

LESSON 9: SUN SALUTATIONS

Grade-Level Outcomes

Primary Outcomes

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

Lifetime activities: Refines activity-specific movement skills in 1 or more lifetime activities (outdoor pursuits, individual-performance activities, aquatics, net/wall games, or target games). (S1.H1.L2)

Embedded Outcomes

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

Engages in physical activity: Participates several times a week in a self-selected lifetime activity, dance or fitness activity outside of the school day. (S3.H6.L1)

Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- demonstrate proper breathing techniques while performing asanas.
- refine previous asanas.
- demonstrate new balancing poses.

Equipment and Materials:

- Yoga mat for each person
- Block
- Appropriate yoga music

Introduction

Going forward, practice will begin to flow and repeat more. Today, we'll work on two new balancing poses and sun salutations. We'll start with our usual warm-up and add staff pose [see Lessons 1 and 2].

Instructional Practice: Sun Salutation

There are many, many variations of sun salutations. See the reference section for some detailed website suggestions.

■ PRACTICE TASK

Have students move into downward dog.

Rag doll

Quiet mountain

While students are here, give a brief explanation of the purpose and practice of sun salutation.

Go through sun salutation:

- Head to knees
- Look up
- Head to knees
- Hands to floor, right leg back to lunge
- Plank
- Caterpillar to upward dog

- Downward dog
- Left leg forward to lunge
- Standing forward bend
- Inhale up and back
- Mountain

Cue slowly at first, gradually increasing pace. Do numerous times on both sides.

Guiding questions for students:

- Why is the sun salutation such an important practice in yoga?
- Why, in your estimation, does the sun salutation end with hands in mudra position?

Refinement

Downward dog: Remind students to work on keeping their heels on the ground and butt up in the air.

Student Choices/Differentiation

Allow students to bend their knees slightly on standing forward; bend if straight legs are too uncomfortable.

What to Look For

- Students are breathing correctly.
- Students are keeping the core tight in plank.

Instructional Practice: New Balancing Asanas

■ PRACTICE TASK

Demonstrate the new poses and have students follow the sequence:

Standing head to knee

Dancer

Refinements

- *Standing head to knee*: Keep elbows in and chest forward.
- *Dancer*: Keep hips and shoulders square to the front wall for ultimate balance.

Extensions

- *Standing head to knee*: Pull chest to leg, chin to knee.
- *Dancer*: Use ankle to pull arm back to get back leg parallel to the floor. Repeat on the other side.
- *Note*: YouTube is a great resource if you have the technology available, especially if you cannot demonstrate some of the different extensions of the asanas.

EMBEDDED OUTCOME: S5.H2.L2. This is a good place to see whether students are choosing the appropriate level of challenge, which will be evident by their ability to balance on one leg. Students should bend the leg if they can't balance over the straight leg.

Student Choices/Differentiation

Standing head to knee:

- Students will show varying levels of leg straightness.
- Students can keep the balancing-leg knee slightly bent to help with the balance, but work toward straightening both legs.

Dancer:

- For those struggling with balance, have them keep the knee down and arm up and stay there.
- For those advanced, have them lean and reach as forward as possible.

What to Look For

- Did I remind students about a focal point?
- Are students' bodies under control?
- Are they handling it appropriately if they are having difficulty balancing?

Instructional Practice: Cool-Down

■ PRACTICE TASK

Have students lie on their backs in savasana (corpse pose).

Cue with breath counting.

As your students are relaxing, their heart rates coming down, have them focus on the movement of their abdomens during breathing.

Student Choices/Differentiation

Knees can be up with feet on the floor for those whose lower back is uncomfortable.

What to Look For

- Did the class demeanor change when you asked them to about think about their breathing?
- Can you notice physical tension dissipating?

Formal and Informal Assessments

- Teacher observation and correction
- Journal assessments and assignments (see homework)

Closure

Quiet the mind; chime the gong. Have students listen and focus on the sound as long as they can.

Reflection

- Are students using proper etiquette during their practice?
- Am I aware of differentiating as necessary for each student?
- What can I plan that will challenge them in the next lesson?

Homework

Journal assignment:

- We moved a little faster today during our sun salutation practice. What are your overall feelings on this?
- You challenged yourself with two difficult balances today. Were they easy? Difficult? What specifically?
- What did you do to accommodate? What can I do to help you?
- Log your physical activity outside of school. Include the type of activity and how long you did it.
- On average, how many times per week are you participating in physical activity, including physical education class? Are you meeting Outcome S3.H6.L1?
- Calculate the average number of minutes per week that you were physically active, including in physical education class. Are you meeting the national guidelines for physical activity?

Resources

Great site for everything sun salutation: www.yogajournal.com/category/beginners/how-to/sun-salutations.

Internet keyword search: "dancer yoga pose," "standing knee pose"