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The TIPSTER

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Valdosta State University
James L. and Dorothy H. Dewar College of Education

Georgia Systemic Teacher Education Program

GSTEP Teacher Induction

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COMP: Classroom Organization and Management Program

Dr. Mary Ellen Dallman

Whose paper is this? There's no name on it!

What can I do to tame the Paper Monster? I can't keep up with the grading.

When they line up, why do they run to the door, push their way to the front, or cut in line?

Why does she raise her hand and start talking, without waiting to be called on?

Where is my marker? Where are the flash cards? **Where's my mind?** I think I've lost it!

The College of Education has responded to pleas for help with classroom management from new teachers by sharpening the focus of its educator preparation program and adopting the Classroom Organization and Management Program (COMP) as its model for undergraduate and graduate discipline and classroom management courses. It offers a specific rationale and strategies for learner-focused instruction and behavior management. COMP is based on the following four premises:

- effective classroom management is *proactive*, not reactive;
- in effective classrooms, *management and instruction* are *interwoven*;

- *students are active* participants in the learning environment; and
- *teachers* working together synergistically *help one another*.

COMP is an evidence-based program that can help teachers learn to create and manage an effective learning environment. COMP was based upon the earlier theoretical and practical research of Fredric Jones, related to the use of body language to provide limit-setting, and Jacob Kounin, who identified several concepts for managing whole-group instruction. COMP research first examined how differences in teacher management practices correlated with student outcomes. Later, these teacher practices were distilled into

a series of management strategies and compiled in a manual. Now, using this manual, these strategies are taught by a COMP certified Workshop Leader to classroom
(continued on page 6)

Upcoming Events

- **VSU Summer Graduation**
July 29, 2006
- **Fall Classes Begin**
August 14, 2006
- **Education Career Day**
November 21, 2006

The Principal's Perspective



Regina G. Purvis, Ed. S.
Principal
Cook Elementary School
21 years experience K-5

The end of a school year is always busy. As teachers and students anticipate the last days, I have already started preparing for next year. I know the school year is coming to a close when my desk is suddenly filled with applications. First year teachers come with excitement and energy. They are prepared to change the world. I often wonder how classrooms would be if we all preserved this enthusiasm.

With a signed contract, student teaching fades into a memory. It is replaced with lesson plans, schedules, routines and procedures of the first year. Colleges prepare their students well, but the first year of

teaching can be compared to riding a bike without training wheels. When the training wheels are there, as in student teaching, the built-in support is available. When the wheels come off, the first year, you are on your own. Mentors are there to help guide you during this time. They are a wonderful source of information and support for beginning teachers. Even with a strong mentor, there are unwritten guidelines for all teachers regardless of their experience. These guidelines are:

- Thou shalt befriend the secretaries, for they truly operate the school.
- Thou shalt befriend the custodians, for they will keep thy room clean and provide thee with special favors.
- Thou shalt stay in contact with your students' parents for you will need their support.
- Thou shalt love thy mentor because he/she will be thy support.
- Thou shalt be consistent with discipline or thy students will overthrow

thy room.

- Thou shalt not gossip about thy colleagues.
- Thou shalt learn to live on a budget, for thou will be paid only once a month.
- Thou shalt learn the acronyms of every program so thou can speak the educational lingo.
- Thou shalt be active in professional development so thou will be an effective teacher.
- Thou shall love and respect all children for thou are their role model and they are our future.

I hope that these guidelines will help make your first year successful. Education is more than a profession. It is a commitment. Teaching can be both greatly rewarding and challenging. When others scoff at educators, it is worth noting that all professions begin in the classroom. May your year be full of wonderful memories.



TechnoInfo Corner

Check out the following websites for teaching resources:

▶▶ **Educational CyberPlayground**

http://www.edu-cyberpg.com/Teachers/Home_Teachers.html

▶▶ **NEA Works4Me**

<http://www.nea.org/works4me/wm060607.html>

▶▶ **PDK—The Teacher Connection**

<http://www.pdkintl.org/tconnect/tchome.htm>

▶▶ **Reach Every Child**

<http://www.reacheverychild.com/newteach/index.html>

▶▶ **The Library of Congress - Teachers**

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/>

Success in life has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It's what you do for others.

-----Danny Thomas,
Actor, Comedian





Be the Best You Can Be!

