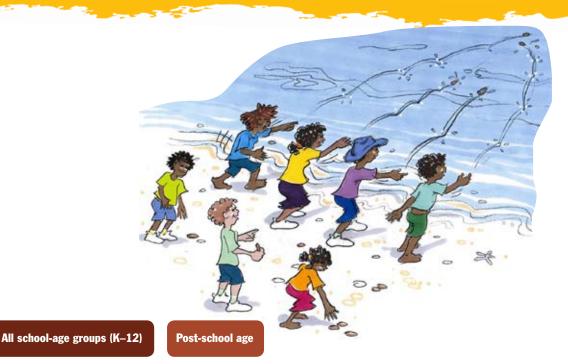


# Australian Government Australian Sports Commission



'wirr-wu-yu'



#### Background

As in various other cultures, stone skipping (throwing) along a surface of water was played by Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

On Dunk Island in Queensland, the throwing of cuttle-fish (*krooghar*) bones was observed. The bones were thrown along the surface of the water like 'skipping stones' and often reached surprising distances in a series of skips.

#### Language

The word *wirrwuyu* means 'throwing stones' in the Djapi dialect of the Yolngu language of northern Australia.

#### **Short description**

An outdoor education activity where players take turns in throwing the stones to make them 'skip' as many times as possible along the surface of the water. It provides a fun activity as well as practice for throwing. This activity is usually known as 'ducks and drakes' and is a well-known favourite.

#### **Players**

Any number of players but usually two to six in a group spread out in a row

#### Equipment

• A large supply of small flat pebbles or stones

#### **Playing area**

An open area near water

#### Game play and basic rules

- This game of throwing skill was played by both children and adults who lived near a sea, lake or river.
- Players collect a supply of small flat stones or pebbles.

## ausport.gov.au/isp

• The idea of the activity is to throw a small flat stone across the surface of the water to see how many times it skips or bounces before sinking.

## Comments

This activity requires considerable skill and much practice. The thrower attempts to release the stone as low as he or she can towards the water at a flat angle.

If performed well, the stone skips along the surface of the water in a spectacular fashion. A stone that skips or bounces across the water more than five times is a very good throw, and more than ten would be excellent.

#### **Variations**

- Use a 'target' such as a stick or large rock to aim at.
- Use tennis balls and a bin or wicket. Players 'bounce' the ball off the ground (or even water) once or twice to hit the target.
- Use a suitable light ball and standing in waist-deep water bounce the ball off the water for a partner or other players to attempt to catch.

#### Safety

Ensure that appropriate safety aspects are observed for all activities. It is recommended that only one player throw at a time.

### **Teaching points**

- Collect the stones. Spread out in a line.
- Off you go. Keep the arm low, bend the knees, flick the wrist. Elbow leads.

Ο

- Count the bounces.
- Keep going.