

Gymnastic activities – unit 3

ABOUT THE UNIT

In this unit children focus on improving the quality of their movement, *eg by stretching fingers and pointing toes*, to help them produce tension and extension. They plan and perform sequences of contrasting actions, and develop flow by linking actions smoothly and planning variations in speed.

In gymnastics as a whole, children use skills and agilities individually, in combination and in sequence, with the aim of showing as much control and precision as possible.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

This unit lays the foundations for future gymnastic units, in which children will refine and combine their agilities and actions to answer set movement tasks. They will work with a partner on the floor and using apparatus. They will choose and adapt actions from their individual sequences to create sequences together. They will learn that strength and suppleness affect the performance of gymnastic actions, and will know whether or not the layout of apparatus is safe.

In all physical education units, children will make simple assessments of their performance based on clear criteria that their teacher gives them.

VOCABULARY

In this unit children will have an opportunity to use a range of words and phrases, such as:

- inverted
- contrasting
- flow
- combinations
- half-turn
- sustained
- explosive

RESOURCES

- resource cards with balances, shapes, actions and short sequences to copy
- an appropriate selection of:
 - low apparatus, *eg mats and benches*
 - intermediate apparatus, *eg benches, planks, vaulting box tops, inclined platforms, padded platforms*
 - portable high apparatus, *eg boxes, tables*
 - fixed high apparatus, *eg ropes, rope ladders, climbing frames*

EXPECTATIONS

When carrying out the type of activities and tasks in this unit

most children will be able to:

use a greater number of their own ideas for movements in response to a task; choose and plan sequences of contrasting actions; adapt sequences to suit different types of apparatus and their partner's ability; explain how strength and suppleness affect performance; identify some muscle groups used in gymnastic activities; suggest warm-up activities; compare and contrast gymnastic sequences, commenting on similarities and differences; with help, recognise how performances could be improved

some children will not have made so much progress. They will be able to:

perform some gymnastic actions with control and accuracy; repeat short sequences of movement that include 'unlike' actions; show some contrast in shape and use of direction; work safely on the floor and apparatus; follow warm-up activities carefully and recognise which parts of the body are working hardest; describe what others have done, using gymnastic language; with help, comment on the quality of performance

some children will have progressed further. They will be able to:

work on longer sequences; show control, consistency and accuracy of movement; include changes in level, direction and speed in their sequences; adapt short sequences so that a partner or small group can perform them; recognise how strength and suppleness affect the quality of performance; suggest warm-up activities; identify similarities and differences between performances; suggest some ways a performance could be improved

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

LEARNING OUTCOMES

POINTS TO NOTE

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN

CHILDREN

ACQUIRING AND DEVELOPING SKILLS

- to consolidate and improve the quality of their actions, body shapes and balances, and their ability to link phrases of movement
- to help the children to develop and perform actions, *eg jumping, balancing, transferring weight, rolling, turning, weight on hands*. Ask them to practise actions and concentrate on the quality of the movement, *eg extended feet, hands, arms, legs*.
- to teach the children to link different balances, moving in and out of positions of stillness, *eg balance on hand, knee, elbow; move smoothly into a roll; move smoothly into a balance on one foot*.
- to teach the children to transfer weight smoothly from one part of the body to another, *eg from a balance on the shoulders to a movement taking weight on the hands*. Help them to use these actions on the floor and over, through, across and along apparatus.

- explore combinations of floor, mats and apparatus, and find different ways of using a shape, balance or travel
- practise an action or short sequence of movements, and improve the quality of the actions and transitions
- show control, accuracy and fluency of movement when performing actions on their own and with a partner

SELECTING AND APPLYING SKILLS, TACTICS AND COMPOSITIONAL IDEAS

- to improve their ability to select appropriate actions and use simple compositional ideas
- to help the children to vary and apply their actions on the floor and on apparatus, *eg varying shapes (contrasting, twisting into), changing speed, changing direction (forwards, backwards, sideways), changing level, using apparatus (onto, from over, underneath)*. Teach them to copy a partner's sequence on the floor and using apparatus, *eg following or matching movements, shapes, balances*.
- to teach the children easy combinations of contrasting actions, *eg moving from a low travel to a high travel, from a high balance to a low travel*. Teach them how to choose combinations that work in their sequences. Talk to them about how they devise sequences. Listen to their suggestions about how to adapt a sequence for a partner or for different apparatus. Encourage them to work well with a partner.

