Dear RunJumpThrow Event Organizer,

On behalf of USA Track & Field, I’d like to thank you for your interest in RunJumpThrow, USATF’s signature youth activity program with our partner, The Hershey Company.

RunJumpThrow (RJT) is a hands-on learning program that gets kids excited about physical activity by introducing them to basic running, jumping and throwing skills through track and field – the foundation of nearly every sport. Working in partnership with SHAPE America, the curriculum is designed to be accessible to all children, regardless of athletic ability or fitness level.

RunJumpThrow is a crucial part of USATF’s evolution to help improve the lives of young people, regardless of whether or not they are competitive athletes. In the RJT curriculum, you will find activities ranging from warming up and walking to advanced hurdle and jumping activities. While all these activities meet SHAPE America standards, the most important part of RunJumpThrow is that kids have fun moving their bodies.

Getting active is the first step toward getting fit. By focusing on the activity and taking joy in movement, the goal of RJT is to help instill a love of movement in children and to provide a starting point for what we hope will be a lifetime of healthy, physical activity. We thank you for your interest in being a critical part in achieving that goal. Only with enthusiastic event organizers will RJT be successful.

Thank you again for your commitment to the health and well-being of children. USATF looks forward to working with you in coming months to make RunJumpThrow a program that improves the lives of children throughout the country.

Best Regards,

MAX SIEGEL
CEO, USATF™
On behalf of The Hershey Company, thank you for giving your time and talents to support the development and well-being of children in your community.

While most of you know us for iconic brands like Hershey’s, Reese’s and Twizzlers, our company was founded with an enduring social mission to support the development of children. Our family of remarkable employees come to work each day, knowing that they are making a difference in the lives of children near and far.

One of the cornerstones of our commitment in the development of youth has been sponsoring an introductory track and field program in local communities across North America for nearly four decades. We are excited about our new partnership with USATF that will expand access to the sport of track and field for kids ages 7-12.

At Hershey, we value programs that provide opportunities for kids to learn by doing. Our new RunJumpThrow program is an innovative way to extend our values and innovate around our long-standing commitment to introduce kids to basic running, jumping and throwing skills for a lifetime of activity.

Thank you again for your leadership and mentorship. We look forward to running, jumping and throwing with you.

Thanks again for making a difference in the lives of children,
The Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE America) is excited to announce its partnership with USA Track and Field (USATF) on the Run Jump Throw initiative!

The fact that Run Jump Throw is a hands-on learning program that introduces kids ages 7-12 to basic running, jumping and throwing skills through track and field makes it the perfect complement to SHAPE America’s vision, which is “Healthy People – Physically Educated and Physically Active!”

“We want to thank USATF for recognizing that physical education is an essential platform for skill development and for fostering long-term participation in physical activity,” says SHAPE America CEO Paul Roetert. “Run Jump Throw offers a great opportunity for kids to learn new skills, make friends and have lots of fun running, jumping and throwing with teachers, coaches and parents.”

Headquartered in Reston, VA, 25 miles west of Washington, DC, SHAPE America is the largest organization of professionals involved in physical education, physical activity, dance, school health and sport … all specialties related to attaining an active, healthy lifestyle. SHAPE America’s mission is to advance professional practice and promote research related to health and physical education, physical activity, dance and sport by providing its members with a comprehensive and coordinated array of resources, support and programs to help practitioners improve their skills to further the health and well-being of the American public.

CHERYL RICHARDSON

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF MEMBER ENGAGEMENT AND PROGRAMING
November 4, 2014

Dear Colleagues:

On behalf of the United States Olympic Committee, I would like to commend USA Track & Field for demonstrating its commitment to youth development through the RunJumpThrow program. Developed in partnership with The Hershey Company, the program upholds the key principles of the USOC’s American Development Model, and is designed to introduce kids to fundamental motor skills while setting the foundation for a healthy life.

Programs like RJT are critical to promoting sustained physical activity and sport participation in the United States. By creating early positive experiences in sport, coaches, parents and administrators can help maximize a child’s potential for future growth and love of physical activity. At its core, RJT supports the long-term athlete development principles that have been embraced by sport organizations worldwide, helping create opportunities for future elite athletes to realize their full potential.

We wish USATF all the best in its continued efforts to help children grow through sport, and hope this program will inspire the next generation of Team USA athletes.

Sincerely,

CHRIS SNYDER
DIRECTOR, COACHING EDUCATION
INTRODUCTION

RunJumpThrow (RJT) provides children ages 7-12 a fun chance to learn and practice the foundational skills of all sports – running, jumping, and throwing. These skills are the core of track & field and can be applied on the track or on nearly any other sport’s playing field.

The RunJumpThrow 6 Week Plan consists of activities organized into 20 stations and a sample lesson plan for a 5-6 week program. Also included are guidelines for operating a fun competition for kids to test their skills. This plan is presented in a format for non-technical event organizers or individuals who don’t have physical education degrees. (Physical educators may download the addendum - RJT for Physical Educators - by clicking here.) The plan is described in plain language and is intended to be used in conjunction with the instructional video, available after organizers register to host a RunJumpThrow event and download the written curriculum.

A station is a designated time and place to focus on learning and practicing specific track & field skills. Event organizers may select from the stations and adjust the program to best fit their situation. Activities can be modified and scaled for small and large events and programs.

To successfully implement an RJT 6 Week Plan, administrators and instructors should ensure they have one grown-up volunteer instructor for every 8 kids participating. It is possible to put on an RJT event with no equipment. All elements of the program may be conducted regardless of whether you have access to an official track or not.

