

Review of Skills as Sports WEEK EIGHT

THIS SET OF LESSONS PROVIDES

athletes the chance to apply
the skills developed over the
course of the Young Athletes™
program to sports games.



Special Olympics

young athletes™

www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes



Overview

Lesson Plans (Day One, Day Two, Day Three) provide details to help you plan and carry out the Young Athletes program with a group of children between the ages of 2 and 7 years old.

Adults Needed: Plan for at least 1 adult for every 4 children. Recruit help from families, volunteers, older students, college students and others in your community to make sure the program runs smoothly and is fun.

Time: Young Athletes is implemented with great enthusiasm, high energy and quick pace. Time estimates are provided to guide completion of each lesson in 30 minutes. However, the pace and length of the lesson should be matched to the needs, interests, ages, and skills of the young athletes in your group.

Sequence: There are three lessons for each skill area labeled Day One, Day Two and Day Three. Lessons within the skill area are designed to be offered in sequence to help children become acquainted with the activities and build skills through repetition.

Resources: The Lesson Plan Summary Cards include an outline of the activities, list of equipment needed, and page numbers to find the activity descriptions. The cards, Young Athletes Activity Guide, Suggestions from Teachers, and training videos are included in the online Toolkit (see website below).

Playing at home: Give families the Lesson Plan Summary Cards and encourage them to sing the songs and play one or two games with their child at home before the next session. Help them learn about the activities by including them in your group sessions and/or providing a family training session. Be sure they have access to the Activity Guide and Videos for more information.

>> See the Young Athletes Toolkit online at:
www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

Review of Skills as Sports

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Opening Sports Song (4 min.)

PURPOSE Start each Young Athletes class with a gathering/warm-up song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with. This will help them warm-up, serve as a gathering activity, create body awareness and support adaptive skills (follow directions, sing along, imitation of motor movements).

EXPLAIN "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

SING **Wheels on the Bus melody:**

- The athletes in our class can run run, run, run, run, run. The athletes in our class run run run - all through the day.
- The swimmer on the team can swim, swim, swim, swim, swim, swim. The swimmer on the team can swim, swim, swim - all through the pool



Running Styles *(4 min.)*

PURPOSE Strength, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movement)

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD “This week we are going to practice different sports. Today we are going to do sports that you would see in track and field. First let’s try running different ways.”

Use a whistle to signal when athletes should listen to you and change their running style.

- Stomp slow/fast
- Run slow/fast
- Run backwards
- High knees runs (raise knees high when running)
- Tiptoe walking

Or, create a foot race (competition) using different running styles movements)



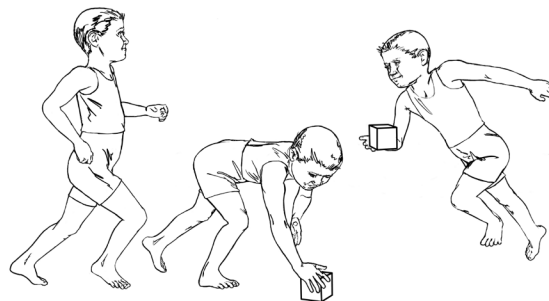
Run and Carry Relay *(5 min.)*

EQUIPMENT Bean bag, floor markers placed at equal intervals around the floor.

PURPOSE Motor coordination, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD Set up floor markers around the room, then show each child a marker to stand on. Give a bean bag to the child at the first marker. "Now let's play a running game."

- (Child at first marker/home base) is going to run from home to the second marker.
- He/she is then going to hand the bean bag to (child at second marker) and he/she will run to the next marker and give the bean bag to (child at third marker.).
- We will keep going around the room until (child on last marker) gets the beanbag and runs "home" to me.
- Ready, set, go.



Jumping High (5 min.)

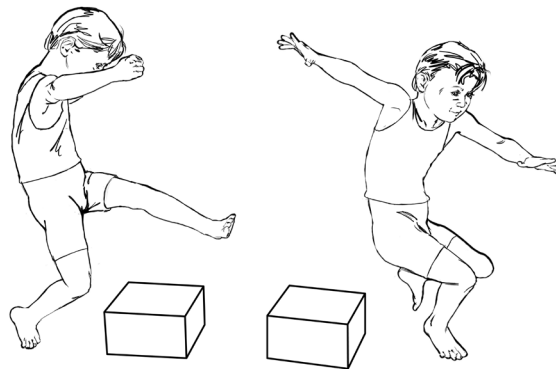
EQUIPMENT Floor markers, dowel, bean bags, cones, hoops, balls, balance beam/rope, and Blocks should be spread around the room. so that athletes can have a chance to jump over the various pieces.

