

## FOCUS►

### Subfocus►

## CONCEPT OF BALANCE

### Bases of Support

#### Grade K

#### Standard 1

The physically literate individual demonstrates competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.

#### Grade-Level Outcome

Maintains momentary stillness on different bases of support (S1.E7.Ka)

#### Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- Identify body parts that serve as bases of support
- Maintain balance momentarily on chosen bases of support

#### Materials and Equipment

- Sufficient space for students to work safely, on floor or mats
- Small individual mats, one per student if available; carpet square for outdoors
- Paper, pencils

(Beginning with the first lesson in gymnastics that uses mats, students are taught safe use, transport, and storage of the mats) (S4.E1, E5, E6.K).

#### Safety Concern

No disturbing or touching of others as they work is permitted (important safety protocol for gymnastics work at all times). (Standard 4)

#### Introduction

*Today we are going to study balance. What does balance mean? Am I balanced now?*

(Stand on one foot and lean forward, waving arms as if about to fall.)

*Am I balanced now? (Stand on one foot, extend arms outward from the body, and do not move.) Balance is stillness—no wiggles, no wobbles. Why do I put my arms out? Correct, to help me stand still—to maintain balance.*

Briefly introduce balance as one of the major components of gymnastics and an important aspect of game skills, such as kicking, receiving a pass when slightly off balance, and dodging and faking opponents.

#### BRIGANCE TEST FOR BALANCE

Challenge students to stand on one foot in self-space as you count for three seconds. Extending their arms outward will help them maintain stillness.

*This is a task your classroom teacher will probably ask you to do during the school year. Remember the secret of extending the arms for good balance and stillness.*

- Balance on the other foot, trying not to wiggle or wobble.

*Focus your eyes on a spot on the opposite wall or look at another person; this will help you stay very still.*

- Repeat the task with eyes closed—just for fun.
- Repeat the task and choose which foot to serve as the base.
- Balanced on one foot in self-space, use free body parts (arms, one leg) to make the balance different from everyone else—a balance that is uniquely you.

## **LEARNING EXPERIENCE: BASES OF SUPPORT**

Demonstrate the balance of standing on one foot.

*When I am balanced on one foot, what body part is touching the mat or floor? Correct—my foot. That is my base of support. When you are seated in self-space, what body part is your base of support? The body parts touching the mat or floor when you balance are called bases of support.*

- Have the students demonstrate their favorite balance, as you name the bases of support, emphasizing the various body parts that can serve as bases for gymnastics balances. Then have them balance on a different base or bases of support.
- Have the students create as many safe combinations as they can.

## **LEARNING EXPERIENCE: BODY IN DIFFERENT POSITIONS**

*When I observe your balances I notice that some of you created all your balances while standing, others were in a sitting position, and others were lying on the mat or floor. Change your position as you create balances on different bases of support: standing, sitting, lying on the mat.*

(If the class has studied levels as a movement concept, refer to the levels of high, middle, and low.)

### **Assessment**

*Before we continue our work on balance today, tell your neighbor the criteria for balance. If you heard “holding very, very still,” that answer is correct.*

## **LEARNING EXPERIENCE: STILLNESS**

Have the students create a balance they think they can hold perfectly still.

*Some of you are having difficulty holding your balance; try holding still as if someone is taking a photo of your balance—no wiggles, no wobbles—one thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand three . . . rest.*

- Have students repeat the balance with a goal of holding stillness for three seconds. Allow several minutes for students to explore different balances, emphasizing stillness as you provide the three-second count.
- Expand students’ balances by selecting various bases of support. (Choose bases of support appropriate to the class and individual skill level, such as feet and hands, two feet, one hand and one foot, two hands, knees and elbows, belly alone, back alone, shoulders and \_\_\_\_\_, hip and one hand, hip and elbow.)

*Gently expand the skill level of children in gymnastics by focusing on the individual and his or her abilities. Use caution in selecting children for demonstrations because others will attempt the balances they see demonstrated, and they may not be ready for that level of difficulty.*

## **LEARNING EXPERIENCE: RECORDING THE FAVORITE**

From all the balances attempted today, have the students choose their favorite and repeat the balance, emphasizing stillness and base of support. Provide pencil and paper for each student to illustrate or record that favorite balance. Have the students label the bases of support. (List body parts as bases on the whiteboard to assist with spelling.) Place the students’ work in their portfolios.

### **Assessment**

- Observe safety and stillness in balances when students attempt balances.
- Informal assessment is done with pictographs and labeling of bases of support.

## **Closure**

- What was the focus of our lesson today?
- What are the two tests for holding a good balance?
- Tell your neighbor what base of support in gymnastics means.

## **Reflection**

- Can the students balance safely on various bases of support?
- Does the class create a safe environment and respect for others when working in gymnastics?
- Do the students understand stillness when balancing?