- devise and perform a gymnastic sequence, showing a clear beginning, middle and end
- adapt a sequence to include different levels, speeds or directions
- work well on their own and contribute to pair sequences

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF FITNESS AND HEALTH

- to recognise and describe the short-term effects of exercise on the body during different activities
- to know the importance of suppleness and strength
- to ask the children to say which parts of the body are important for gymnastic activities or movements. Ask them why the warm-up is an important part of gymnastic activity.
- to ask the children to compare and contrast breathing and heart rates when resting and exercising. Talk to them about why good suppleness and strength improve the quality of gymnastic performance.
- to help the children to work safely on their own and in pairs, *eg to decide which pathways to use when creating a sequence*.

- understand the importance of warming up
- identify when their body is warm and stretched ready for gymnastic activity
- understand that strength and suppleness are important parts of fitness

EVALUATING AND IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

- to describe and evaluate the effectiveness and quality of a performance
- to recognise how their own performance has improved
- to ask the children to compare and contrast sequences. Ask them to identify similarities and differences in performance, *eg similar or contrasting movements, body shapes, balances, way the apparatus is used*.
- to teach the children to judge the best performance and say why, *eg it meets the requirements of the task, better extension and body tension, smooth transitions*. Help them to suggest how a performance could be improved. Listen to the language they use and help them to develop it.

- explain the differences between two performances
- identify when two performances have the same elements and order, and comment on their quality
- understand what is involved in the process of improving a performance

- In every lesson, most of the children's learning should take place through physical activity relating to the core tasks.**
- Most lessons should start with short warm-up activities that help the children remember what they did in the last lesson and prepare them for what they will learn next. Most lessons should end with cool-down activities.
- Give the children enough time to practise their work, and to show and teach it to different partners. When performing in pairs and small groups, the children should have an opportunity to work with different partners, including those they are comfortable or friendly with.
- Give the children time to finish and refine a sequence before moving them on to a new piece of apparatus or sequence.
- A digital camera could be used to record their still shapes and balances, so that they can see their own performances. The children should also be given the opportunity to record their sequence, to help them remember it. They could use a word-processing package to describe their sequences and gymnastic actions.
- Make sure the children have an opportunity to see good-quality performances and actions by watching demonstrations and videos, and by looking at photographs, pictures and resource cards.
- The children could also use a database of appropriate actions, shapes and balances that they could copy or use as the basis for their own ideas.
- Give the children specific feedback on their ideas, compositions and how to improve the quality of their movement.

Health and safety

- Are the children wearing footwear and clothing that are safe and help their learning?
- Is the space safe and clear enough to work in?
- Are the children aware of others in the class when they are moving and working?
- Have they all warmed up and cooled down properly?
- Do they all know how to lift and move apparatus safely?

PRIOR LEARNING

It is helpful if children have:

- made short sequences of 'unlike' actions, *eg jump-roll-balance*
- remembered and repeated sequences accurately
- linked actions on the floor with actions on the apparatus
- copied a partner's actions
- modified their basic actions, *eg different levels, shapes, speeds, pathways, body parts*

CORE TASKS

Following are core tasks the children could be asked to carry out.

Task 1

Using floor and apparatus, create and perform a sequence of contrasting actions, *eg three jumps and two balances*, showing contrasting shapes. Make sure you show extension when balancing and flow when transferring your weight, so that the end of one action is the beginning of another.

Task 2

Using floor and mats, create and perform a sequence that involves a clear change of speed, linking three balances with three different ways of travelling, *eg balance, travel, balance, travel, travel, balance*.

Adaptations and variations on the tasks

Ask the children to:

- make their sequences shorter, use simpler actions and agilities, and reduce the number of elements they use (this will make the tasks easier)
- make their sequences longer, use harder actions and agilities, and increase the number of elements they use (this will make the tasks easier)
- perform the sequence with a new change of speed, level or direction, or to change a balance, shape or way of travelling
- work in groups, *eg divide the class into groups of four and ask the children to start and finish at the same time*
- perform the same sequence with different emphasis, *eg twisted shapes, symmetrical balances*
- use higher or lower apparatus
- use the apparatus laid out in a different way

EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Out of lessons, at home and in the community, children could be encouraged to:

- go to local gymnastic displays (they could watch older children performing in school displays or assemblies)
- join extracurricular gymnastic activity clubs
- follow balance, shape, travel and movement phrase trails at playtime (these could be set up in the playground)
- get in touch with local gymnastic clubs
- watch national and international gymnastic events on television, or find out about them in books or on CD-ROM
- write down or describe their sequences to their parents or guardians

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

This unit could be linked to:

- science – studying skeletons, muscles and pulse rates
- PSHE – understanding the need for self-discipline and practice