These activities may be held anywhere – in a gym, in a field, on a track, or on a playground. Stations may be conducted sequentially, or one at a time, or you may spread out several stations and have athletes rotate between them.

The text below provides instructions on executing stations, tips for conducting a one-day RJT event if you so choose (1-day events must be registered through the RJT website), and the block lesson plan.

Before hosting any RJT event, thoroughly read the Core Plan and study the Instructional Video.
STATION DESCRIPTIONS

The descriptions to follow cover the content of the RunJumpThrow Lesson Plan. The content is organized as 20 stations. A station is a designated time and place to learn and practice specific skills. RJT is a comprehensive program with both introductory and advanced skill instruction.

THE 20 STATIONS ARE ORGANIZED INTO 5 CATEGORIES

1. WARM-UP STATIONS
   Posture & Breathing, Loosening, Balance, Locomotives

2. INSTRUCTION STATIONS
   Find-Your-Gears!
   Ready-Set-Go!
   Learning about Running
   Learning about Jumping
   Learning about Throwing
   Lesson on Rules

3. SKILL-DEVELOPMENT GAMES
   Fun with Relays, Be The Leader, Imagination Station

4. ADVANCED STATIONS
   Pizza Box Hurdles, Tempo Work, Scissor High Jump

5. COOL-DOWN STATIONS
   Homework
   Moves you can use
   Range of Motion
   Assessment
   Learning about the Cool-down (3x Cloud Hands)

For a single-day event, organizers can do as many or few stations as is feasible given their specific time and space restrictions. Descriptions of the stations follow. After the descriptions is a section with ideas and examples for how to use the stations to put together an event.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................................................................................................06
STATION DESCRIPTIONS ..............................................................................................................................................................07
POSTURE AND BREATHING ..........................................................................................................................................................11
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

LOOSEN UP FROM HEAD-TO-TOE ...............................................................................................................................................13
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

THE SIXTH SENSE: BALANCE MOVES .........................................................................................................................................15
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

DYNAMIC WARM-UP ......................................................................................................................................................................16
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

LOCOMOTIVES ................................................................................................................................................................................17
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR
FIND YOUR GEARS .........................................................................................................................................................................19
CUES FOR HOW TO TEACH IT
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

READY, SET, GO! .............................................................................................................................................................................20
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

LEARNING ABOUT RUNNING ......................................................................................................................................................22
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

LEARNING ABOUT JUMPING .......................................................................................................................................................24
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

LEARNING ABOUT THROWING ...................................................................................................................................................25
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

LESSON ON RULES .........................................................................................................................................................................27
CUES FOR HOW TO TEACH IT
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

FUN WITH RELAYS .........................................................................................................................................................................27
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

BE THE LEADER ...............................................................................................................................................................................29
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

IMAGINATION STATION ...............................................................................................................................................................30
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

PIZZA BOX HURDLES .....................................................................................................................................................................31
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

TEMPO WORK .................................................................................................................................................................................32
HOW TO TEACH IT
CUES
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR
JUMP THE RIBBON .........................................................................................................................................................................33
CUES FOR HOW TO TEACH IT
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

HOMEWORK: MOVES YOU CAN USE TO GET FASTER AND STRONGER ..........................................................................................34
CUES FOR HOW TO TEACH IT
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

RANGE OF MOTION .......................................................................................................................................................................35
CUES FOR HOW TO TEACH IT
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

COOL DOWN ...................................................................................................................................................................................36
CUES FOR HOW TO TEACH IT
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR

PLANNING A SINGLE-DAY RUNJUMPTHROW EVENT .............................................................................................................37
PRACTICE MEET ..............................................................................................................................................................................39
6 WEEK PLAN FOR 5-6 WEEK UNIT .............................................................................................................................................40
**STATION 1**

**POSTURE AND BREATHING**

**TEACHING POSTURE AND BREATHING IS PART OF TEACHING RUNNING, JUMPING, AND THROWING**

In this station, use the cues below to describe and demonstrate posture and breathing. The goal is for kids to learn how to safely and effectively use their feet, hips, core, lungs & heart, neck & shoulders, and head to stand tall with a long and strong spine and to breathe fully.

**HOW TO TEACH IT:**

1. Arrange children so all can see the instructor. Everyone needs to have ample space. Have children stand at least arm's length distance apart.
2. Have children stand tall and relaxed, with their feet under the shoulders
3. Start at the feet and work upward, describing and demonstrating good posture
4. Use the cues below to describe and demonstrate proper posture and breathing technique

**CUES FOR TEACHING POSTURE AND BREATHING:**

**FEET**

**HAVE CHILDREN OPEN THEIR TOES**
- Babies naturally spread out their toes but as we grow up, many begin to curl our toes
- Help kids remember this important posture skill

**HOLD ARCHES UP**

Just like we can improve our shoulder and spine posture by paying attention, kids can improve foot posture by holding their arches up

**KNOW THE SWEET SPOT**
- Located between the 2nd and 3rd toe, 1/3 of the way back from the toes
- A common problem is that kids often make initial ground contact on the outside of side of their foot
  - This causes injuries, is very inefficient and encourages slow movement
- Teach children to push into the floor through their sweet spot while running, jumping and throwing
- Re-teach foot posture and putting pressure into the ground throughout all other stations, in practice, and in competition

