



Australian Government  
Australian Sports Commission

gitja  
'git-ja'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

### Background

The *Gitja* (moon) play game from the north Queensland area was usually played when a number of children gathered together. The full version of the game observed involved imitation and acting aspects along with a running-and-chasing activity.

### Language

*Gitja* was the Koko-yellanji language term signifying the moon.

### Short description

This is a chasing-and-catching (tag) game. It is a simplified version of a more involved game.

### Players

- A group of 10–14 or more players

### Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

### Game play and basic rules

- In this game a player takes the part of *Gitja*. Players form a circle around a player with *Gitja* on the outside and another player on the inside of the circle.
- The player in the circle represents someone who has eaten *Gitja*'s food by mistake and *Gitja* wants him or her to know it was the wrong thing to do.
- The game starts and *Gitja* attempts to catch (touch) the player who is in the middle of the circle. The players in the circle hold hands to attempt to 'stop' the *Gitja* and to help the player being chased.
- The *Gitja* may not break through the arms but can duck under them to chase. The players in the circle bend down to stop the *Gitja*. Players allow the player in the middle to go outside the circle and back into it as he or she is chased by *Gitja*.
- Play continues until *Gitja* has succeeded in catching (touching) the player or a set time expires. The players must stay within the designated playing area when running and chasing.

### Variation

- Play with two people to be chased by *Gitja*.

### Comment

This version is shortened from a full game of *Gitja* and does not include the acting and playing aspects. However, it still reflects the basic nature of the game.

### Teaching points

- Form a circle. Player inside, *Gitja* outside.
- Hold hands. Do not break through the arms.
- Duck under.
- Keep going. Help the runner. Cheer for him/her.
- Good. Change over. Well done everyone.