the bigger the grid the easier it is for the players with the ball (attacker) and the smaller the grid the easier it is for the players without the ball (defender).

(Better known as ‘Soccer World’ or ‘The land of the Tigers, Cheetahs, Ponies etc!)

**4:55 – 5:10** - Players arrive, coach greets them, and let’s them interact with each other. Maybe have them show each other soccer tricks or moves?

**5:00** – Practice is scheduled to start and you may only have 3 kids there! Get them started with one of the following fun games:

- **Follow the leader!**
  - This can be done with or without a ball. Hopping, skipping, jumping and being CREATIVE are key components to warm up activities for young players. Let them follow each other as well! Add a ball and see what they can do with it. Dribbling, throwing, kicking are all good options.
- **Coach Says!**
  - In your soccer world or grid have players moving in all directions with and without a ball. Use magic phrases and make it FUN!
    - **Coach Says:**
      - Hop on one foot
      - Skip
      - Hop on both feet
      - Look up when you are moving
      - Do a cartwheel
      - **‘PEANUT BUTTER!’** This is my secret word for them to glob onto each other. It’s very cute and funny!
      - **Dribble your ball**
        - Both feet
        - One foot only
        - Slow motion, fast or LIGHT SPEED!

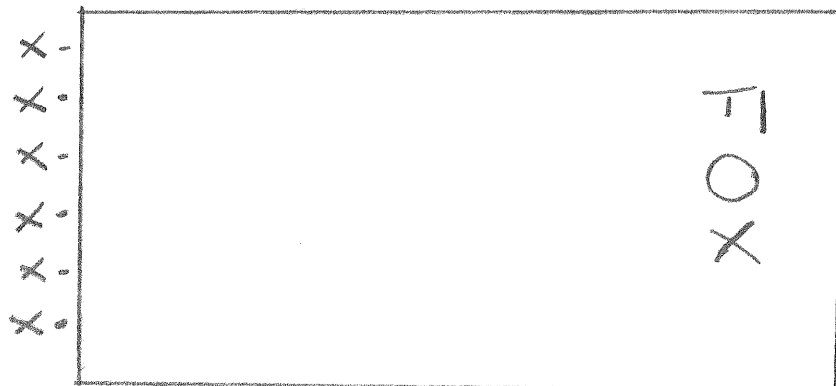
- **FOOT!**
  - This means you want players to stop the ball using the bottom of their foot. Ask them to roll the ball slightly. This works on BALANCE.
  - Other body parts you can add include, stomach, head, shin, elbow etc.
  
- **MARBLES!** (Or any other word you choose)
  - This is the cue for them to try to hit other people's balls with their own, by dribbling close to their teammate, then passing their own ball so that it hits their teammate's balls. Let them do this for 60 seconds, then back to another command, dribble, foot, skipping whatever.

**COACHING POINTS:** Balance, movement, eyes up, change of direction and speed, creativity, keeping ball close to body, using all surfaces of both feet, awareness of surroundings while manipulating the ball.

**5:15pm**

**GAMES WITH PRESSURE**

- **“Mr. Fox, Mr. Fox What Time Is It?”**
  - Players line up on the endline of your grid and Mr. Fox is on the other endline. Players ask, “Mr. Fox, Mr. Fox what time is it?” Mr. Fox replies, “10 O'clock”. Players dribble four touches towards Mr. Fox, then they put foot on the ball. This continues until the kiddos get closer to the Fox and when Mr. Fox replies it's 'LUNCHTIME', then they all have to dribble their ball back to their home base! If the Fox touches their ball with his foot, then they become a Fox as well! This continues until there is one player left. That player becomes the first Fox for the next round of the game.

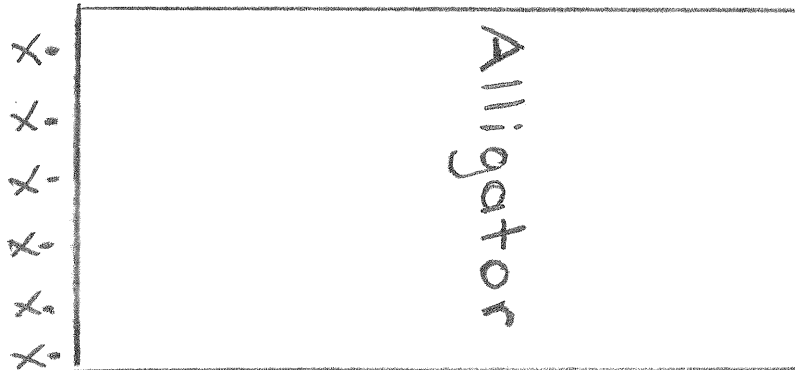


- **“Alligator, Alligator”**

- Players line up on the endline of your grid. The Alligator is in the middle of the grid. Players ask, “Alligator, Alligator May We Cross Your Bridge?” The Alligator says, “You may cross my bridge if you.....