During student teaching and your first year in your own classroom you want to be the best you can be! However, many people find that they feel like a fish out of water. College provides you with the solid foundation in which to be a great teacher but they don't give you the finished product. Not only must you now provide your students with the essential tools they need to maximize learning but you have to search for the tools needed to maximize teaching. You also have a tight budget and never enough time! This may sound like a very stressful and scary process. However, with the right ideas and guidance, it will be a manageable skill that will save you great time in the future.



I have learned in my five years of teaching from some of the best teachers in the world. They have given me the tools and

helped me find my way when I thought I couldn't. I now want to share those essential tools with you! One of the most important things you can purchase is a camera! A digital camera may be best, but it is costly. If all you can afford is the throw away kind then buy them. Purchase one a month and have the film developed at a local store. It will cost about \$10 to \$15 a month. During planning days and before or after school take a few minutes to go from room to room taking pictures of great ideas teachers have put into place. Then when you have time you will not have to remember what all you saw. You can just print or develop your pictures and create a notebook of great ideas. When I go to visit a school I take a camera with me. When I go to a learning conference, I take a camera with me in case they have ideas during the conference.

Keep in mind you will not have time to or need to put every idea into place but you can pick and choose from your picture notebook to decide what will work best for you.

The second most important tool I learned was

to talk, talk, talk! Talk to experienced teachers about what they have learned works best! Ask them about teaching ideas or information about curriculum. New teachers are often hesitant to ask experienced teachers questions for fear of appearing unqualified. I will promise you those experienced teachers will not mind you asking them. They are more than willing to tell you

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Brandi Pieplow
Lead Preschool Special
Needs Teacher

Early Learning Center
Barrow County Schools
2006-2007 Teacher of the Year for
the Early Learning Center

Notes from the GSTEP Director's Desk



Dr. Lynn Minor
GSTEP Director
Valdosta State University

The Georgia Systemic Teacher Education Program (GSTEP) at VSU is pleased to invite you to attend the Critical Friends Coaches Institute that will be held at VSU this summer. This will be the second Critical Friends Institute sponsored by GSTEP at VSU. Last summer over 30 educators participated in a week long institute led by Frances Hensley, Betty Bisplinghoff, Thomas Van Soelen, and Andy Plemmons. I had the pleasure of attending the institute, and I believe it was the most beneficial professional development activity in which I have participated.

Critical Friends Groups (CFGs) were designed by the National School Reform Faculty to help their members work collaboratively to think about better teaching practices, establish and

publicly state student learning goals, look closely at curriculum and student work, and identify school culture issues that affect student achievement. The CFG Institute is appropriate for educators at all levels and with any level of experience. An important part of the institute will be to train facilitators who can then return to their educational settings and lead professional learning communities with their colleagues. The various protocols experienced as part of the CFG Institute are helpful for those who may be mentoring student teachers or beginning teachers, working with groups of undergraduate or graduate students in higher education, working with colleagues to develop curricula that address Georgia Performance Standards, or meeting with colleagues in a supportive environment to review student work and discuss how to improve teacher practice and student achievement.

The 2006 Critical Friends Groups Coaches

Institute will be held July 17th through July 21st, from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, in the VSU Education Center. All costs for the CFG training are being covered by VSU GSTEP; therefore, the institute is free to registered participants. Participants are also eligible to earn 3 professional learning units (PLUs) upon completion of the institute. Spaces are limited and will be filled in the order registrations are received. If you are interested in participating in the 2006 CFG Institute, please email the following information to Lynn Minor at lminor@valdosta.edu: name, address, phone/fax numbers, email address, school system, school, school address.



ELEMENTARY ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES (PART 2 of 3)



Jumping for Height and Distance

David Murrie

As part of athletic activities, jumping should grow out of an exploration in gymnastics and seen as a fundamental movement pattern. As a word of caution, outlined in Part 1 of this series, it is unwise, not only for optimum concentration and learning, but also for reasons of safety, to spend a whole lesson on any one activity. This is particularly true of jumping activities in order to avoid repetitive strain injury due to the specific muscular, and joint stress, particular in relation to the landings. As a consequence limit the number of trials/repetitions. In jumping for height and distance pupils must also have safe non-slip take-off areas, a cushioned landing with appropriate footwear to protect their heels and ankles.

