

## Learning Snapshots

### STANDARD 1

#### 1.10 Demonstrate the underhand movement (throw) pattern.

The underhand movement pattern is simpler than the overhead movement pattern and should be learned first. The underhand movement pattern is used in many sport skills: the softball pitch, bowling, and the underhand volleyball serve. The goal is for students to demonstrate the underhand throwing pattern using the proper form. The proper form for the underhand throwing pattern is as follows:

- Face the target.
- Hold the ball with the thumb and three fingers.
- Swing the arm back.\*
- Turn the body back slightly.
- Step forward on the foot opposite to the throwing arm.\*
- Turn the body forward slightly.
- Swing the arm forward with the palm facing forward.
- Release the ball.
- Follow through in the direction of the target.

During the lesson, the teacher demonstrates the correct technique for the underhand throw (also known as a toss), pointing out one or two cues that students should focus on first (items with an asterisk). Students, in pairs, practice the underhand throw. The teacher rotates through the class providing positive or corrective specific feedback on the one or two specific cues.<sup>4</sup> Students change partners frequently so that they learn sharing and cooperation (Standard 5.3) in the same lesson. As students' performances improve, the teacher focuses on additional cues. It is important for students to focus on generating force instead of accuracy so that proper throwing form remains the primary objective. Students practice the underhand throw throughout the school year. Multiple lessons and practice opportunities will be needed for most students to achieve throwing proficiency.

#### 1.13 Catch, showing proper form, a gently thrown ball.

Catching is a common skill used in many sports and games. At the first-grade level, students learn the proper form for catching a gently thrown ball. The proper form is:

- Watch the ball.
- Move toward the ball.
- Fingers are pointed up if the ball is above the waist or pointed down if the ball is below the waist.
- Extend both arms.\*



#### ILLUSTRATION CREDIT

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<sup>4</sup>Feedback is most effective when it is specific and positive or specific and corrective.

- Grasp the ball with both hands.
- “Give” with the ball on contact.\*

During the lesson, the teacher demonstrates the correct technique for catching while pointing out one or two cues that students should focus on first (items with an asterisk). Catching can be practiced simultaneously with the underhand throw. The teacher circulates through the class providing positive or corrective specific feedback on the one or two specific cues. Students continue to change partners frequently, so that they learn to share and cooperate (Standard 5.3) in the same lesson. As students’ performances improve, the teacher focuses on additional cues. The teacher reviews and students practice the correct technique for catching throughout the year.

## STANDARD 2

### 2.10 Demonstrate and explain how to reduce the impact of force while catching an object.

The term *impact force* as it applies to a child catching an object such as a ball with the hands is nothing more or less than the slap or sting to the palm and fingers as the ball is touched, slowed, and brought to rest. Bringing a ball to rest requires a force on the ball to be applied for a certain amount of time; as more time is taken, the force required becomes smaller, and so does the slap. An example of taking more time in order to reduce the force is bending an elbow when catching instead of keeping the arm straight. The slap can also be reduced by spreading the force that has to be applied over a large area of the hand, so that no one spot has to apply all of it; the slap is less if a ball is caught with two hands instead of one, because the force is spread over the area of two hands instead of the area of one. Another way to reduce the slap is to put some material between the palm of the hand and the ball. When a baseball player catches a ball in the palm of her or his glove, some of the energy of the ball’s motion goes into squeezing and stretching the leather of the glove instead of into squeezing and stretching her or his hand.

This standard requires that students demonstrate and explain these concepts. When teaching the correct technique for catching (Standard 1.13), the teacher explains why it is important to bend elbows when catching and why baseball/softball players wear gloves. During throwing and catching practice, the teacher circulates through the class to provide feedback and periodically asks students to explain why bending their arms is important when catching.

## STANDARD 3

### 3.6 Stretch arms, shoulders, back, and legs without hyperflexing or hyperextending the joints.

*Hyperflexion* means to bend a joint beyond its normal range. *Hyperextension* means to straighten a joint beyond its normal range. (See the Glossary.)



Both practices could result in injuries when one is stretching and should be avoided. One example of hyperflexion is the deep knee bend. One example of hyperextension is when a trunk lift is performed with the chin higher than 12 inches above the ground. These two exercises are unsafe stretches that should not be a part of physical education instruction.

The purpose of this activity is to instruct students on the correct stretching technique. A static stretch is a slow, sustained stretch that is held for 10 to 30 seconds. The student “stretches the muscle-tendon unit to the point where mild discomfort is felt and then backs off slightly, holding the stretch at a point just prior to discomfort” (*Physical Education for Lifelong Fitness* 2005, 107). Posters and other visual aids provide students with a picture of the correct technique. All flexibility exercises should be performed as static stretches with no bouncing. There are four safe stretches.<sup>5</sup>

#### ACROSS-ARM STRETCH

Reach right arm across the chest with upper arm parallel to the ground.  
Place left hand on right upper arm.  
Gently push on right arm toward chest.  
Repeat with the other arm.



#### SHOULDER SHRUGS

Stand.  
Raise right shoulder toward earlobe.  
Lower shoulder.  
Raise left shoulder toward earlobe.  
Lower shoulder.

#### REVERSE HURDLE STRETCH

Sit with one leg extended and the other leg bent so that the sole of the foot is alongside the extended knee.  
Bend the extended knee slightly.  
Reach both hands toward toes of the extended leg.  
Repeat with other leg.



#### LOWER BACK STRETCH

Lie on back with both knees bent and both feet on the ground.  
Grab with both hands the thigh of one bent leg.  
Pull thigh toward chest, keeping the knee at a 90-degree angle.  
Repeat with other leg.



#### ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

**ACROSS-ARM STRETCH**  
**LOWER BACK STRETCH**  
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**REVERSE HURDLE STRETCH**  
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**SHOULDER SHRUGS**  
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<sup>5</sup>Because there are few safe stretches, the same stretches are listed for both kindergarten and grade one students. These stretches are appropriate for young students.

#### STANDARD 4

- 4.5 Explain that increasing the heart rate during physical activity strengthens the heart muscle.

Before and during aerobic exercise, the teacher asks students to place their hands on their chests to feel their hearts beat. The teacher tells the students that the heart is the size of a fist (Standard 4.4) and is the most important muscle in the body. And, like the other muscles in the body, it needs to be exercised to remain strong. The teacher asks students whether their hearts are beating faster before or during exercise. When the students respond that their hearts beat faster during aerobic activity, the teacher explains that this increase in heart rate is what makes the heart stronger. During aerobic activity in future lessons, the teacher quizzes the students regarding the relationship between heart rate and strengthening the heart muscle.

#### STANDARD 5

- 5.3 Demonstrate the characteristics of sharing and cooperation in physical activity.

At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher presents a chart divided into three columns. The first column is labeled “Looks Like”; the second column is labeled “Sounds Like”; and the third column is headed “Feels Like.” The teacher asks the students to discuss what sharing and cooperation look like, sound like, and feel like and records their responses. The students are then divided into pairs and assigned to a trolley activity, where they are supposed to walk forward and backwards. The students get on their trolley, thinking that this is going to be an easy task. As they begin walking, they realize that it is difficult to move unless they work together. After the students have tried to complete the task but failed, the teacher calls the students back to the chart. The class reviews the important components of sharing and cooperation. Then the students try the trolley again. The pairs are successful this time. During closure, the teacher asks students to discuss what helped them to be successful.



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