



## **Target Ball**

### **Materials Needed**

Balls (different kinds and sizes); materials for target (cardboard blocks, milk cartons, cardboard cylinders from paper rolls, large juice cans, bowling pins, any other soft materials that can be knocked down)

### **Purpose of Activities:**

Interacting with balls and targets offers children the opportunity to develop reasoning. As they act on the materials by throwing or rolling, they make predictions about what may happen and observe the results. Sometimes the results confirm their predictions. However, sometimes they are surprised by the results. When that happens, they are stimulated to reorganize their thoughts to make sense of their experiences. In activities of this type, children can reason about the relationship between different ways of throwing the ball and knocking down the target and the relationship between throwing the ball and knocking down targets of different shapes and sizes, (for example, targets with narrow bases are easier to knock over than targets with wide bases).

Exploration with these materials also lends itself to sociomoral development. By noticing how other children use materials, a child may be stimulated to use materials in new ways. As they play with others, taking turns, sharing the materials, or creating games, they must cooperate, negotiate with peers and adults, and make decisions. This social interaction facilitates language development. Sometimes conflicts arise (over use of materials, turn taking, etc.), and these offer opportunities to develop understanding of self and others. When they make up games involving knocking down the target, keeping score, and taking turns, they are growing in their understanding of causality and mathematics.

### **Beginning the Activity:**

One way to begin this activity is to introduce the materials during group time and ask the children if they can think of ways to use them. The children may have many ideas. Accept them all and suggest that they try out their ideas during activity time. Make the materials available during activity time. If interest wanes, the teacher may go to the activity and begin using the materials in different ways. Try setting the objects side by side across the floor, placing one object directly in front of the others, or stacking them two or three objects high. Seeing new ways of using the materials usually stimulates children to try new ideas of their own. Teachers can also intervene at appropriate times with questions that encourage reflective thinking. By testing their ideas to see if they will work, young children reason to make sense of their world.



Source : Kamii, C., & DeVries, R. (1978/1993). Physical Knowledge in Preschool Education: Implications of Piaget's Theory. New York: Teachers College Press.