It is however important that the children are highly active and so a lesson structure similar to the “Multi Activities Approach” in gymnastics advocated by Tansin and Barry Benn is appropriate. Ensure that in each lesson all pupils gain a positive, regular and progressive experience of all three movement activities; running, jumping and throwing, relevant to their development.

Here are some ideas for jumping activities to include that can achieve maximum activity, progression, personal discovery, planning and evaluating, and accommodates large, mixed ability classes with years 4 to 6.

As outlined for running activities; the class can begin their warm up in the changing room, shaking and swinging their limbs and then running softly on the spot, followed by brisk (quiet) walking to the gym or outdoors (and then jogging to the field activity area). The athletic challenges can then progress in intensity, introducing up to 3 specific mobility stretches at appropriate points in the lesson.

I begin the first lesson with the children in

pairs, jumping on a gym mat and encouraged to land softly and quietly by bending their ankles, knees and hips. The children observe each other as well as experiencing and practising the movement. The pairs can explore jumping up, first without bending their knees, then from bent knees and then starting tall, bending their knees and jumping in one fluid movement (down & up). Questions that can be posed include; which is more effective and can you think of reasons why? How much knee bend do people use. What would be the effect of bending the knees to less than 90 degrees? (It would put a lot of stress on the muscles and the knee joint). Look also for children who extend their legs pushing their torso upwards, versus those who pick up their knees to get their feet high off the ground but do not project their hips upwards (lifting the aeroplane undercarriage without taking off!). Other questions to ask are; Which muscles are you using? What do the muscles do? Which need to be stretched? Let the children demonstrate some appropriate stretching.

Next, try jumping up and swinging your arms up as you jump. Compare this with keeping your arms by your sides. Then compare these with starting with your arms stretched above your head and swinging them down (!) as you jump. Which is best, and why, do you think?

The children can then try to measure how much “spring” they have in their legs. The mark how high they can reach with their arms stretched above their heads. They pupil can then jump and stretch up with one hand to reach as high up the wall past their standing height as they can. If you mark a height of 8 feet (the height of a full-size soccer cross-bar, not only can you give the pupils an incentive but you can also amaze them by explaining that the world record for high jump is higher than this. Try taking them to an actual set of goal posts to try to reach the crossbar. Questions the pupils can investigate include do the tallest people have the most “spring”?

Later, the children can investigate standing

jumps for distance, on a sprung floor, starting with two feet to two feet. The first challenge can be to see if you can jump further than your own height. The jumper initially lies down, with their heels on a convenient line. A partner marks their head height and then the jumper tries to jump further. Most pupils will be able to achieve this challenge. Basic rules relating to measuring a broad jump can now be introduced. A further challenge is to see if you can jump as far as your stretched height with arms extended above your head. The more athletic children will be able to do this. Exceptional children, with innate jumping ability, are those who can go some 20cm. beyond this mark.

Once again the children can experiment with aspects of jumping. If the children are asked to try jumping with arms folded across the chest, what effect does this have? What do the jumpers tend to do with their arms? Why is this? What is the best way to use your arms during take-off?



Note that so far, we have used two footed take-offs, but all jumps in athletics are from one foot, indeed the rules specifically forbid a two footed take-off in the high jump. Consequently the important movement pattern

to develop is from one foot. One foot to two (long jump), one foot to the same foot and one foot to the other foot (as in triple jump). The children can discover why take off from two feet in the long jump is not the most effective way by the following activities.

Compare a two feet to two feet standing jump with a one foot to two feet jump (after a short familiarisation with the new technique). Now, think; if you only have the strength of one leg to push with, not two, why do you not jump only half as far? Watch what your partner does with their free leg and think about this in relation to what the arms do to help the jump. Now try taking two steps

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ELEMENTARY ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES (PART 3 of 3)

Throwing

David Murrie

Throwing as part of athletic activities should grow out of explorations within games, as fundamental underarm, sidearm and overarm actions. These actions can be refined into basic competitive patterns of pushing (e.g. chest pass or shot putt), pulling (soccer style throw-in, a football 'hail mary' or javelin), slinging (from "welly wanging" to discus throwing) or heaving (from "tossing the caber" to the hammer throw). All of these depend on a similar fundamental pattern of movement from the legs and trunk.

Safety is of course paramount and most of the dangers can be overcome by avoiding tradition implements and using "soft" (but not too light) play equipment and mini-balls. In this way, larger groups can be managed with high activity safely within the multi-activities or even whole group approach (in pairs involving partner work in reciprocal teaching).