PURPOSE Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD “Now we are going to do the high jump. We’re going to try to jump OVER our equipment.”

Tips: Children can jump onto or off of equipment if their feet cannot clear the floor; If they are jumping off of the equipment as opposed to over it, challenge them to reach for an object (ex: scarf) while doing so.

- Jump onto the equipment first– THEN see if you can jump OVER it!
- Now move to the next piece of equipment and try it again.



Hurdles (5 min.)

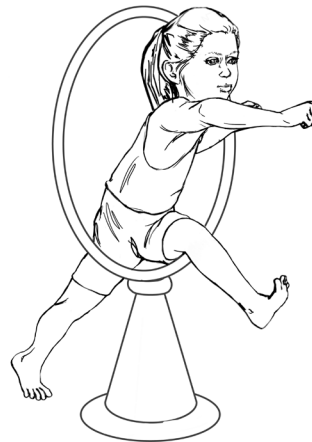
EQUIPMENT One dowel with two cones or blocks (for hurdle). Make hurdle using two cones and one dowel or stick. Place dowel through holes in cone.

PURPOSE Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, adaptive skills (following directions, imitating of motor movements)

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD Set up several hurdles for athletes. Always start the bar at the lowest height. Adjust height as needed for athletes. "Now we are going to jump over hurdles."

- Encourage athlete to jump using two feet, over the bar, landing on two feet.
- After everyone has jumped over the lowest height, raise the dowel. Repeat.

For more of a challenge (optional) set up 2 hurdles several feet apart. "Now that everyone had jumped over the stick, let's see if you can jump over 2 in a row like this. Jump over first one, walk to the next one and then jump over that one."



Throwing for Distance and Accuracy *(5 min.)*

EQUIPMENT Small foam ball, floor markers

PURPOSE Body Awareness, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills (run, jump, throw, balance) and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD Set up markers (e.g. stars) about 3 feet apart. Have the child throw the ball at the marker. Encourage the child to throw the ball at the markers.

- Now we are going to throw the ball at the first star/marker.
- Great – now go and get to and throw to the second star/marker.
- Wow – can you throw it to the third star/marker?

Closing Sports Song *(4 min.)*

PURPOSE End each Young Athletes class with a closing/cool-down song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with. This builds body awareness and adaptive skills (following directions, singing along, imitation of motor movements) and helps transition to the next activity.

EXPLAIN “Let’s end Young Athletes with a song, If You are Happy and You Know It. Sing along with me and do what I do.”

- SING AND DEMONSTRATE**
- If you’re happy and you know it, wiggle your arms (flap like a bird’s wings, walk around with arms outstretched)
 - If you’re happy and you know it then your face will really show it if you’re happy and you know it wiggle your arms.



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Opening Sports Song (3 min.)

EXPLAIN "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

SING AND DEMONSTRATE **Wheels on the Bus Melody**

- The athletes in our class roll the ball, roll the ball, roll the ball. The athletes in our class roll the ball - all through the day.
- The athletes in our class jump up and down, up and down, up and down. The athletes in our class jump up and down - all through the game.

Balance Beam (4 min.)

EQUIPMENT Balance beam/rope.

PURPOSE Body Awareness, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills (run, jump, throw, balance) and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD "Athletes – today we are going to play more sports games. First we are going to do the balance beam – this is part of gymnastics. OK athletes, I want you to look at what I do with MY body and try to do it with your own. I want you to COPY what I do. Look at me, see how I am:"

- Standing on one foot on the balance beam/rope, standing with one foot in front of the other on the balance beam/rope, standing on tip toes on the balance beam/rope, and standing on my heels on the balance beam/rope...You try!
- Now try it with your arms out/in/up/down, or eyes closed/open.
- Encourage athletes to try these new balancing techniques while manipulating their bodies so that their muscles will need to counteract shifts in weight. Shifting of body weight to engage balance muscles is an important functional and sports related skill.



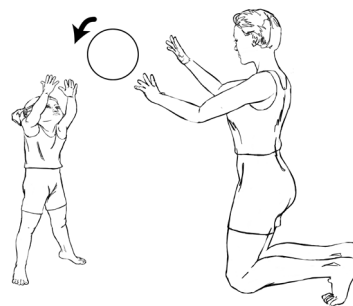
High Ball Catch *(4 min.)*

EQUIPMENT Large beach ball, slow motion balls

PURPOSE Motor coordination, strength, general fitness, motor skills (grasping, catching, & holding), body awareness, proprioception, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements). Use a large beach ball or slow motion balls to introduce catching from a short distance.

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD Kneel facing the child who is about 3 feet away. "OK athletes, we're going to practice catching this BIG ball!"

