

Boomerangs Are Coming Back

*Complete Lesson plans for teaching the sport of
boomerangs*

by

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Lesson 1

Objective:

- ◆ The students will be able to throw a Backyard Boomerang using the correct form and technique so that it returns within a 5' circle.

Equipment:

- ◆ 1-Backyard Boomerang for each student (left handed throwers MUST have left handed boomerangs, which are so marked)
- ◆ Large open field or gymnasium
- ◆ 1-cone or marker for each group

Setup:

- ◆ Students should work with a partner or in small groups (left handed throwers should be grouped together if possible). This will enable students to help one another with the proper technique. Each group should have an unobstructed circular area of at least 15' in diameter.

Procedure:

- ◆ Explain the proper throwing technique as described below. Emphasize throwing the boomerang with the painted side facing inward towards the thrower, and that boomerangs are thrown vertically and not horizontally like a Frisbee.
- ◆ Allow students time to practice in their groups while you rotate around the field/gymnasium to check technique. When most students are experiencing success, having the boomerang return with some consistency, have them play a game of accuracy. Each student will take three throws in rotation from directly beside the cone, allowing the boomerang to land on the ground. The students with the boomerang landing closest to the cone earns one point. The first student to earn ten points is declared the "Boomstud" or "Boombabe" of the group.

Throwing Technique:

- ◆ Make a fist with the throwing hand, with the fingers curled downward and the thumb extended inward (as if knocking on a door). Pinch the end of one arm of the boomerang, painted side facing inward, between the thumb and the first finger. Cock the boomerang back in the hand so that the closest free arm touches the thrower's forearm.
- ◆ Draw the throwing arm back so that the elbow points back and the boomerang is beside the ear. Using a standard throwing pattern, throw the boomerangs vertically, straight forward, releasing it at eye level and flicking the wrist to impart spin. (It often helps to have a target in the distance such as a tree or post to throw at.) The hand position and wrist flick are similar to that used in knocking on a door. Emphasizing this will help some students keep from throwing sidearm.

- ◆ If throwing outdoors, right handed throwers must have the breeze hitting their left cheek. Left handed throwers should have the breeze hitting their right cheek. Do not attempt to throw the Backyard Boomerang if the wind is too strong as it will cause the boomerang to go out of control.

Safety Considerations:

- ◆ Painted side of the boomerang must be facing inward towards the thrower. Throwing the boomerang with the painted side facing outwards is very dangerous!
- ◆ Make sure each thrower has enough room for the boomerang's full rotation (12'-15'). Right handed throwers need room to the left as the boomerang travels counter-clockwise. Left handed throwers need room to the right as the boomerang travels clockwise.
- ◆ A boomerang should not be thrown in high winds.
- ◆ Don't throw the boomerang when a person is directly in front of you, or in the rotation of the boomerang.
- ◆ Don't try to catch a boomerang thrown incorrectly.
- ◆ Students must be constantly aware of their classmates and other boomerangs.

Problem Solving:

- ◆ *The boomerang lands behind the thrower* – Throw more to the right (RH throwers). The boomerang was thrown too much into the wind.
- ◆ *The boomerang lands in front of the thrower* – Throw more left (RH throwers) or more into the wind.
- ◆ *The boomerang climbs high and crashes to the ground* – The boomerang was thrown too sidearm. Throw the boomerang more vertically.
- ◆ *The boomerang grounds out or travels too close to the ground* – The boomerang was thrown too vertically or over vertical. Throw the boomerang straight up and down or just slightly laid out.
- ◆ *The boomerang loses spin and does not complete full flight pattern* – Loosen grip slightly and throw with more wrist flick to impart spin to the boomerang.
- ◆ *The boomerang does not have enough power to complete a full flight pattern* – Check the thrower's technique. A full arm pattern should be used. He may be trying to push the boomerang rather than throwing it like a ball. The release should be at eye-level as is pitching a baseball. The follow-throw should be straight, not cross-body.

Lesson 2

Objective:

- ◆ The students will be able to catch a thrown Backyard Boomerang using various two-hand and one-hand techniques.

Equipment:

- ◆ 1-Backyard Boomerang for each student (left handed throwers MUST have left handed boomerangs, which are so marked)
- ◆ Large open field or gymnasium
- ◆ 1-cone or marker for each group

Setup:

- ◆ Students should work with a partner or in small groups (left handed throwers should be grouped together if possible). This will enable students to help one another with the proper technique. Each group should have an unobstructed circular area of at least 15' in diameter.