**MAINTAIN STRONG FEET WHEN RUNNING**
- While the foot swings forward and then makes contact with the ground, the ankle is flexed
- Sloppy, loose feet cause injuries and slow running
- Feet pointed away from the knees (commonly called “duck-footed”) can lead to injury and slow running
HIPS
- Hold the hips like a bowl of water, don’t spill out the front
- Reinforce that hips stay even like a bowl of water while running, jumping, and throwing

CORE
- The body’s “core” is its center of mass
- Stand on one foot and imagine the middle of the body balanced over the sweet spot of the foot

HEART & LUNGS
INHALE
- Learn how to belly breathe! Encourage kids to push their bellies out as they draw air in to the lower lungs
- Their backs get big as they inhale to draw oxygen into the upper lungs

EXHALE
- Suck bellies into the spine, and shrink the upper body to get all air out of the lungs
- Have kids hold their hands on their bellies to feel it expand as they draw air in

NECK AND SHOULDERS
- Relax the face and neck and breathe easy
- Relax the shoulders

HEAD
- Imagine the head is light like a helium balloon
- Be very careful not to whip the head around when running, jumping and throwing

LONG STRONG SPINE
- Put it all together and feel alignment starting at the sweet spot of the feet extend out the top of head
- Align the major joints of the body. Head on top of the shoulders, on top of the hips, on top of the knee, on top of the ankle, in a straight line down. This is called good posture!
- Imagine a string running from the sole of your foot up through the top of your head, pulling up like a marionette

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:
- Babies just learning how to sit up demonstrate natural tall posture, this is the model children need to remember.
- Learning belly-breathing can eliminate side-aches.
- Running, jumping and throwing with good posture reduces injuries and improves performance.
LOOSEN-UP FROM HEAD-TO-TOE

GETTING LOOSE IS A SKILL
Warm-up the body for the demands of running, jumping and throwing in a fun and safe way. The routine is a low-intensity version of the more advanced “Dynamic Warm-up”.

HOW TO TEACH IT:
- The routine is done standing in place, with children spread out facing the instructor
- After the posture and breathing lesson, begin at the top of the body and work down, demonstrating and describing how to take each joint carefully through its range of motion

NECK ROTATIONS
1. While standing tall, gently rotate the head in a circular motion
2. Ensure that rotations are slow and easy and there is no strain
3. The movement is done slowly and in control
4. Five rotations each direction

Notes:
- Many children are tight in their shoulders and this will be noticeable
- Challenge the range of motion with no stress or strain
- This movement can be done slow, medium speed and medium fast

ARM CIRCLES FORWARD AND BACK, SINGLE AND DOUBLE ARMS
1. Stand tall and rotate arms like big wheels around the body
2. At the top of the rotation the arm will be straight up in the air. Reach up and gently challenge the range of motion
3. Start with one arm and then the other, forward and back 10 x each arm, each direction
4. Double arms forward and back together and opposite, 10 repetitions

SHOULDER ROTATIONS AND SHRUGS WITH ISOMETRIC HOLD
1. Using the muscles of the upper back and shoulders, lift and rotate forward and back
2. 5 times forward, 5 times backward
3. Hold your shoulder up to your ears like your stressed-out for five seconds (isometric hold) and then shake it out for five seconds. This move can be done once or twice

TRUNK TWISTS WITH FEET FIXED AND WITH FULL RANGE OF MOTION
1. Start with feet slightly wider than shoulder width
2. Leaving feet strong on the floor with toes spread out, arches up, and pressure on the sweet spot, twist the hips and spine and look behind
3. Twist back and forth in a steady rhythm
4. After 10 repetitions (5 each way), allow the back heel to come off the ground and twist even farther for 10 more repetitions

ROTARY GOOD MORNINGS
1. Start with a base wider than shoulder width and feet strong on the floor
2. Reach up and then slowly and carefully reach to the side, and then between the feet, the other side and then back up
3. Repeat this motion three times

**HIP ROTATIONS**
1. With feet under shoulder and strong feet rotate hips in a big circle
2. The stretch should be without strain and felt in the sides and front of the body
3. Rotate 5 times each direction

**KNEE ROTATIONS**
1. Feet together, knees together, hands on knees
2. Make small, controlled rotations
3. Rotate 5 times each direction

**ANKLE BALANCE AND ROTATIONS**
1. Stand on one foot with the other raised in front
2. Reinforce foot posture, including spreading out the toes and keeping all the weight over the sweet spot
3. Rotate the foot being held up in big circles
4. Rotate 5 times each direction, each foot

**ADVANCED VARIATION**
Combine with easy side skips. Children skip sideways in a large circle for a few seconds, pause and loosen-up their necks with head rotations. More side-skips, then arm rotations and shoulder shrugs, more skips, trunk twists and so on. The routine concludes with tracing letters and numbers with the toes while balancing like a stork to loosen and strengthen the ankle.

**CUES:**
- Loosen-up and shake it out!
- Pay attention to your body and explore your range of motion without any stress or strain

**GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:**
- Apply posture and breathing skills while loosening up.
- Leaders should carefully listen and observe children at this time to pick up important information about limitations or previous injuries.
THE SIXTH SENSE: BALANCE MOVES

ENCOURAGE IMPROVED BALANCE

Balance is a teachable skill that reduces injuries and improves performance in all sports. Balance improvements start immediately just by paying attention and continue with practice.

HOW TO TEACH IT:

The moves introduced here can be used as a focused station or as a part of the warm-up or cool down. The moves can also be added to other stations for a positive training effect.

