

# FOCUS► **BALANCES AND WEIGHT TRANSFERS ON LOW EQUIPMENT**

## Subfocus►

## Partner Relationships

### *Grades 3-5*

#### **Standard 1**

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

Students are introduced to balances and weight transfers on low equipment only after they display a functional understanding of balances and weight transfers on mats. This lesson, Balances and Weight Transfer on Low Equipment, is designed to be completed over a series of several classes, not during a single class.

#### **Grade-Level Outcomes**

- Combines traveling with balance and weight transfers to create a gymnastics sequence with and without equipment or apparatus (S1.E12.4)
- Combines actions, balances and weight transfer to create a gymnastics sequence with a partner on equipment or apparatus (S1.E12.5)

#### **Lesson Objectives**

The learner will:

- Combine balances and weight transfers on low equipment
- Combine balances and weight transfers into a sequence on low equipment
- Combine balances and weight transfers into a sequence with a partner on low equipment (grade 5)

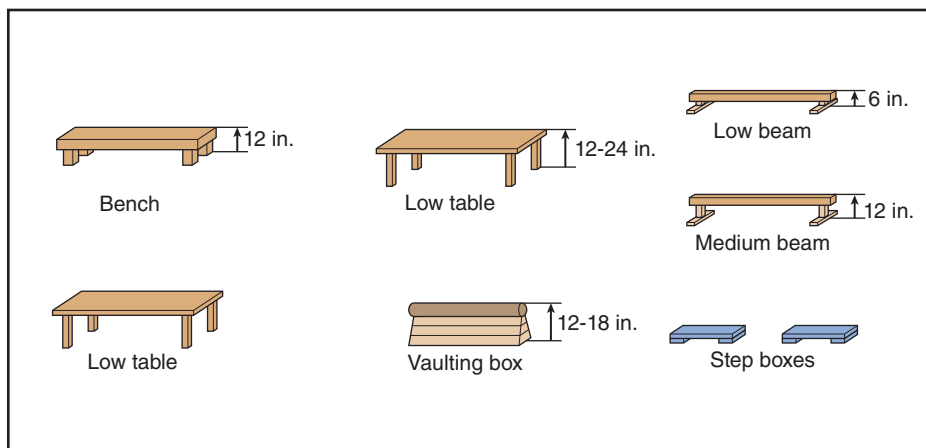
Review partner relationships: working in unison or contrast, leading and following, matching side by side, and mirroring by facing each other.

#### **Materials and Equipment**

- Variety of low equipment: 12-inch (30 cm) section of vaulting box, low balance beams, benches, low tables, aerobic step boxes
- Sufficient mats to surround equipment for safety

#### **Organization and Management**

- Establish protocols for response to signal, listening position, and rotation of stations.
- Set up stations (see examples of low equipment for balances and transfers).



## Introduction

*During our study of gymnastics, you have balanced on various bases of support and in various shapes and levels; you have transferred weight by stretching, curling, rolling, and twisting; and you have created sequences on mats. Today, we will increase the challenge by applying all those skills to small equipment—tables, benches, beams, and boxes. Safety on the low equipment is our prerequisite to the large gymnastics apparatuses.*

## Safety Concern

Tell students that they must not disturb or touch others as they work on gymnastics equipment. (Standard 4)

Divide the class into equal groups for stations. Preferably, sufficient equipment should be available so that no more than four or five students are at a station.

- Rotation 1: all students to all stations
- Rotation 2: choice of favorite two stations, no more than five at a station
- Rotation 3: choice of favorite station for sequence work

## LEARNING EXPERIENCE: BALANCES ON EQUIPMENT

Review bases of support from lesson on mats and criteria for success.

- Exploration of balances with various bases of support on low equipment. On each rotation to a different station, students begin anew with balances and bases.
- Task extensions: inverted balances on table and vaulting box.

*Guided discovery: Some balances that were easy on the floor are difficult on low equipment, such as one-foot balance, front scale, but some balances are easier on low equipment than on the floor or mat.*

## LEARNING EXPERIENCE: WEIGHT TRANSFER ON EQUIPMENT

Review actions of stretching, curling, and twisting; muscular tension; alignment; counterbalance.

- Have students explore weight transfers on equipment.
- Challenge students to transition between balances while remaining on the equipment.

## LEARNING EXPERIENCE: MOUNTS AND DISMOUNTS

Have students explore getting onto low equipment.

- Introduce step and spring takeoffs with review of jumping and landing. With a 10- to 15-foot (3 to 5 m) approach to the equipment, students transfer to feet on equipment.
- They transfer to body parts other than feet on equipment, such as knees and hands, upper thighs, stomach.
- Task extension: transfer momentarily to hands only.

