

Learning Snapshots

STANDARD I

I.1 Chase, flee, and move away from others in a constantly changing environment.

The skills of chasing, fleeing, and moving away from others are individual defensive and offensive strategies that students will use at upper-grade levels in many sports and games. At the third-grade level, students practice these skills and use them in simple tag games. Working in pairs, defensive players chase while offensive players flee. Offensive players use fakes to convince the defense they are going in one direction but then move in a different direction. Defensive players learn to keep their eyes focused on the offensive player's torso, because most fakes occur with arms and legs. Offensive players change direction and speed constantly to evade the defensive players.

Students practice these skills frequently throughout the school year in pairs and in small groups. It is important when practicing these skills that the teacher set boundaries by placing one cone at each corner of the activity area, so that students know they must remain in a defined area. During closure, students can be asked to describe how changing speed and direction can allow one person to move away from another (Standard 2.1).

I.2 Perform an inverted balance (tripod) by evenly distributing weight on body parts.

A tripod involves placing the head and both hands on the ground, creating a triangle and then positioning knees on elbows and maintaining a balanced position. The most important aspect of this skill is creating a solid foundation or base of support. When demonstrating and describing the tripod, the teacher reminds students that a tricycle is more stable than a bicycle, and a triangle foundation is more stable than positioning hands and the head in a straight line. Students practice the correct head and hand position to ensure that they are creating a triangle. The teacher monitors students to determine whether they have mastered the correct position. Then the teacher has students practice balancing their knees on their elbows. This lesson should be performed on mats or on grass.

ILLUSTRATION CREDIT

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STANDARD 2

2.2 Explain and demonstrate the correct hand position when catching a ball above the head, below the waist, near the middle of the body, and away from the body.

The teacher should demonstrate and explain the correct technique for catching a ball above the head, below the waist, near the middle of the body, and away from the body. In the explanation, the teacher should include the following points:

- Watch the ball.
- Move to the ball—if it is away from the body.
- Hands are positioned so fingers point up if the ball is at the middle of the body or above the waist.
- Hands are positioned so fingers point down if the ball is below the waist.
- Extend the arms.
- Grasp the ball with both hands.
- Give with the ball on contact.

Once the teacher has introduced the skills, students practice throwing and catching in pairs. The teacher circulates through the class, providing feedback and asking students to explain the correct hand position when the ball is above the head, below the waist, near the midsection of the body, and away from the body.⁷ The teacher reteaches the information until students are able to demonstrate and explain the correct hand position.

STANDARD 3

3.1 Demonstrate warm-up and cool-down exercises.

A sound practice is to have students do a warm-up prior to vigorous physical activity at the beginning of instruction. A cool-down should be done at the end of a vigorous activity, but it may not be necessary if the physical activity is not vigorous. Therefore, a teacher should consider the lesson focus and type of physical activity in the lesson before including warm-up and cool-down activities as instructional time might be better spent in learning activities.

A warm-up consists of mild exercises (e.g., brisk walking, knee lifts, or any full-body movement that progressively warms up the muscles) performed to prepare the body for more vigorous exercise. A cool-down consists of mild exercises performed after an activity so that the body gradually returns to a resting state. Stretching exercises (also known as flexibility exercises) are best performed during the cool-down. Once they have learned the routine, students demonstrate the warm-up and cool-down exercises by assisting the teacher in leading the warm-up and cool-down phases of lessons.

⁷Feedback is most effective when it is specific and positive or specific and corrective.

Grade Three



3.6 Hold for an increasing period of time basic stretches for hips, shoulders, hamstrings, quadriceps, triceps, biceps, back, and neck.

Stretching exercises are done during cool-down for lessons that involve physical activity. All stretching exercises (also known as flexibility exercises) should be performed as static stretches with no bouncing. At the third-grade level, each stretch should be a minimum of 10 seconds increasing to not more than 30 seconds by the end of the school year (*Physical Education for Lifelong Fitness* 2005, 107). Safe stretches are illustrated below:

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.

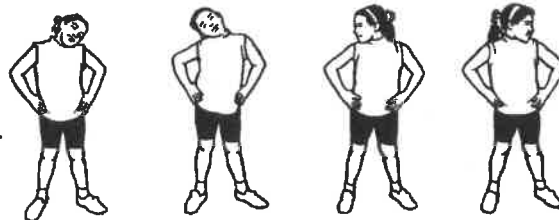
LOWER BACK STRETCH

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.



NECK STRETCH

Stand.
Tuck chin to chest.
Rotate neck so left ear is over left shoulder keeping chin tucked to chest.
Rotate neck so right ear is over right shoulder keeping chin tucked to chest.



*Note: Students should not rotate the head in a circle.

ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

**ACROSS-ARM STRETCH
REVERSE HURDLE STRETCH
LOWER BACK STRETCH**

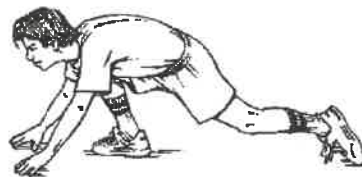
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SHOULDER SHRUGS
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NECK STRETCH
Illustration reprinted with permission from C. Hinton, *Fitness for Children* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics), 51. ©1995.

FORWARD LUNGE

Stand and extend one leg forward with the knee bent at a 90-degree angle. Lean forward so weight is on the bent leg. Keep the rear leg extended. Repeat with the other leg.




STANDARD 4


4.14 Identify flexibility exercises that are not safe for the joints and should be avoided.

There are several flexibility exercises that have traditionally been performed but are dangerous to the performer. (See Appendix F for a list of contraindicated exercises and alternatives.) Some of these contraindicated exercises are illustrated below:


CONTRAINDICATED EXERCISES




DEEP KNEE BENDS




NECK CIRCLE (NECK ROLL)



HURDLER'S STRETCH



**STANDING TOE TOUCHES
CHERRY PICKERS**
(standing toe touches performed rapidly)



WINDMILLS
(standing toe touches where the right hand touches the left foot and the left hand touches the right foot in rapid succession)

ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

FORWARD LUNGE
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**DEEP KNEE BENDS
NECK CIRCLE
HURDLER'S STRETCH
STANDING TOE TOUCHES
WINDMILLS**
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The teacher creates a bulletin board displaying pictures of unsafe exercises with an explanation of why each exercise is dangerous. During physical education instruction, the teacher distributes a set of cards that depict safe and unsafe exercises. Students are asked to identify those that are unsafe and to select from the set of cards a safe exercise to perform.

STANDARD 5

5.1 Set a personal goal to improve a motor skill and work toward that goal in nonschool time.

Third-grade students are working on a variety of skills (e.g., rolling, throwing, catching, kicking, striking, dribbling with a hand, and dribbling with feet). After introducing a skill to the students, the teacher asks them to write a personal goal for improving the skill. Goals should be clear, measurable, and achievable. Students are instructed to practice the skill during nonschool time and to monitor their progress in a log. Throughout the year, the teacher reviews the logs and assesses students' performances to determine whether students are meeting their goals or need adjustments to their goals or practice plans.