- For example, balancing activities during recovery periods during “Find Your Gears” or advanced tempo work are especially helpful in developing strong feet
- A few balance challenges can also be added to any station where children must stand in line between trials
- Try super strengthening kids’ feet with a few balance moves immediately following a challenging running activity, learn to focus on posture in fatigue

ORDER OF INSTRUCTION AND CUES:

- Review the “sweet spot” of the foot learned in the posture lesson
- Three balance moves (start each by balancing on one foot with the other held up in a running position)

RUNNING ACTION

1. While balancing on one leg, practice aggressive, fast running arm action
2. Hold hips in correct posture
3. Maintain a slight opening and closing of the elbow joint
4. 20 times for each leg is enough

REACH TALL AND SWAY

1. Balance on one foot and reach both hands high into the sky
2. First, sway side to side just a few inches by moving your arms and upper body to the left and right 5 times each direction
3. Then, try to sway far enough to feel a stretch in the side of the body 5 times each direction
   
Note: stretch the side of the body rather than bending at the hips

TOE TOUCHES

1. Balance on one leg & reach up, then carefully reach down to the floor & touch your toe
2. 5 times each leg is a good place to start

CUES:

- Support
- Control
- Focus
- Keep Stable

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- Training balance not only improves balance as a skill, it makes stronger feet.
- Along with improved balance, stronger feet also reduce injuries & improve performance.
STATION 4

DYNAMIC WARM-UP

PREPARE TO BE POWERFUL

Lead kids through a set of moves that prepares the body for the specific demands of running, jumping and throwing. Warm-up and strengthen the hips and core with loose, fast, complete range-of-motion activities. Use this type of warm-up before high intensity running like practicing the start or relays.

HOW TO TEACH IT:

- Some of the moves begin with the athletes lying on their backs
- Each person needs enough personal space to do the moves. That means spread out!
- Describe and explain “range-of-motion” and “dynamic”
  RANGE-OF-MOTION: This means how far each joint can safely move
  For example
  - When we use our elbow, we reach the end of range-of-motion when it is straight
  - When we can’t touch our toes, we are too tight and not using all of our range-of-motion in our hips
  DYNAMIC: This means energetic and powerful
- Use questions to help kids understand:
  WHAT IS FLEXIBILITY? (touch your toes, limber, loose, not tight)
  WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE TIGHT? (stressed, stiff)
  WHAT DOES IS LOOK LIKE TO BE FLEXIBLE WHILE RUNNING? (high knees, easy strides, powerful arms)

ORDER OF INSTRUCTION AND CUES:

Standing dynamic warm-up moves can be done near a fence or wall to assist with balance. Or, athletes with advanced balance can do the moves without support:

STANDING LEG SWINGS FACING FORWARD
1. Face a fence or wall and balance on one foot: swing the leg in and out, working up to full range-of-motion
2. Working up to full range-of-motion means swing your leg as high as it goes without stress or strain

STANDING LEG SWINGS FACING SIDEWAYS
Face sideways to the fence or wall and swing the leg forward and back in full range of motion
1. As the leg goes back, feel a stretch on the front of the body
2. As the leg goes forward, feel a stretch on the back of the body (hamstrings)

LYING ON THE BACK DYNAMIC WARM-UP MOVES

UPRIGHT LEG CYCLE
Roll onto shoulder blades and cycle legs 20 times: in this position the spine is rounded and the hips are above the head
1. To get onto the shoulder blades, begin by lying on the back
2. Keeping shoulder blades, head and arms on the ground, lift up hips and legs and try to touch the ground behind the head with the feet.
3. Then lift the feet into the air above the face to begin cycling
**STATION 5**

**LOCOMOTIVES**

**TEACH THE ABC’S OF RUNNING SKILL**

Locomotive means moving your body from here to there. These moves are also known as line drills or running drills. Locomotive moves are the ABC’s of running skill. These moves are an extension of loosening and dynamic warm-up. The focus here, however, is more technical. This is one of the places where running skill is taught.

**HOW TO TEACH IT:**

- These classic moves that can be done in a line or in a circle
- During every move, teach and practice technical elements of running skill:
  1. Strong Feet
  2. High Knees
  3. Heel Recovery
- Use this time to teach these skills with cues and demonstrations
- This set of moves also includes lateral locomotives to develop the stabilizers of the feet, knees, and hips
  These moves are typically done in lines. Children can form one wide line and all practice the skill together while moving across the field. Or, you can form lines 3 or 4 deep. It is important however, that kids do not spend too much time waiting between practice attempts.
- Do each move 2 times for 15 meters each

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**EAGLES**

1. Begin on your back like you are making a snow angel
2. Keeping shoulders on the ground, bring the left foot to the right hand by lifting the leg up and across the body
3. Rhythmically switch to the other side
   - Repeat 10 times total (5 each leg)

*Note: As the children will be lying down to begin the movement, it is easiest to teach and demonstrate the movement while the kids are still standing up so they can see.*

**CUES:**

- Loose
- Fast (but not rushed)
- Complete range-of-motion

**GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:**

These moves are challenging to many children. Some might try to take a rest when they lie on their backs to start the exercise. These moves are done to excite the body!
ORDER OF INSTRUCTION AND CUES:

**RUNNING ABC'S**

**HIGH KNEES**
Lift knee to hip height
1. Marching
   - Work on balance
   - Hold hips in correct position (don’t spill the bowl of water)
2. Skipping
3. Full Speed
   - For fast high knees, the legs go up & down fast, but the athlete moves forward slowly

**SKIPPING HIGH KNEES WITH EXTENSION**
1. This move is also known as “B” skips
2. For this drill, extend the lower leg out at the top of the high knee action
3. A fun variation is to have everyone go at the same time and rhythmically clap their hands under the extended leg

