

FOCUS► **BALANCES AND WEIGHT TRANSFERS: BUILDING A SEQUENCE**

Grades 3-5

This lesson is designed to be completed over a series of several classes, not during a single class.

Standard 1

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

Grade-Level Outcomes

- Combines balances and transfers into a three-part sequence (i.e., dance, gymnastics) (S1.E11.2)
- Combines traveling with balance and weight transfers to create a gymnastics sequence with and without equipment or apparatus (S1.E12.4)

Lesson Objective

The learner will create and perform a gymnastics sequence of balances and weight transfers on mats (grade 3), optional for grades 4 and 5.

Materials and Equipment

Sufficient mats for all students to work safely

Introduction

Review with the class the work of balance and weight transfer: bases of support, body shapes, levels, inversion, stretching, curling, twisting, muscular tension, alignment, extensions, and transitions.

Relate the gymnastics sequence to sports practice that leads to successful participation in the game as well as to music practice and theatrical rehearsals that lead to the final performance.

Although students have created sequences within class work, the culminating sequence will serve as their summative assessment of the gymnastics work for balance and weight transfer—a creative project that demonstrates skills, cognitive understanding, and the uniqueness of each student.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: SEQUENCE ON MATS

Students work through the following three parts of the sequence with guided practice of balances and transfers, review of ending shape, and exploration and practice of beginning shape.

- Beginning shape: Students stand at the end (or corner) of the mat. They may select any position they choose with guidance that it should facilitate movement.
- Balances and weight transfers:
 - Grade 3: three balances with different bases of support and weight transfers between balances
 - Grade 4: four balances with different bases of support, each with a different shape—wide, narrow, curled, twisted; and transfers between balances
 - Grade 5: five balances with different bases of support and different shapes, demonstrating the three levels—high, middle, low; at least one inverted balance; and weight transfers of stretching, curling, and twisting
- Ending shape: Ta-da, standing position with arms extended upward, alignment of arms, shoulders, hips, feet

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: STUDENT PROJECT

Following sufficient time for students to explore beginning shape, practice of balances and weight transfers, and review of the ending shape, discuss with the class the final project. Inform students of the components of the project, the criteria for assessment, and the procedures for completion of the assignment.

(Post on the wall charts of the body parts as bases of support, shapes, actions, and levels.)

Discuss with the class the following steps for completion of the gymnastics project:

- Record beginning and ending shape on paper.
- Draw balances on back of paper (stick figures or pictographs) and include transfers.
- Number the balances in order of the sequence.
- Memorize the sequence.
- Have a friend watch a dress rehearsal.
- Come to the teacher for evaluation when ready.

Criteria for Evaluation

- Balances drawn
- Different bases of support for each balance (grade 3)
- Balances and shapes (grade 4)
- Balances, shapes, levels, and inversion (grade 5)
- Balances numbered and performed to match order
- Beginning and ending shapes
- Sequence memorized
- Evidence of concepts of muscular tension, alignment, shapes, levels, and so on as they pertain to gymnastics
- Extra credit: creativity (a touch of me!)

Note: Facilitate final project work by having students prepare an assignment sheet (see sample worksheet). Helpful hints for success: Fold the paper as a three-fold letter, separating parts I, II, and III with the folds. Students focus only on the portion that is assigned for that day, reporting to you for further instructions when they complete that part. Youngsters benefit from actually folding the paper into three sections for concentration on the task.

Begin the sequence work by having students practice balances and weight transfers, record them on the assignment sheet in part II, and put drawings on the back of the assignment sheet. (Observe for students having difficulty understanding directions or working independently; provide individual assistance as needed.)

FINAL GYMNASTICS SEQUENCE FORM

Name: _____ Homeroom: _____

Part I: Beginning Shape

Part II: Balances and Transfers

Use back of sheet to diagram balances, and label bases of support and transfers.

Part III: Ending Shape

From S. Holt/Hale and T. Hall, 2016, *Lesson planning for elementary physical education* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics).

Assessment

- Daily assessment of progress on assignment, comments on assignments.
- Summative: The final gymnastics sequence serves as the summative assessment for students' cognitive and performance understanding of balances and weight transfers in gymnastics, as well as the concepts of muscular tension, alignment, shapes, levels, and so on as they pertain to gymnastics.

Note: Complete your assessment of each student's project while students are working on their sequences. Digital recording of sequences is optional for students. Place completed projects in each student's portfolio following your evaluation.

Closure

- Today, we focused on part II of the final gymnastics sequences. Tell your neighbor the requirements for completion of part II.
- Will muscular tension be important when your sequence is being graded? Why?
- Raise your hands if you used extensions in any of your balances. What role do extensions play in maintaining good balance for sequences?
- In our next class we will focus on parts I and III of the sequence—the beginning and the ending.
- In our next class we will focus on practicing or rehearsing the sequences and showing them to a friend before I grade them.
- After I have graded your sequence, you will serve as a coach to help other students with their sequences.

Reflection

- Are students working safely when working independently?
- Do they cognitively understand balances, weight transfers, and the concepts of muscular tension, alignment, and extensions? Can they use them in a sequence?
- Do any students need modifications of the task? Do any students need an extra challenge in their balances and transfers?