

LESSON 8: UNILATERAL EXERCISES

Grade-Level Outcomes

Primary Outcomes

Movement concepts, principles, & knowledge: Applies the terminology associated with exercise and participation in selected individual-performance activities, dance, net/wall games, target games, aquatics and/or outdoor pursuits). (S2.H1.L1)

Fitness activities: Demonstrates competency in 1 or more specialized skills in health-related fitness activities. (S1.H3.L1)

Fitness knowledge: Demonstrates appropriate technique on resistance-training machines and with free weights. (S3.H7.L1)

Safety: Applies best practices for participating safely in physical activity, exercise and dance (e.g., injury prevention, proper alignment, hydration, use of equipment, implementation of rules, sun protection). (S4.H5.L1)

Embedded Outcome

Fitness knowledge: Identifies the structure of skeletal muscle and fiber types as they relate to muscle development. (S3.H9.L2)

Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- describe various workout routines that are progressively more difficult.
- identify appropriate exercises for each body part through the use of free-weight equipment.
- apply the terminology associated with exercises and equipment appropriately.
- practice unilateral exercises safely.

Equipment and Materials

- Dumbbells of various weights
- Kettlebells of various weights
- Elastic bands of various strengths
- Pin-loaded machines
- Cable-based machines
- Unilateral upper-body worksheet
- Unilateral lower-body worksheet

Introduction

To keep a workout routine from becoming dull and boring, you should always expand and experiment with how you perform certain exercises. In today's lesson, we will perform unilateral exercises for a change of pace. Unilateral is a term you that looked up for homework. Can anyone tell me what it means? Yes—unilateral exercises are those performed with only one side of the body, as in biceps curls with just the right arm. When you finish your set with the right arm, you perform the same exercise with the left arm. Exercising this way has some advantages over other training methods, and we will start class by discussing those advantages as well as some disadvantages.

Instructional Task: Class Discussion

■ PRACTICE TASK

Lead the class in discussing unilateral training.

Guiding questions for students:

- What does the term *unilateral* mean?
- What are some advantages of using a unilateral exercise?
- What are some disadvantages of using unilateral training during a workout?

Extension

The discussion can move into compound exercises and single-joint exercises.

Student Choices/Differentiation

Provide handouts with examples of compound exercises and single-joint exercises.

What to Look For

- Students are able to describe exercises as single joint and compound correctly.
- Students are engaged in the discussion.

Instructional Task: Unilateral Upper Body

■ PRACTICE TASK

Have students complete their dynamic warm-ups. Students then pair up and move around the room to each upper-body station and perform the exercises on one side of the body at a time. For upper-body exercises, the basic repetition range is 8 to 12.

Refinement

Advise students that using only one side of the body during free-weight and machine exercises calls for a reduced amount of weight. Usually this is less than half of what a person can perform when using both sides of the body.

Students record all weights and exercise names on the unilateral upper-body worksheet.

Extension

Students can create an exercise that might include more than one muscle group (compound exercise).

Student Choices/Differentiation

Students choose which exercises to practice.

What to Look For

Students make the appropriate weight selection based on only the one side of the body being used.

Instructional Task: Unilateral Lower Body

■ PRACTICE TASK

Students pair up, move around the room to each lower-body station, and perform the exercises on one side of the body at a time. For lower-body exercises, the basic repetition range is 10 to 15.

Students record all weights and exercise names on the unilateral lower-body worksheet.

Students cool down with their static stretching routines.

Refinement

Remind students that lower-body exercises usually demand more reps than upper-body exercises. Students should select a heavier weight but also keep their form and use proper technique and spotters.

Student Choices/Differentiation

Students choose which exercises to practice.

What to Look For

- Students make the appropriate weight selection based on the side of the body being used.
- Students are using spotters.

Formal and Informal Assessments

- Unilateral worksheets
- Exit slip: Give me an example of a single-joint unilateral exercise for the [insert body part].

Closure

- The workout plan for the day incorporated two new concepts: combining various exercise tools and using unilateral exercises. Let's review your exercise lists and share ideas with other groups.
- Both methods are considered advanced training programs, as they relate to progressions and fitness development.
- As we explore a variety of exercise techniques, equipment, and programs, I expect to see you including these ideas and concepts in your resistance-training program.

Reflection

- Do students identify exercises now by how many joints are involved?
- Are they comfortable using free weights?
- Are they ready to write a resistance-training plan?
- Review physical activity logs. Are students participating in enough physical activity to meet government-recommended guidelines?

Homework

Research the types of muscle fibers and how different fiber types influence muscle development. Summarize your findings for Lesson 9. (Embedded outcome: S3.H9.L2)

Resources

Bompa, T., & Carrera, M. (2015). *Conditioning young athletes*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Internet keyword search: "unilateral resistance training," "unilateral upper body exercises," "unilateral lower body exercises"