- Gently toss a beach ball or fairly large ball to the child and encourage catching the ball with fingers pointing up (because it's from above the waist). Be sure the toss is done from the chest level and with the fingers pointing up. "See how I am tossing the ball to (athlete) with my fingers pointing UP? Catch the ball with your fingers pointing UP!"
- Vary distances and heights depending on child's physical abilities. Progress by moving further away and mixing up high and low tosses. "Great job!! Now I'm going to back up a little bit and see if we can do this!"
- Give the athletes as much practice as possible while being sure to incorporate all children. Waiting children can be cheering, or tossing an imaginary ball, or tossing it to themselves if there are enough.



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Overhand Throwing (5 min.)

EQUIPMENT Small foam ball

PURPOSE Motor coordination, general fitness, motor skills

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD This uses the same techniques as two hand throwing but encourage the child to use one hand, bringing his/her arm back and forward the throw the small ball towards you. "Now let's throw this smaller ball like I am doing with just one hand."

- Stand in your sideways stance.
- Bring the hand holding the ball up over your head.
- Bend your arm at the elbow.
- Now throw the ball.
- That was great! Good job. Let's do it again.

Handball (5 min.)

EQUIPMENT Beach ball, cone

PURPOSE Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD "Now we are going to see if we can hit this ball off the cone. Watch – keep your hand open and hit it like this."

- Place the ball on the cone and hit it with an open hand or fist.
- Line athletes up opposite the cone to take turns hitting the ball and bringing it back.
- OK, now you do it. Good job!



Beginning Hockey (6 min.)

EQUIPMENT Beach ball, slow motion ball, small foam ball, dowel, junior sized hockey stick or junior size plastic golf club

PURPOSE Motor coordination, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills, and eye hand coordination

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD "Today we are going to learn to play some sports. First we are going to play hockey." Place a large ball on the ground.

- Stand in your sideways stance.
- Hold the stick (hockey stick, golf club) with both hands.
- Now hit the ball
- Great!



Closing Sports Song (3 min.)

Repeat the song used in Day 1 to end the Lesson.

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Opening Sports Song (4 min.)

EXPLAIN "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song (Wheels on the Bus melody). Sing along with me and do what I do."

SING AND DEMONSTRATE **Wheels on the Bus Melody**

- The athletes in our class touch their toes (bend and stretch); touch their toes; touch their toes. The athletes in our class touch their toes, - all through the day.
- The pitcher on the team throws the ball, throws the ball, throws the ball. The pitcher on the team throws the ball - all through the town.

Beginning (6 min.) Tennis/Softball

EQUIPMENT Beach ball, slow motion ball, cones; paddle, junior size racket or plastic bat

PURPOSE Motor coordination, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills and eye hand coordination

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD "Now we are going to play tennis/softball." Place a large ball on a cone and use floor markers to help athletes learn how to stand sideways.

- Now stand sideways and hold the paddle/racket with one hand.
- Hit the ball with your paddle/racket.



Kickball (5 min.)

EQUIPMENT Beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or playground ball

PURPOSE Body Awareness, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills (run, jump, throw, balance) and adaptive skills (following directions, imitation of motor movements)

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD “Now we are going to practice our soccer skills! First we are going to kick the ball.”

- Roll or kick a ball toward an athlete and encourage him/her to kick the moving ball toward you or a moving target.
- Have the athlete bring the ball back to you.
- That was a great job. Now let’s do it again with (child).
- Give athletes more opportunity to practice by assigning adults to small groups.

Penalty Kick Prep (5 min.)

EQUIPMENT Beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or playground ball

PURPOSE Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating, motor movements)

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD “Now we are going to practice our penalty kick! We are going to run and then kick the ball. Watch!” Place a ball on the ground.

- Walk to the ball and kick it.
- Have children repeat activity, progressing to running and kicking.
- Great! Let’s do it again.



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Give and Go (5 min.)

EQUIPMENT Beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball, playground ball; cones

PURPOSE Motor coordination, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills, eye hand coordination, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements, counting)

DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD "Let's play soccer. I am going to kick the ball to you and you kick it between the cones."

- Kick a ball toward the athlete and encourage him/her to kick the moving ball toward a goal or between 2 cones.
- You scored a goal! Let's keep count and see how many goals our team can score.

Closing Sports Song (4 min.)

Repeat the song used in Day 1 and Day 2 to end the Lesson.



CONGRATULATIONS!

You have finished Week Eight: Review of Skills as Sports and the Young Athletes program. Plan for a culminating event with your local Special Olympics Program. You can repeat or adapt the Lessons to help children practice their skills and gain more confidence, too. See the online toolkit for Suggestions from Teachers and other resources at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