If working outdoors be sure to pick a warm, dry day. Once again; the class can begin their warm up in the changing room, shaking and swinging their limbs and then running softly on the spot, followed by brisk (quiet) walking to the gym and running on the spot, or walking to the outdoors (and then jogging to the field activity area). The athletic challenges can then progress in intensity, following some specific mobilising for the hips, trunk and shoulders in the warmth. As the practices progress to more whole-body activities further mobility work can be done.

Here are some ideas for progressive throwing activities to include that which can achieve maximum activity, some personal discovery, planning and evaluating, with years 4 to 6.

I develop the first lesson with the children in pairs, sat opposite each other a couple of metres apart across a centre line. Use a ball, approximately a size 3 netball/soccer ball, but preferably soft (foam or even slightly deflated, so the ball does not bounce so much, but offering resistance to

push against). The child with the ball tries to push it straight over the head of their partner, from a sitting position. A chest-pass action with the ball pushed from under the chin and with the elbows out horizontally (fingers pointing in towards each other, not upwards) becomes a two-handed push or (shot) putt. If the partner catches the ball, they take their turn to throw from their seated position. Otherwise, the partner retrieves the ball and throws from where it first struck the floor. Thus, if the ball bounces short, they can move forward to take their throw from where the ball hit the floor. Be sure to have enough space to spread the children out and, in order to avoid the children slipping into bad habits, have all children throw and retrieve on your signal.

Once the competition is underway, the practice progresses to a kneeling throw, thus releasing the ball from a higher position and encouraging the children to use their hips and upper body more. If you let the child who has been moved back furthest from the centre line throw first (and possibly have the first return done from the sitting position) this should help equalise the positions again.

Next try kneeling on one knee with the opposite foot placed flat on the floor forward of the bent knee. Which foot forward feels best? In this position the thrower can throw the hips and torso more into the movement without falling, by bracing against the leading leg.

Rotating the dominant shoulder back into a side-on position and then vigorously forwards again, followed by arm extension to throw, not only gives more impetus, but also encourages a more one-handed action. This is particularly true if the ball is not too large to control mainly by one hand. The non-dominant hand can then be used to hold and guide the ball instead of push. Be sure to have the children use the dominant hand push from behind the ball and not just under. Avoid dropping the pushing elbow below the shoulder axis in an attempt to support the ball; this tends to result in an overarm throwing (not pushing) action. Note that the ball should be pushed from under the chin in one simple elbow extension

pushing action - not moved out to the side and then shoulder-passed.

The next progression involves standing facing forward, with feet side by side. Then later, one foot forward and starting from a more side-on position. Teach the children to push hard, and take a step forward, off the back foot (right foot for the right handed thrower), passed the front foot. The ball should be released as the body rises over the front foot and before the back foot comes down. If the movement is done vigorously enough the thrower will need to place the (right) foot down in front of them to stop falling forwards. Encourage the children to be dynamic; Weight on ball of the foot, using / extending their legs fast and stepping quickly.

By noting their progression the pupils should appreciate that to throw far you need to use your legs and upper body effectively as well as your arms. With safe equipment and organisation, the children can experiment with aspects of throwing and measuring in pairs, if directly supervised. Follow the principles of; spectators stand behind the thrower, all throw at the same time, and then all retrieve at the same time. By trying to throw different flat and steep trajectories, children can investigate what is the best angle to release the ball at, to throw furthest? If the children are asked to try throwing with feet kept close together, what effect does this have?



The same progressive sequence from sitting to standing throws can be done with the other throwing patterns. First, throwing a small netball/soccer ball straight, over and past their partner with a two-handed, overhead throw. Once again, the elbows should be kept high, not dropped below the shoulder axis. The children should be encouraged to reach back behind them and throw with arms stretched. Inexperienced throwers will throw mainly from the elbow not the shoulder.

After progressing to the standing throw, experiment with how wide to place the feet. Remember to push the body forward

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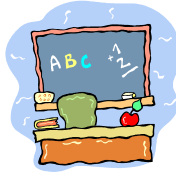
Classroom Organization and Management Program *(continued from page 1)*

teachers in an 18 - 24 contact hour workshop format. Diligent application of COMP the proven strategies result in classrooms where students have significantly higher task engagement, less inappropriate and disruptive behavior, and higher academic success.