**LATERAL LOCOMOTIVES**
Note: variations of these moves are done in other sports with a lowered posture. For track and field, the drills are done with an exaggerated, tall posture

**THREE LATERAL LOCOMOTIVE MOVES**
1. Side skips
   - Use big side swinging arm action
2. Carioca variations: fast and big
   - This move is also known as “grapevine”
     - Facing sideways to the direction of travel, the trail leg alternates going in front and in back of the lead leg
3. Easy sideways hopping
   - Emphasize posture
   - Small jumps of 6 inches or so with good rhythm

**FUN LOCOMOTIVES**

**MUMMY WALKS**
1. Arms are held out in front
2. Slowly walking forward, lift the lead leg up to hip height. Athletes with greater strength and flexibility can lift the leg to chest height

**GROUCHO MARX RUN**
1. This is a very silly and fun way of stretching the hip flexors (the small muscles in the front of the hips)
2. Athletes bend at the ankles and knees to shrink by 6 inches and then run at medium speed
3. The spine stays straight up and down

**SKIP, SKIP, SCOOP**
1. This move is outstanding for developing hip strength
2. Facing forward, the athlete skips twice. On the second skip, lower the hips. On the third skip reach low with the hand and brushing the ground, as if scooping up sand.
3. Explode of the back foot while scooping, imagining like you are throwing grass or sand
ADVANCED VARIATION
Try a “freeze” command during running drills. When the coach says “freeze,” the athletes try to immediately balance and get into a one leg running action position.

CUES:

USE THIS TIME TO TEACH RUNNING SKILL

- Reinforce posture, breathing and balance
- Be consistent: Strong feet! Remember your toes!

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:
As posture and balance improve, you will quickly see better quality.

STATION 6

FIND YOUR GEARS

HELP KIDS LEARN PACE AS A SKILL
Introduce the skill of running at a steady pace at various intensities with this fun game. Children run in a big circle around the instructor for brief periods and come back to the center frequently for more instruction. Children try jogging for a few seconds really slowly with mixed-in bursts of medium and full speed running. Just like on a bicycle, settling into a rhythm in each gear and going a different speed is a skill that can be improved.

CUES FOR HOW TO TEACH IT:

1. First, practice jogging in-place good posture and breathing
2. Then progress to moving forward very slowly
3. Use commands such as “faster” and “slower” to speed up and slow down the group
4. After 1 or 2 minutes of running various speeds, bring the group back to the center & provide instruction and demonstration
   - Focus on posture, balance, and breathing. Detailed instruction on technique happens later. This is an introduction.
   - Allow rest. This can be a time to teach heart rate. After the fourth or fifth period of running let the kids get closer to full recovery (heart rate <100). They will think they are ready to go earlier, so keep the group focused with instruction and demonstration.

   Heart Rate Lesson
   1. The heart rate is the number of beats in a minute
   2. First, find the pulse at the neck or on the wrist
   3. Count the beats for 6 seconds and multiply by 10 to find the heart rate
   4. Or, for a more accurate measure, count for 15 seconds and multiply by 4
5. Teaching questions
   - Can you find the gear between slow and medium and hold it for 30 seconds of smooth running?
   - Can you find the gear between medium and fast and hold it for a smooth rhythmic 10 second blast?
GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- Full participation. Everyone having fun learning how do run at different paces. Make it clear that it is not a contest but rather a lesson on skill of running at a certain pace.
- Connect previous learning about posture and breathing. No side aches! Belly goes out when air goes in while running.

STATION 7

READY, SET, GO!

TEACH ACCELERATION SKILLS

This station focuses on the specific skills associated with starting races. The first skill is to not fidget! Everyone must be quiet and remain still at the start. Then, after the “Go!” command, the skill of pushing into the ground is used to start running quickly!

HOW TO TEACH IT:

Note: Typically, we teach acceleration while engaging in activities like short sprints and relays. Obviously this is important as acceleration is central to these events. But learning the rules, reaction time, technique, going full speed, and manipulating the baton or obeying the commands is a lot going on at one time for a 7-12 year old excited to be outside moving with their friends. In this station, space is held for children to learn the rules and techniques involved with acceleration without actually getting up to full speed. That happens in the next station.

USE “READY, SET, GO!” AS THE STARTING COMMANDS

Everyone should be still (no fidgeting!) at the “set” command

ORDER OF INSTRUCTION AND CUES:

TEACH THE PRELIMINARY POSITIONS

2-POINT START

1. Standing upright with one leg in front of the other
2. Alternate arm action (that means if the left leg is forward, the right arm is forward)

3-POINT START

1. The two feet and one arm make the three points on the ground
2. One foot is about 10 inches in front of the other
3. The arm on the same side as the back foot is used as the third support

4-POINT START

1. The 4 point start is similar to the crouch start athletes use with starting blocks
2. The feet are set about 10 inches apart and both arms are used as support

TEACH REACTION TIME

- Stay completely still, no fidgeting!
- Push into the ground at the “Go!” command

TEACH COMPLETE EXTENSION

- Complete extension means to use all of the potential of the hips, knees, and ankles
- Before the back foot comes off the ground, the body should be a straight line from the top of the head through the foot
- Use a wall or fence so kids can see and feel the complete extension without actually running
TRY ACCELERATING WITH A COMMAND FOR ONLY 2, 3 AND THEN 4 PUSHES

