

## LESSON 3: CENTERING

### Grade-Level Outcomes

#### Primary Outcomes

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

**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 appropriately. (S2.H1.L1)

**Fitness knowledge:** Identifies types of strength exercises (isometric, concentric, eccentric) and stretching exercises (static, proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation [PNF]), dynamic) for personal fitness development (e.g., strength, endurance, range of motion). (S3.H9.L1)

#### Embedded Outcome

**Challenge:** Chooses an appropriate level of challenge to experience success and desire to participate in a self-selected physical activity. (S5.H2.L2)

### Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- refine basic Pilates exercises.
- identify and discuss the Pilates powerhouse.
- apply the concept of centering in the workout.
- identify types of stretches and strengthening exercises.

### Equipment and Materials

- Mats
- Music
- Stereo equipment
- Resistance bands or straps
- Worksheets and pencils

### Introduction

*Today, we'll continue our Pilates workout, but we'll be focusing on a different Pilates concept—centering. Who remembers what centering is from our previous class? Yes, it's focusing on the large group of muscles in the center of the body, sometimes known as the core. In Pilates movements, the center is the foundation for all movements, so the core is very important. Centering involves more than just the abdominals. It includes the lower back, glutes, pelvic floor, and muscles around the buttocks and hips. What is another name for this? Yes, it's the powerhouse. As you perform your workout, maintain your focus on how you are engaging the powerhouse, or centering.*

## Instructional Task: Warm-Up (10-14 Minutes)

### ■ PRACTICE TASK

Stand in Pilates posture (standing straight, with good alignment, relaxed shoulders, hands resting on thighs).

In the hook-lying position (neutral spine), students practice the four-count breathing technique.

Add pelvic pull-ups (6-8), concentrating on pulling the core muscles into the center.

Repeat the warm-up from Lesson 1.

### Student Choices/Differentiation

Use visual aids or review video clips to demonstrate stretches and exercises.

### What to Look For

- Students are breathing deeply, focusing on exhaling on the way up.
- Students achieve an optimal range of motion in the stretches.

## Instructional Task: Pilates Beginner Workout (30-40 Minutes)

### ■ PRACTICE TASK

Use the beginner workout from Lesson 1. Specify the number of repetitions or time for each exercise. Verbally cue the sequence. The principle of centering is the focus of the workout.

### Refinement

Remind students to breathe while centering.

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**EMBEDDED OUTCOME: S5.H2.L2.** Encourage students to work at a level that is challenging but allows them to complete the sequence.

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### Guiding questions for students:

- How did focusing on centering affect your technique?
- How did fatigue affect your ability to engage the powerhouse?

### Student Choices/Differentiation

- Use a poster board to remind students of the sequence.
- Students can modify the number of repetitions for their level.
- Hundred: Students can start with feet on the floor or in tabletop position (harder).
- Roll like a ball: Students can practice C curve or supported roll back.
- Plank and mermaid: Students can have the lower arm extended or forearm on the mat.
- For leg exercises, students with tight hamstrings can bend slightly at the knees.

### What to Look For

- Students are performing all exercises with control and at an optimal pace.
- Students are breathing rhythmically, with the exhale on the more difficult (concentric) phase of the movement. Students should not hold the breath.

## Instructional Task: Cool-Down and Discussion (5-6 Minutes)

### ■ PRACTICE TASK

Use the stretching routine from Lesson 1 followed by relaxation—supine and prone—with a focus on breathing.

### Student Choices/Differentiation

- Stretches can be performed using a band.
- Students move through the stretches at their own pace.

### What to Look For

- Students are performing the stretches slowly and with control.
- Students are holding each stretch for 30 to 60 seconds.

## Instructional Task: Types of Strength and Stretching Exercises

### ■ PRACTICE TASK

Review isometric, concentric, and eccentric contractions. In small groups, students review the exercises in the main workout and discuss and identify the types of strength training and stretching exercises that were used. One student records answers.

### Extension

Review the types of stretches. Repeat the task for the stretching exercises in the warm-up and cool-down. One student records answers.

### Student Choices/Differentiation

- Students can complete the assignment for homework if more time is needed.
- Have pictures or videos of different types of stretches or strength training exercises if needed.

### What to Look For

- Students can differentiate between static and dynamic stretching.
- Students can align terminology correctly with the types of strengthening exercises they are doing.
- All students are contributing to the discussion.

## Formal and Informal Assessments

- Worksheets
- Exit slip: Which muscle groups are part of the powerhouse?

## Closure

- Who can tell me what concentric, eccentric, and isometric mean?
- I can really see improvement in your technique—great job!
- Next class will be our last one with this beginner's workout, so let's work hard to make it our best.

## Reflection

- Now that students have had more practice with the exercises, are they getting a good workout?
- Are they able to apply the centering concept and still demonstrate control during the workout? Do we need more practice with that?
- Review worksheets to make sure students understand the types of exercises and stretches they are doing.

## Homework

Make at least one blog entry. You can discuss the aspects of the workout that interest you, but you must include which components you think you are doing well and which ones you think need improvement.

## Resources

Crowther, A., & Petre, H. (2009). *Total Pilates: The step-by-step guide to Pilates at home for everybody*. London: Duncan Baird.

Pilates exercises: <http://pilates.about.com/od/pilatesmat/tp/BeginnerExercises.htm>

Internet keyword search: "Pilates," "Pilates beginner workouts," "Pilates principles," "centering," "Pilates powerhouse," "static and dynamic stretching," "isometric," "concentric," "eccentric"