COMP Workshops consist of seven modules that address the following key areas:

1. Organizing the Classroom provide guidance for arranging furniture, equipment, supplies, and students.
2. Planning and Teaching Rules and Procedures helps teachers plan, develop, implement and maintain a system of classroom policies and routines.
3. Managing Student Academic Work looks at the complementary roles of teacher and students, helping teachers foster greater student accountability.

4. Maintaining Good Student Behavior requires that teachers sustain appropriate student behavior by maintaining student cooperation and compliance by using appropriate positive, negative, and corrective consequences; encouraging praise; and appropriate intervention strategies.



5. Planning for Instruction that supports students' active participation requires that teachers consider a variety of formats as they structure learning activities and provides specific management strategies for each.
6. Conducting Instruction and Maintaining Momentum helps teachers refine the

smoothness and momentum of their delivery by practicing strategies that maintain the group's focus and engages students' interest and involvement with the lesson.

7. Getting the Year Off to a Good Start helps teachers be proactive by preplanning for the school year and offers activities that teach students how to be successful in school.

To learn more about the Classroom Organization and Management Program, visit: <http://www.comp.org/>

Dr. Mary Ellen Dallman is an Associate Professor in the Department of Early Childhood and Reading Education at Valdosta State University in Valdosta, GA. She is a COMP certified Workshop Leader.

Planting a Seed *(continued from page 3)*

everything you want to know. Usually, once you start talking to them, they will take you under their wing and guide you towards great teaching. You may find some experienced teachers that you are more comfortable talking to than others. In the beginning, talk to several to get several perspectives and then narrow down which ones you like the best. Ask them what conferences you should attend and which speakers they like best. Ask them what resource books they have that you can use. Ask what type of incentives they use, and what type of discipline plan they have in place. They have already been there and done what you are doing. They know what works best! Ask them if you can make copies of things they have. I encourage you to beg, steal, and borrow from those experienced teachers around you. Plan with them, eat lunch with them, sit with them at meetings, ask them what you should order for your classroom. In the end you will end up with more than you can use. That is okay! File it away or add it to your notebook so that you will have it when you need it. Those experienced teachers are your best resource ever and they are free!

The last tool I have to share is be as organized as you can be! This does take a lot of time in the beginning and you may spend some late nights getting organized. Keep in mind the payoff later will be well worth the time you put into it. This does not have to cost you lots of money either. Ask teachers during preplanning if they have extra notebooks, crates, or shelving they are not going to use! Teachers always have

extra things that they will share with you. If you do have money, spend it on getting organized! I can not stress this enough. It will save you so much in the future. When you only have a minute and need to find something you will know right where it is! Eventually people will start coming to you for things because they will know you know right where it is!

Remember that just because you are at the end of your college days and beginning your teaching career doesn't mean you stop learning. Listen and learn from those around you! They are your best resources! Keep in touch with your professors; they will gladly help you if you ever need them. Get organized and don't be afraid to try new things as they come along! One day you will be the experienced teacher that new teachers are coming to and asking for help. You will have great ideas and that are all organized! This will be your reward for working so hard to be the best you can be!

Greetings from the Editor

This is our last issue of the *Tipster* for this academic year. Don't forget that you can find this issue, as well as back issues, of the *Tipster* online at:

<http://borg.valdosta.edu/doc/VSUResourceBank.nsf>

Have a safe, restful and happy summer!



Shirley Andrews, Editor

ELEMENTARY ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES (PART 2 of 3) *(continued from page 4)*

forward before doing the jump. Compare the two footed take-off (take a step then go from one foot to two feet just before the take-off line to then jump onto two feet) to the one footed take-off (two steps and jump to land on two feet). Which allows you to jump further? Which helps to carry forward speed into the jump the best? In the one footed take-off, what should you be trying to do with the free leg?

In another session pupils can also try the standing triple jump (hop, step and jump) and compare distance jumped with distance achieved for 3 hops, and with three steps or with three consecutive two footed jumps. Have no more than three attempts at this. If the children develop sore muscles the following day after doing jumping that feel weak when walking down stairs you know that they have (temporarily) overdone the exercise.