- This is hard for kids as they want to continue to try to accelerate, while this drill ends after just 2-4 foot contacts
- For each of the 2-4 foot contacts, encourage kids to “PUSH, PUSH, PUSH!”
- It is really hard to see complete extension with the naked eye. With small groups and a little technology (phones, tablets, etc.) the coach can video the first few steps

ADVANCED VARIATION Add imagination and balance

- Have the children get in the “set position” like a sprinter at a big track meet
- It would be helpful to have them talk about and imagine the position first
- Once in the position, practice being balanced equally on all fours, shifting weight forward onto hands, shifting weight back onto feet, to the left and right
- Once comfortable and familiar with the stance, try getting into a balanced sprinter’s crouch and moving fast and far for only four steps. Use “ready, set, go” commands
- Practice reaction time and complete extension

CUES:

DRIVE

PUSH

COMPLETE EXTENSION

REACT TO THE “GO!” COMMAND

BE STILL IN SET POSITION
This has to be taught. Children need the basic rules of starting to be explicitly described to them. Use “Ready, Set, Go” commands and explain that “set” means to remain in one position.

PUSH INTO THE GROUND TO MOVE HIPS FORWARD
Rapidly accelerating by pushing with the hip. Incorporate wall-pushes with complete extension and rocket jumps to recruit the powerful muscles while teaching the skill.

BIG ARMS
Great range of motion happens at the shoulder from the first steps of acceleration. The active phase is backward and the arm returns forward with a stretch reflex. The elbow opens as the arm drives back and closes a bit when the arm returns forward.

SPINE STRAIGHT AND HEAD NEUTRAL
Large forces created by complete extension of hip and knee joints cause acceleration when the body is properly aligned with good posture.

STRONG FEET
Dangly, sloppy, loose feet do not accelerate the body. The feet should be held with the toes spread open and up and the ankle gently flexed in a stable position.

HELPFUL ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY TO TEACH

- Reaction Time
  have athletes balance on one leg with arms in alternate running action. Using ready set go commands, practice reaction time by switching feet and arms on “Go!”
- Complete Extension
  using complete potential energy in hips, knees, and ankles. A common problem is to leave a significant amount of energy in the hips during the first acceleration steps. This can be noticed with video analysis and visual observation of the hip angle at toe-off.

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- Sometimes kids have to slow down to accelerate. Fast wheels turning on the ground like Speedy Gonzalez is not the image. Getting it right means powerful, complete pushes in the direction of the finish line.
- Demonstrating good posture and balance while trying to accelerate shows advanced skill.
LEARNING ABOUT RUNNING

TEACH THE SKILLS OF RUNNING

This is an instructional session, not a running workout.

HOW TO TEACH IT:

1. Set up a 30-70m straight running course with a coach station in the middle about 40 feet back

![Course Diagram]

2. Kids gather around the leader for instruction and then line up at the start

3. One-at-a-time the children run the short, straight course and the coach observes

4. After finishing, the runner walks back to the start, stopping by the coach for corrective feedback and positive reinforcement

5. Explore various paces

6. As this is an instructional session and not a workout, 3-5 repetitions is enough

ADVANCED VARIATION

On a rainy or super-hot day, teach the skills of running indoors by drawing stick figures of runners and having discussions and in-class demonstrations.

CUES:

TEACH BIG FUNDAMENTALS

- Stand tall
- Strong feet
- Hips underneath
- Relax face and shoulders
- Open and close the elbow
- Loose hands (but not floppy)
- No bobble heads
- No bouncing
- Breathe

TEACH DETAILS

JOGGING

1. The coach should see and the children should feel a gentle up-and-down motion – but don’t bounce!
   - This motion is good for the muscles and bones
   - Leaning at the waist is a common error, encourage kids to BE TALL!

2. Keep face, neck and arms relaxed. There should be no noticeable tension in the upper body. Relaxed muscles and good posture will allow most efficient use of the cardiovascular systems.

3. Hold hips underneath
   - Tight hip flexors are common in modern society and holding the hips underneath the body (rather than tilted forward and spilling water from the bowl) must be taught.

4. Arms rotate a bit at the shoulder. A common mistake is to fuse the upper arm to the upper body causing the shoulders to rotate too much. The shoulders may have some slight oscillation, but the upper arm should loosely rotate at the joint.

5. Strong feet. The sweet spot of the foot is between the bones of the second and third toe (metatarsals) about one third of the way from the front. This point is known as the center of pressure and is located just behind the ball of the foot just as the arch begins to ascend. It is elevated (does not collapse to ground).
MEDIUM SPEED RUNNING

1. Run tall and relaxed. Running relaxed and with good posture is essential for efficient, continuous running.
2. Knee flexion in swing phase. Immediately after the toe pushes off the ground behind the runner’s center of mass, the knee should flex to allow the leg to swing forward more efficiently.
3. Fast contact on the balls of fast feet. The ground contact is to be strong and fast on the sweet spot of the foot. Long ground contact time indicates poor posture and fatigue. This is an indicator of too much intensity as practice at this pace should be at high quality.
4. Breathe with entire body. Running medium and medium fast is a higher metabolic task. Children may begin to lose their breath quickly. Learn to extend continuous running by allowing the chest, back and core to expand and contract fully and forcefully to get oxygen. Tight shoulders and neck will interfere with this.
5. Arms swing at side loosely from shoulder, opening and closing at elbow. The arms should move alternatively with the legs with similar range of motion.