Have students explore various ways of getting off low equipment:

- Review of critical elements for safe landings: bending of knees and ankles, and alignment of shoulders, hips, and ankles
- Jumping off with shapes in the air
- Jumping off with quarter and half turns

Task extensions: transfer from feet to hands on equipment for transfer off low equipment; transfer from low-level balance to weight on hands on mat, rolling action for dismount

## **LEARNING EXPERIENCE: SEQUENCE ON LOW EQUIPMENT**

- Approach: Standing approximately 15 feet (5 m) from the bench, low table, or low beam, students may select a locomotor or a weight transfer action to travel from the starting place to the equipment.
- Mount the equipment: Transfer from two feet to two feet, one foot to two feet, one foot to one foot. Task extensions: knee vault, frog stand.
- Balances and weight transfers
  - Grade 3: bases of support
  - Grade 4: bases of support, shapes, levels, weight transfers
  - Grade 5: bases of support, shapes, levels, inversion, weight transfers
- Dismount from low equipment
  - Jumping and landing: two feet to two feet, jump with quarter turn, jump with half turn, jump with shape in the air
  - Task extensions: transfer from feet to hands on equipment for transfer off low equipment; transfer from low-level balance to weight on hands on mat, rolling action for dismount
- Ending shape: ta-da

Following the rotation to all stations, ask students to select their two favorite stations for balances and weight transfers. Allow sufficient time for each student to experiment with balances, weight transfers, and mounts and dismounts at the two stations.

After a discussion of the final project, a sequence on low equipment (the components of the project, the criteria for assessment, and the procedures for completion of the assignment), have each student select his or her best station for the sequence project.

- Review with the class the steps in completing the gymnastics project:
  - Record the approach, mount, dismount, and ending shape on paper.
  - Draw balances and transfers on back of paper (stick figures or pictographs); label bases of support.
  - Number the balances in order of the sequence.
  - Memorize the sequence.
  - Have a friend watch for a dress rehearsal.
  - Come to the teacher for evaluation when ready.

### **Criteria for Evaluation**

- Written work complete
- Sequence memorized and performed as recorded on paper
- Different bases of support for each balance (grade 3)
- Balances and shapes (grade 4)
- Balances, shapes, levels, and inversion (grade 5)
- Sequence matched to skill level of student
- Extra credit: creativity (a touch of me!)

Provide students with the assignment sheet for completing the work on the beam, bench, table, or box they have selected.

## **GYMNASTICS ASSIGNMENT SHEET FOR LOW EQUIPMENT**

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Low equipment: \_\_\_\_\_ Partner: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Part I**

1. Approach to low equipment

2. Mount onto low equipment

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### **Part II**

1. Balances: Draw each balance on back of this sheet and label base of support.

2. Weight transfers, transitions, travel

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### **Part III**

1. Dismount

2. Ending shape (ta-da)

From S. Holt/Hale and T. Hall, 2016, *Lesson planning for elementary physical education* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics).

## **Assessment**

### **Grade 3**

The summative assessment for third graders is the sequence on mats. Sequences on low equipment consist of balances on various bases of support with mounts and dismounts. They can be assessed by a peer or digitally recorded for a self-assessment.

### **Grade 4**

The final gymnastics sequence serves as the summative assessment for students' cognitive and performance understanding of balances and weight transfers in gymnastics, as well as the concepts of muscular tension, alignment, shapes, levels, and so on as they pertain to gymnastics. (Formative assessments have been collected throughout the study.)

### **Grade 5**

The final gymnastics sequence on low equipment is an option for students who prefer the low equipment instead of pieces of apparatus.

Complete your assessment of each student's project by stations while other students continue their work. Digital recording of sequences is optional for students. Place completed projects in each student's portfolio following your evaluation.

## **Closure**

- What was different about our work in gymnastics today? What new challenge was added?
- What is the difference between doing balances on the mats and on the equipment?
- Which pieces of low equipment were best for inverted balances?
- Which shape was easiest? Most difficult?

## **Grades 4, 5**

- Compare your skills of balancing on the mats with balancing on the equipment.
- Compare moving into and out of balances on the mats and on the equipment.

## **Reflection**

- Do students work safely on gymnastics equipment?
- Do they safely come out of balances, both accidental and intentional?
- Are they able to move into and out of balances on the equipment?
- Are they ready with both skills and acceptance of responsibility for the large pieces of gymnastics apparatus?