One of the major problems with teaching the high jump is the limitations on landing areas. However, the fundamentals of high jump take-off can be taught through the basic scissors technique in a gym. The jumper takes off from the foot furthest from the bar, swinging up the inside leg and then landing on this other foot. If the inside leg is swung bent, instead of straight in the classic scissors jump, you have the fundamentals of the take-off for the Fosbury Flop style of high jumping, and you will be sowing good seeds for future high jumping.

To introduce this the jumpers stand at the side of a gym mat (near a corner),

with the take-off foot forward and pointing across to the far corner of the mat. Swinging up the leg nearest the mat, step forward and onto the mat. This is best done by imagining there is a low fence to step over to get onto the mat, lifting one leg at a time. Now, imagine the fence is as high as your inside leg measurement. You need to swing your near leg high, place it over the fence and then swing your other leg up and over to join the first. Now, if the imaginary fence were raised a few centimetres higher you would need to swing your leg high and jump off the other one too, in order to get higher off the ground. The pupils should be encouraged to extend the take-off leg, pushing their head and chests upwards, whilst swinging the free leg and the arms vigorously.

Once the children are co-ordinating the actions, with good posture and lift, you can let them take a walking step towards the mat, onto the heel of the take-off foot and then do the scissors jump. This can be built to up to three steps and a piece of foam tubing resting on skittles can used as a "bar". Control carefully where the jumper takes off from, so they land on the centre of the mat and on their feet, and do not allow a fast run up. The children can see how far up their body they can raise the bar level with and still clear it. Level with the bottom of their shorts? Level with their waistband? Navel? Note that the take-off foot should always be placed in line with the direction of travel to avoid twisting.

If you are lucky enough have access to good outdoor jumping pits the children can try jumps with running take-offs, starting from 2 or 3 steps away from the take-off area gradually building up to approximately 6 (high jump) to 10 (long jump) steps.



A good activity to finish on is a team jumping competition where the members of the team add together their jumps to get an overall team distance to compare with the other teams.

To finish a session the children can then collect any equipment, jog slowly back to the school door or around the gym, slowly repeat the stretches they have done in the lesson (particularly a long gentle stretch for the front of the thigh), walk briskly and quietly back to change, and then reflect on something they did well and enjoyed. They can also review what they learnt including talking, writing, reading and creating images about the activities.

David Murrie is Chair of Sport and Exercise Sciences & Senior Lecturer in Sports Coaching, University of Paisley and Coach Educator, British Athletic Federation and Irish Association of Snowsports Instructors.

NOTE: Part 1 of *Elementary Athletic Activities* was published in the March 2006 edition of the *Tipster*. Part 3 can be found on page 5 of this issue of the *Tipster*.

Moments in America for All Children Children's Defense Fund, November 2005

Every second a public school student is suspended.
Every 9 seconds a high school student drops out.
Every 13 seconds a public school student is corporally punished.
Every 20 seconds a child is arrested.
Every 22 seconds a baby is born to an unmarried mother.
Every 35 seconds a child is confirmed as abused or neglected.
Every 35 seconds a baby is born into poverty.
Every 38 seconds a baby is born to a mother who is not a high school graduate.
Every 51 seconds a baby is born without health insurance.

Every minute a baby is born to a teen mother.
Every 2 minutes a baby is born at low birthweight.
Every 4 minutes a child is arrested for drug abuse.
Every 4 minutes a baby is born to a mother who received late or no prenatal care.
Every 8 minutes a child is arrested for violent crimes.
Every 19 minutes a baby dies before his first birthday.
Every 41 minutes a child or teen dies in an accident.
Every 3 hours a child or teen is killed by a firearm.
Every 5 hours a child or teen commits suicide.
Every 6 hours a child is killed by abuse or neglect.



with the back foot and push upwards with the front leg, releasing the ball high and fast. In a soccer throw-in the rules say that the feet must remain on the ground, but does this allow you to throw the furthest distance?

Can you throw further if you have a run-up? This is an advanced coordination task. Most pupils will find it difficult to get their feet into a sound throwing position (base) *and* execute a full-range throwing action from a run up (with weight transfer from back foot to front). You may be surprised at their limited, or lack of improvement in distance thrown. Many will throw off the front foot, or just use their arms whilst still running or after stopping completely - thus wasting the extra momentum of the run up.

The children can move on to throwing one-handed, concentrating on still throwing overhead. To encourage this, and avoid elbow injuries have the children start the throw with the ball held above the shoulder and encourage the elbow coming through at or above head height (past the ear); many children will try to throw a more side-arm action, having dropped the ball near to the hip before winding up the throw. Bean bags, tennis balls, cricket balls, quoits, miniature American Footballs are all good for competition and practice. Practice throwing straight, along a line for accuracy.