Procedure:

- ◆ Review the proper throwing technique from lesson one. Allow students time to practice so that they become comfortable throwing again.
- ◆ Explain the "sandwich catch". This catch uses two hands to catch the boomerang in a "sandwich". The thrower should face the boomerang as it completes its circular path back to the thrower. Then using one hand as a guide, directly in the path of the boomerang, and the other as a clamp, catch the boomerang flat between the two hands. This is the most basic and easiest of all catches. Allow the students time to practice the "sandwich catch" before moving on to more complex catches.
- ◆ If you are using the ringer style of Backyard Boomerang, the students may want to try a finger catch. To catch the boomerang on the finger, have the thrower point at the circle in the center of the boomerang as it completes its path. The thrower should not jab or jerk at the boomerang, but simply point and allow the boomerang to land on the finger.

Trick Catch:

- ◆ After mastering the basic "sandwich catch" the students may progress to other catches used in Trick Catch competition. Catches are listed below in the order of their completion in competition.
 - 1 – any two hand catch
 - 2 – left hand clean catch (boomerang does not touch any part of the body or arm above the elbow)
 - 3 – right hand clean catch
 - 4 – two handed behind the back catch

- 5 – two handed under the leg catch
- 6 – foot catch (using the feet to catch the boomerang without letting it touch the ground)
- 7 – two hand clean catch
- 8 – left hand eagle catch (coming down over the top of the boomerang)
- 9 – right hand eagle catch
- 10 – one hand behind the back catch
- 11 – one hand under the leg catch
- 12 – foot catch

- ◆ When running an actual Trick Catch event, divide the throwers into groups of four or five throwers. One person at a time will complete all twelve throws on command (instructor commands “THROW”). One point is scored for each completed catch. If two or more competitors complete all twelve catches during the first round, those competitors will continue throwing in round two, completing the same series of catches until a missed catch. The last person remaining still catching is declared the winner.

Lesson 3

Objective:

- ◆ The students will use creative one and two handed catching techniques to catch a Backyard Boomerang in a game of “RANG”.

Equipment:

- ◆ 1 – Backyard Boomerang for each student (left handed throwers MUST have left handed boomerangs, which are so marked)
- ◆ Large open field or gymnasium

Setup:

- ◆ Students will work in groups of four to six students each. Each group should have an unobstructed circular area of at least 15’ in diameter.

Procedure:

- ◆ Review the proper throwing technique from lesson one, and the various catching techniques from lesson two. Allow students time to practice so that they become comfortable throwing and catching again.
- ◆ After a brief warm-up time, explain the game of RANG. It is similar to the basketball shooting game of HORSE. Allow the students to play RANG until there is a winner in each group. Rearrange groups so that the students can compete against other classmates.

RANG:

- ◆ Decide what order each person will be throwing in. The throwing order remains the same throughout the entire game. The first thrower makes a throw and a catch. The

catch can be ANY catch as long as the boomerang does not touch the ground. The next thrower must then attempt to make the same catch. If he/she is successful, the next thrower must also make that same catch. If he/she is not successful he/she earns the letter "R". The next thrower is then free to attempt any catch he desires. If he is successful, the thrower following him must make the same catch or earn a letter.

- ◆ Once a player earns all four letters – RANG – that player continues to throw in turn, but the throws and catches do not count against anyone else. An alternative would be to have the player with RANG rotate into another group.
- ◆ Encourage the students to be creative in making their catches. Suggestions include jumping catches, head catches, smiling hip catches, and hackeys (hitting the boomerang into the air with a body part before catching it).

Lesson 4

Objective:

- ◆ The students will be able to throw and catch a Backyard Boomerang in the individual and team game of Position.

Equipment:

- ◆ 1 – Backyard Boomerang for each student (left handed throwers MUST have left handed boomerangs, which are so marked)
- ◆ Large open field or gymnasium
- ◆ 1 – cone or marker for each group

Setup:

- ◆ Students will work in groups of four to six students each. Each group should have an unobstructed circular area of at least 15' in diameter.

Procedure:

- ◆ Review the proper throwing technique from lesson one, and the various catching techniques from lesson two. Allow students time to practice so that they become comfortable throwing and catching again.
- ◆ After a brief warm-up time, explain the game of Position. Review some of the problem solving techniques from lesson one so that the students will be able to adjust their throws to make the boomerang come to the desired area. Have the students play an individual game first, where each person is his/her own team. Then group the students into teams so that some of the more accurate throwers are grouped with those that are not as strong.

Position:

- ◆ Two or three teams of four players can compete against each other in an area. Decide what order each person will be throwing in. The throwing order remains the same throughout the entire game. The first thrower from the first team makes a throw from

