

STANDING ON SHOULDERS AND HOW TO GET THERE

Aim group: 9-10 -11-12 years old

Description:

In this lesson you will find some advices and important issues to be aware of when you teach acro and specifically standing on shoulders with kids. We give tips how to organize your class, how to organize the spotting, how to build up safely to the standing on shoulders and how to make it fun. This is most of the times not feasible in one lesson, so you should spread it out over more lessons and be aware of the opportunities to build it up.

In the schedule below you find points of attention for the three parties we work with in acrobatics:

the base, the flyer and the spotter

You also find points of attention at three different skills:

- technical elements/skills,
- physical elements/skills and
- social elements/skills

How children learn

With children it is a challenge to let them learn through experiencing, watching and feeling.

Very often we only use words and we show others how to do it. They try and succeed or fail and we continue with talking and explaining.

This lesson gives you tools how to let them learn through experiences without losing the borders of safety and the physical possibilities of your young students.

Children learn more when they practice in:

- different ways: I show you different ways to practice one skill
- with playing and fun: I show you little variations and games
- practice through repetition: I give you the advise to let them practice with different partners and to repeat the same skills more often in your class.
- have their own responsibility: I give you the tip to let them watch at each other and correct each other
- to be aware of what happens in their body: I give you the advise to check regularly with the children what happens with them while doing the trick: do they experience pain, tiredness (physical awareness)? Or pride, happiness, success or frustration (emotional awareness).
Try to be open for those experiences. It puts you in contact with the children so they feel themselves heard. To learn they have to be in contact with themselves and you can help them with this.



You can let them be aware of the physical emotions and feelings by touching for example the back or the belly when this is not stable. You can do little games to check if they can stand the pressure and the pushing or pulling when they are the base. For a flyer it is important to know what it means to be a base, so use little games they should do too.

Schedule for standing on shoulders

| Technical elements / skills | | |
|---|--|--|
| <i>For the base</i> | <i>For the flyer</i> | <i>For the spotter</i> |
| He/she is doing the balance | Heels are closed | Alert and awake |
| He/she is standing straight up | Feet are relaxed | Cognitive able to understand what happens |
| Feet are wide or clockwise | Legs are as straight as possible | |
| Standing stable and strong | | |
| Physical elements / skills | | |
| <i>For the base</i> | <i>For the flyer</i> | <i>For the spotter</i> |
| Stable core | Certain weight comparing to the base | Strong and big enough to correct and to hold the flyer |
| Strong legs | | |
| Open chest | | |
| Flexible shoulders | | |
| Certain weight comparing to the flyer | | |
| | | |
| Social elements / skills | | |
| <i>For the base</i> | <i>For the flyer</i> | <i>For the spotter</i> |
| Responsible behavior | Responsible behavior | Responsible behavior |
| Awareness of the others | Awareness of the others | Awareness of the others |
| Be able to show empathy for the flyer and the spotter | Be able to show empathy for the base and the spotter | Be able to show empathy for the flyer and the base |
| Able to feel what happens during the practice | Able to feel what happens during the practice | care |
| | | |
| | | |

How to organize the group?

- In the beginning work in a circle. The children can watch at each other and learn from that without noticing.
- Later you can work in little groups

Working in a circle

Ask the children to make groups of 2 persons. One is a little bit bigger or stronger, he/she becomes the base. The other one is a little bit smaller or less strong, he/she becomes the

flyer. If you have an odd number of students, make one group of three, best 2 bases and 1 flyer. Ask all the couples to take place in a big circle. If you have the possibility work on little mats for safety.

PART 1 all tricks kneeling with focus on the technique of standing on shoulders

Step 1 (trick 1)

Base sits on his knees and gives his hands in the air.

Flyer takes the hands of the base, places one foot on the shoulder of the base and steps up.

> Tips for the base: correct hand position, leaning a little bit forward, hands not too low, looking straight forward.

> Tips for the flyer: use your own leg to jump from the floor, do not pull at the hands of the base, stand calm and relaxed, if you have to step down never jump down, but step down.