Also, throwing a rounders bat (!), with the extra weight at the far end (like a club) encourages the correct overhead action - similar to a strong tennis serve. However, always be extra careful with safety if you choose to use 'hard' equipment.

Encourage the children to release high and "throw tall" - not to fall away to their non-dominant side; encourage them to push up with the leading leg, to brace against it. Handball (mini-handball), played with a ball just small enough to hold in one hand (miniature soccer balls), is an excellent game for encouraging the overarm action (which usually gets little practice), particularly in the shooting at goal. Alternatively, just by throwing at targets on a wall.

Throwing a large (preferably soft) ball backwards, overhead, with two hands results in a heaving action. Keep the arms straight and lift with the legs. Children should be encouraged to keep a good lifting posture; bending the knees, not the back, and keeping the feet firmly planted on the floor. Lift the ball high. Progressing to starting the throw from outside the knee of the dominant side and lifting up and over the opposite shoulder, brings in a hammer throwing action. In order to throw 'straight', the children will need to keep the arms straight, watch the ball released over their shoulder and not spin around. There will be a tendency for the children to try too hard, ending with too much rotation and the ball over-thrown to the side. This will result in the right-handed thrower throwing to the left of the throwing area, especially if the children bend their arms and throw behind their heads, as beginners tend to. Consequently, supervise carefully and put the left-handed throwers together. Note, all rotational throws are less accurate and predictable in their final direction. When the children have learnt to keep their arms straight, stand tall and strong on their non-dominant side and watch the ball go and fly straight, they will really enjoy the next stage.

Put the ball in a bin-liner or sack, and have the child hold the end of the bag with two hands. Placing the ball outside their right foot (for a right-handed thrower) and heave it around and over the left shoulder. Try it yourself (when no-one is looking?); a good demonstration will certainly help the children. Do not rush the action; keep the arms fully extended and just guide the ball. As long as you do not tie a knot in the bag or twist the neck tight, the air will catch the implement, slowing its flight gracefully. Beware over exuberance though, spread the children out and remember where the bag will go if the children release it late and/or swing it around their heads; as many will! Practice a rhythmic long swing.

Finally, the sidearm slinging action (discus throw) is also done with long, extended arms. Concentrate on turning the hips, trunk and shoulders by pushing

off the back foot to rotate round the bracing front leg. Avoid having the children spinning around or attempting (advanced) rotational actions; keep the front foot on the ground to concentrate on the fundamental action and to maximise accuracy. Once again, a small netball or foam ball can be used, or a quoit for younger children. By swinging the ball back and then quickly forwards, you will find that the ball can be thrown a very long way if the arm is fully extended. Note, the main danger is releasing the ball too early, sending it out to the side instead of forwards. Be sure to have other children stand behind and to the left of a right handed thrower and always position the left handers carefully.

Children can start by sitting and go through the kneeling and standing stages, reinforcing the overall body action whilst learning how to move the arm and release the ball. Encourage them to turn the chest to the front before letting the ball slide out of the hand. Peter Schmeichel, the Manchester United Goalkeeper is an excellent exponent of this throwing action, often used in throwing out to the wing. Remember the arm should be stretched out to the side not dropped below the hips. Avoid bowling the ball overhead and think of swinging the arm near the horizontal using the legs to add lift. Remember, any of these throwing styles, progressions and improvised throws; sitting throws, hammer throws etc. can be used for competitions and on sports day. A good activity to finish on is a team throw, with the next person throwing from where the last throw reached. How many throws does it take to cross the width of the football pitch?

To finish a session the children can then collect any equipment, jog slowly back to the school door or around the gym, slowly repeat the stretches they have done in the lesson (particularly for shoulders), walk briskly and quietly back to change, and then close their eyes and picture their best throw. Too much throwing in one session will have the children experience sore shoulder and chest muscles for the next day or two. Once again the children can also review what they learnt including talking, writing, calculating, graphing, reading, watching a video of Olympic throwers and creating their own images about the activities.

*“I’ve come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom.
It’s my daily mood that makes the weather.
As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous.
I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration.
I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal.
In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis
will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or de-humanized.”*

~Dr. Haim Ginott

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