

FOCUS➤

STRIKING WITH SHORT IMPLEMENTS (UNDERHAND)

Subfocus➤

Force

Grades K-2

Standard 1

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

Grade-Level Outcomes

- Strikes a lightweight object with a paddle or short-handled racket (S1.E24.K)
- Strikes a ball with a short-handled implement, sending it upward (S1.E24.1)
- Strikes an object upward with a short-handled implement, using consecutive hits (S1.E24.2)

Critical Elements for Striking With Short Implements

- Racket back in preparation for striking.
- Step on opposite foot as contact is made.
- Swing racket or paddle low to high.
- Coil and uncoil the trunk for preparation and execution of the striking action.
- Follow through for completion of the striking action.

Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- Strike a balloon with a paddle or racket, sending it upward
- Strike a ball with a paddle or racket, sending it upward
- Strike an object upward in self-space with consecutive hits (grade 2)

Safety Concerns

- Ensure that space is sufficient for striking with paddles or rackets.
- Ensure that students have spatial awareness as they are visually tracking vertical flight of object and swinging rackets or paddles.

Materials and Equipment

- Inflated round balloons, one per student
- Lollipop paddles, one per student
- Small high-density foam balls, one per student
- Selection of short-handled rackets, Plexiglas or table tennis paddles, beaver-tail paddles (see note at end of lesson plan for construction)
- Shuttlecocks, 8 to 10

Introduction

Earlier in the year, you were introduced to the skill of volleying. In that lesson, you practiced striking a balloon upward with a flat, open palm. Today, you will learn to strike an object (balloon, ball, shuttlecock) with a racket or paddle and send it upward. The racket becomes an extension of your arm; the flat surface for striking is still important. The skills are similar, and so are the critical elements for success. As you are working today, you will hear some of the same cues you heard for the volley (opposite foot forward, flat surface, follow through upward). You will also learn some new ones, just for the paddle or racket (swing of racket, low to high). Oh, yes, always watch the ball!

Rackets have strings; paddles are solid.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: STRIKING UPWARD

Students are scattered throughout general space, each with a lollipop or beaver-tail paddle and a balloon. Holding the paddle in the preferred hand and the balloon in the nonpreferred hand, they strike the balloon to send it upward and catch the balloon after each contact. Allow several minutes for exploration of striking the balloon so that it travels upward, not forward.

Problem Solving

What determines the pathway of the balloon? A kick, a volley? Right, directly behind, directly under.

Cue: Under the balloon.

- Students strike the balloon upward, using single hits, while remaining in self-space.

Cue: Flat surface.

Introduce the critical element of swinging the hand in a low-to-high striking action, emphasizing the action of the swing, not force. Demonstrate poor technique with rebound hits and floppy wrist action, followed by an example of proper technique, with low-to-high striking motion with firm wrist.

Note: The task appears simple, but correct performance is complex for beginning learners. Introduce a single cue and provide practice and feedback; introduce another cue only when you observe readiness of students.

Correct Grip

From the early stages of students' exploration of short and long implements for striking, learning the proper grip (bat, hockey stick, tennis racket, and so on) is important. Developing a skill with the proper grip is much easier than practicing with an incorrect grip only to face relearning later. Teach young students the correct grip to use with the implement. For example, introduce the shake hands and palms-up grip for the lollipop paddle before beginning the following task.

- Students are scattered throughout general space, each with a lollipop paddle and a foam ball. They strike the ball to send it upward and catch and collect the ball after each single hit. They continue to practice, emphasizing the correct shake-hands and palms-up grip for the paddle.

Cues: Control of force. Swing low to high (to the chin). Flat surface.

Safety Concern

Ensure that students are aware of others with balls, movement of paddles or rackets, and students attempting single hits.

- Students perform single hits, remaining in self-space.
- Challenge students to perform five single hits without moving from self-space (grades 1, 2).

Cue: Flat surface. Firm wrist.

Grade 2

Students strike the ball upward for two consecutive hits while remaining in personal space (no more than one step in either direction from self-space).

Cues: Ball above head. Flat surface. Low to high swing (to the chin). Watch the ball contact the paddle.

- Students perform consecutive hits upward without moving from self-space.
- Challenge students to achieve their personal best number of consecutive hits. If ball touches floor or student moves from self-space, he or she starts anew.

Shuttlecocks

If your program has a short racket and shuttlecock for each student, introduce striking an object with a racket with the task progression explained earlier. If you do not have a racket and shuttlecock available for every student, introduce striking an object in the station format that follows.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: STATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Four stations are designed to provide maximum practice and adequate space for striking with paddles or rackets. The task is the same at all stations: striking upward (with control of paddle or racket, object, and body). Students rotate to all four stations, three to four minutes per station.

- Station 1: volleying a balloon upward for consecutive hits with focus on flat surface
- Station 2: striking a balloon upward with a beaver-tail paddle for consecutive hits with focus on watching the ball hit the paddle
- Station 3: striking a ball upward with a lollipop paddle for single hits in self-space; grade 2: consecutive hits in self-space with focus on correct grip
- Station 4: striking a shuttlecock with a short racket (for single hits) with focus on flat surface and low to high swing

Cues: *Watch the birdie. Swing low to high.*

These four stations lead to an excellent class discussion focused on easy and more difficult stations and reasons for decisions.

Closure

- What was the focus of our lesson today? What new skill was introduced?
- How do you know the correct grip for the racket? Show your neighbor the correct way to hold the racket.
- Which was easier: balloons, balls, shuttlecocks? Why?

Reflection

- Are students successful at striking with paddles and rackets?
- Do they have functional understanding (cognitive and performance) of the critical elements of striking with short implements?
- Can students strike the ball or shuttlecock with sufficient control of direction and force to remain in personal space?
- Can they maintain critical elements (flat surface, correct grip) when performing consecutive hits (grade 2)?

A beaver-tail paddle is made by stretching a knee-high hose over a wire coat hanger, pulling the hanger into the elongated shape of a beaver's tail, and tying the hose around the handle of the hanger. Thick tape around the "handles" protects the "grip." These paddles are lightweight and easy for young students to grip and swing correctly for striking balloons. Kindergarten children said they look like a beaver's tail—thus the name!