After this step 1 evaluate all the tips above. Let them work in groups of 4 and correct each other. They should remember all the tips by themselves, stimulate them to watch and to correct each other. A flyer can correct a flyer and a base can correct a base.

Step 2 (trick 2)

Base sits on his knees and takes at the legs of the flyer.

> Tips for the base: Before letting go the hands, first search with the back of the head for contact with the shins of the flyer.

> Tips for the flyer: Don't bend your legs, stay with the weight on the whole foot.

Step 3 (trick3)

Base moves from kneeling to higher kneeling with hands fixed.

Flyer stays quiet and relaxed.

Step 4 (trick 4)

Base moves from kneeling to higher kneeling with hands at the legs of the flyer.

Flyer stays quiet and relaxed. Try not to jump off.

Little actions to make a bit of fun:

- After or in between this series of tricks you can ask the flyers to go to the partner at their left side and work with him or her.
- Half way this serial you can ask the couples to try it all at the same time, work synchronous.
- Ask one of the kids to be the captain and giving the commands.

PART 2 tricks to learn the base how to stand and the flyer to get used of the height

Step 1 (trick 1)

Base stands with feet wide and hold hands up shoulder high.

Flyer takes the hands of the base, places one foot on the upper leg of the base and steps up with one foot on upper leg and second foot on shoulders.

> Tips for the base: correct hand position, standing stable and with a straight back, hands not too low, looking straight forward.

> Tips for the flyer: use your own leg to jump from the floor, do not pull at the hands of the base, bring your shoulders above the shoulders of the base, stand calm and relaxed, if you have to step down never jump down, but step down.

After this step 1 evaluation of all the tips above. Let them work in groups of 4 and correct each other. They should remember all the tips by themselves, stimulate them to watch and to correct each other. A flyer can correct a flyer and a base can correct a base

Step 2 (trick 2) Lifting to sitting on shoulders

NB Her comes for the first time a task for two SPOTTERS. So make groups of 4 !!!

Base lifting with straight back, looking up in the air and pushing on their own knees

Flyer helping the base with the going up by standing on the toes, never sit down! At the end hook legs behind the back of the base

Spotter: Hold upper arms of the flyer and watch for the hooking with the legs of the flyer.

In this trick the base is training the power in the legs and the stability of the core.

The flyer is getting used to the height and the movements of the base.

The spotters learn to spot.

Little actions to make a bit of fun

While holding the flyer in sitting on shoulders:

- Walk through the gym
- Turn little circles
- Makes little jumps

Step 3 (trick3) Standing on the shoulders of two bases

NB Work again with two SPOTTERS. So make groups of 5 !!!

Part 1

Two bases standing beside each other in wide position with the legs.

Flyer stays behind the bases and takes the shoulders, steps up to both legs of the bases, place the feet high on the legs.

Part 2

Bases give outermost hands.

Flyer steps to both shoulders.

Bases take the legs of the flyer and clip them to their heads.

Flyer lets go the hands and stays quiet.

Spotters: one in the front, one at the back.

PART 3 The standing on shoulders 2 persons

Step 1 (trick 1) Going up with Mitella/Napoleon

Part 1. Lifting to sitting on shoulders

Part 2. Walking to standing on shoulders

Flyer takes right hand of the base, places left hand on the head of the base, places the left foot in the bended arm of the base. Slowly give pressure and walk to standing on the shoulders. In the beginning hold hands for safety.

Tips for the base: As soon as the weight of the flyer comes on the shoulders stand up

Tips for the flyer: after this step 1 evaluation of all the tips above. Let them work in groups of 4 and correct each other. They should remember all the tips by themselves, stimulate them to watch and to correct each other. A flyer can correct a flyer and a base can correct a base

Step 2 (trick 2) Walking up directly with two hands

Little actions to make a bit of fun:

- Make a line of bases and let the flyers step over from one base to the other (intermediate).
- Make a line of bases and let the flyers "jumping" over by giving little tempo's (advanced).
- While the flyer stands on the shoulders and holds hands of the base, walk through the gym.

Step 3 (trick3) Walking up directly with one hand

Step 4 (trick 4) With a tempo from sitting on shoulders to standing on shoulders