SPRINTING

1. At this developmental stage it is important to focus on stride frequency
   - Stride frequency is also known as turn-over
   - Teach children how to move their legs quickly underneath their centers of mass
2. Strong foot contact
3. Heel recovery. In sprinting, the swing leg returns more quickly and efficiently with good knee flexion immediately following the toe-off. Shuffling with low heel recovery is a frequent error and is damaging to the hamstrings.
4. Drive arms back until parallel with ground and open at the elbow. The active phase of the running stroke for the arms is backward. As the arm drives back loosely from the shoulder, the elbow should open to some degree. Complete backward arm drive is parallel with the ground.
5. Run relaxed and fast
6. Children make the mistake of showing how much effort they are putting into their running by straining their face and tightening their arms
   - Teach relaxed arms and fast with good posture for best results

ADVANCED VARIATION
- After a complete warm-up, full-speed sprinting is practiced using a “fly zone”
- A fly zone is a 10-15m length of flat, stable surface with a 10-15m acceleration and slow-down length on either side
- Use cones, shoes, or markings on the track or field to mark the zones
- The runner accelerates to the beginning of the fly-zone and maintains full speed for the established 10-15m
- At the end of the fly-zone the runner carefully slows down and walks to the starting area. Rest 2 to 3 minutes between trials
- Try to use a stopwatch for this activity, only timing the fly-zone
- Ten repetitions is enough or stop when you notice the athletes slowing down

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- Apply previously learned skills of posture, breathing, balance, and pace.
- Good posture and attention to the big fundamentals will help children find a safe and effective running style.
- Knowing and demonstrating good running skill reduces injuries, improves performance, and makes running fun!
LEARNING ABOUT JUMPING

PROVIDE SAFE AND FUN SKILL INSTRUCTION ON JUMPING

Jumping is always an intensive activity. Children should demonstrate postural control and stability before trying jumping activities.

HOW TO TEACH IT:

This is an instructional session, so make sure all kids can see the demonstrations and hear the instructions.

ORDER OF INSTRUCTION AND CUES (DO EACH MOVEMENT 10-15 METERS)

PROGRESSION OF FUNDAMENTAL JUMPING SKILLS

1. Easy hops (one leg)
   - Focus on posture and balance
   - Reinforce strong feet and feeling the sweet spot of the foot
   - Move no more than 6 inches each easy hop
   - Go forward, sideways (both directions) and backwards
   - The tempo is rhythmic and slow

2. Medium hops
   - Same as above
   - Move about one foot each medium hop
   - The tempo is rhythmic and medium speed

3. Speed hops
   - Cycle rather than pogo
     - This means the knee significantly bends and the heel comes close to the upper hamstring as the leg swings forward
     - Pogo sticking is when the foot stays low to the ground in the hop (this is OK for easy and medium, but teach athletes to cycle through for speed hops)
     - The tempo is rhythmic and fast

4. Bounding
   - Exaggerated running
   - Use big arms for balance and power

5. Double leg jumps x 1, 2, 3 and 4
   - Start in a stable position and jump off both feet and land carefully on both feet
   - Absorb the landing by bending at the hips and knees
   - Start with just one jump forward
   - Progress to 3 or 4 continuous jumps with rhythm

ADVANCED JUMPING SKILLS

1. Triple jumping with rhythm
   - Left, left, right, left, left, right, etc.
   - Right, right, left, right, right, left, etc.

2. Pop-ups with a 4 step approach
   - Start in a stable position with one leg forward
   - Run forward counting only the leg that was in front in the starting position
   - On the fourth foot contact jump up and out
   - Try to land on the jumping foot and take a few easy running steps to come to a controlled stop
ASSESSMENTS

1. Standing broad jump
   - The standing broad jump is a classic test of coordinated explosive power
   - Can be done on the sand or on a grass field
   - Begin in a stable position
   - Crouch to load up the hips and legs
   - Jump up and out
   - Land on two feet

2. 10m speed hop
   - Also known as “one-legged running”
   - Measure out a ten meter straight-away course on a grass field
   - Start in a balanced position on one foot
   - Use a cycling leg action (knee of hopping foot bends and heel comes close to upper hamstring)

CUES:

- Reinforce balance and posture
- Reinforce triple extension skill learned for acceleration

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

Jumping is not to be practiced when really tired. When posture and balance begin to fade, it is time to move to a less intense activity. Teaching jumping skills right happens with high quality movements.

STATION 10

LEARNING ABOUT THROWING

TEACH THROWING FOR DISTANCE

Most of the time kids throw overhand aiming at a target. In this station teach how to throw for distance. This is the chance to see how far kids can launch a ball.

HOW TO TEACH IT:

1. Something to throw is needed
2. Softballs work well, but softballs are not soft, so safety is a major consideration
   - Bean bags are a softer alternative
   - Plastic javelins designed for kids are commercially available
3. It is best to have everyone throw into an empty space at the same time and in the same direction, and run or walk to get the ball after everyone has thrown
4. Or, have partners stand far enough apart that the ball bounces and rolls to a stop before picking it up.
   This is not a catching drill
ORDER OF INSTRUCTION (DEMONSTRATE AND DESCRIBE):

GRIP
Avoid gripping too tightly

ARM ACTION
In the overhand throwing action, the arm functions like a whip and the shoulder is the handle

HOW TO THROW WITH YOUR WHOLE BODY
- Keep the non-throwing arm long and loose
- Opposite leg forward
- Use legs, hip, and trunk before starting the whipping action with the arm

HOW TO THROW WITH A RUN-UP APPROACH
Add a few steps of easy running, 20 feet is enough for 4 or 5 jogging steps up to the throwing position

PRACTICE IDEA
Use “range throwing” to increase the number of repetitions by decreasing the intensity
After assessing what an “all-out effort” throw is for an individual or small group, create a target at 75% of maximum distance. Perform as many as 30 sub-maximal intensity practice throws, working on technique.