- Are wearing red, or
- Are a boy, or a girl
- Had cereal for breakfast – Be Creative!

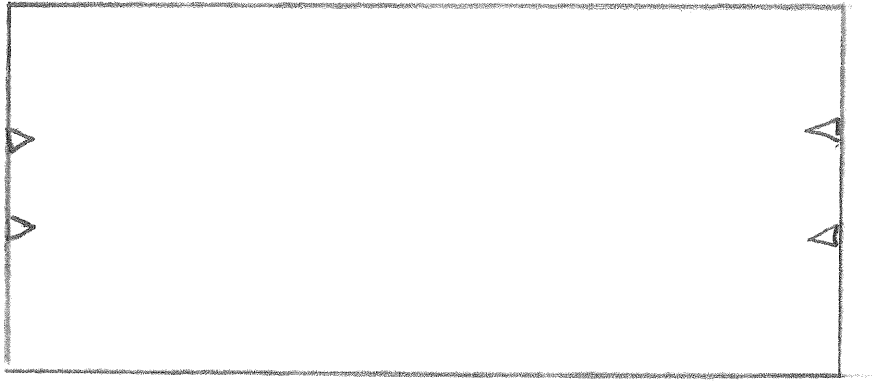
Then the players who can say yes to the Alligator’s response will try to dribble all away across the SWAMP and stay away from the Alligator. If they make it over to the other side of the SWAMP then they wait for the rest of the players to join them. If the Alligator touches their ball, OR if their ball goes off of the bridge, then they become an Alligator with you!



**COACHING POINTS:** This game has players going INTO pressure, so you can encourage them to keep the ball close, look up, protect the ball, go with speed AND control, MOVES. When players are Alligators encourage them to take the ball away by getting to the BALL quickly and using feet to ‘tackle’ or ‘take’ the ball away!

**MATCH!!!**

- Let them play 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 game for 5 to 10 minutes depending on your age level and how excited they are to play! Let the game be the teacher. Do not over coach them. Let them make decisions on what to do with the ball. When they kick the ball out, ask them “Who kicked it out?” They will tell you “Blue did.” You reply, “So, who gets the ball?” Players reply, “White does!” Eventually the players will be able to decipher for themselves who gets the ball without you asking them. Try to let them solve problems and teach each other, this is the BEST way to imprint to memory.



## **5:25pm – SHOOTING GAMES EVERYBODY SHOOTS!**

- Set up one or two goals and have players dribbling around in soccer world. You can give players a number, color, fruit, animal name or just call out name. When you say “Banana’s!” the banana’s need to try and go and shoot on either goal as fast as they can! After they get one goal, they go and shoot on the other goal! If it is too confusing for them to do this when dribbling, here is another option:

### **DUCK, DUCK SHOOT**

- Set up two goals, players sitting in a circle. Tap players on shoulder and say, “Duck” or “Shoot”. If you say SHOOT they have to get up and dribble to goal and SHOOT! Then go and sit back down in the circle.

**COACHING POINTS:** Ask players to dribble close to goal and shoot as hard as they can! Go with SPEED!! Encourage them to shoot early if they are able to kick the ball harder than other players, but not at the cost of being accurate. Don’t worry about which surface of foot they use, just make sure they are trying to get to the goal quickly. You can also ask them to do a CELEBRATION dance or more after they score! Make it FUN!!!

### **Fun Final Game**

#### **Hungry, Hungry Hippo!**

- Players must go and feed the Hungry Hippos. (coaches). Player runs to you with his/her ball, tells you what kind of food it is. You take a big bite, say ‘Thanks for the Pizza, Carrots or whatever, then toss the ball as far as you want away and ask them to dribble it back to go and feed another hungry hippo!