CUES:
- Throw up and out
- Big follow-through

CUES EXPANDED:

BUILD MOMENTUM WITH A SHORT APPROACH
A small run-up or approach can be used to build up some momentum. Twenty to thirty feet is more than enough for most children.

SHIFT MOMENTUM INTO BALL BY BEING STRONG ON THE NON-THROWING SIDE
At the end of the run-up, brace the non-throwing side into a strong hinge or axis of rotation.

BIG RANGE OF MOTION (INCLUDING FOLLOW-THROUGH)
Be patient and leave the ball back to allow the front to the body to stretch before snapping into the throw. Upon release use maximum range of motion for the follow-through.

LOOSE, FAST ARM
The arm should move loosely and quickly. Trying to “muscle” the throw with the arm is a common mistake.

RELEASE HIGH
Most experiences children have throwing balls likely involve a large demand on accuracy or aim. Throwing for distance is different. The athlete should feel themselves push into the ground and loft the ball out and up and the point of release. The angle of release could be as high as 40 degrees for a strong thrower.

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:
When going for distance, keep the overall number of throws down. A good session of full intensity trials will have less than 12 total throws.
STATION 11

LESSON ON RULES

MODEL THAT RULES ARE IMPORTANT

Set up a specific time and place to teach the rules. Children are so excited to compete that sometimes they get half a step in front of the next kid and try to block them out! Against the rules! To create a safe and fair environment, teach more advanced rules of upcoming practice meets and the basics like not fidgeting during “ready, set, go” in a classroom-type setting, in the bleachers, or in the shade of a tree.

CUES FOR HOW TO TEACH IT:

- Sample rules for practice meets are provided in the guidelines for “Planning a single day event”
- Use visual aids to teach the rules. Seeing the rules written on a portable electronic devise or whiteboard helps children learn
- Use examples. Allow kids with experience explain the rules

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- Check for understanding. Ask a volunteer to raise their hand and explain the rules using their own words.
- Practice the “ready, set, go” sequence before introducing more advanced skills like relays or races.
  Not fidgeting is a learned skill.

STATION 12

FUN WITH RELAYS

DESIGN TEAMWORK CHALLENGES AND HAVE FUN WITH RELAYS

Relays are fun and can be used in many ways to teach track & field skills. Quickly and easily design relays with no special equipment or facility needs as children learn to run and enjoy practicing their skills of acceleration and pace. For example, you could break a group into four teams and design a here-to-there relay with a hand-slap exchange. Relays can also be very structured (see the Advanced Variation of combining relays and tempo work).

HOW TO TEACH IT:

RELAYS CAN BE RUN IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS: TWO STANDARD METHODS ARE SHUTTLE RELAYS AND OVAL RELAYS

- For shuttle relays, teams split in half and stand on opposite ends of a straight course. The first runner dashes to other group, has a face-to-face exchange with the next runner, and so on.
- For relays on an oval, all the participants run in the same direction, passing the baton or slapping hands while both are moving.

EXCHANGE

- A hand slap will work for many fun relay activities
- If a baton or object is used, make sure that it is safe for children to run with
TEAM SIZE AND LENGTH OF RUN CORRESPOND

- That means, when you have many kids on one team, 12 for example, the distance ran can be longer because there will be more time for recovery
- Very short relays (a shuttle relay using the short width of a gym for example) can have smaller teams as children will not need much recovery time between runs

ORDER OF INSTRUCTION AND CUES:

TEACH THE EXCHANGE

- Incoming runner holds the baton at the bottom pointing it straight up
- Outgoing runner makes a big target with an open hand at held at shoulder height

DESCRIBE THE RULES OF THE RELAY

A specific session with a white board to describe the rules is very helpful. See the "Lesson on Rules."

- Important rules for all relays
  1. No impeding
     - This means runners are not allowed to get in front of another runner and try to block
     - Be still until the “Go” command

ADVANCED VARIATION

Combine having fun with relays and Tempo Work. Design relays with the goal of members running at a determined pace. For example: groups of 3-5 try to walk a mile in 20 minutes using pacing skill alone. No watches or clocks!

CUES:

The teamwork element and possible addition of equipment may distract kids from paying attention to their posture. Relays are fun! Use reminders to help develop and reinforce the skills in this playful experience.

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

Children and grown-ups are drawn to the relays. The teamwork element quickly attracts us and encouraging shouts fill the air as children joyfully dash with the purpose of supporting their small group.
**BE THE LEADER**

**LEARN RUNNING AT VARIOUS PACES**

This a familiar and fun, non-competitive running game. Organize a group of runners in single-file with alternating leaders surging up from the back of the pack. The purpose is to have fun applying the skill of running at various paces.

**HOW TO TEACH IT:**

**THIS ACTIVITY CAN TAKE PLACE IN A GYM OR OUTSIDE**

- Outside, set perimeters for the course by explaining boundaries to the group during the instructions (stay on this half of the soccer field, for example).
- Organize the group so that all can see and hear for instructions
  1. The game is like follow the leader, but the leader always changes
  2. Runners run in a single-file line. The person at the end moves to the front to take the lead & set the pace for a while before the next dash from the back and new leader.
  3. Either at the teacher’s command or after a set time (30 seconds) the person at the back changes gears and gets to the front and settles back into a slow jog.
  4. Teach the runners to maintain a consistent distance from each other (1-5m)
- Begin running in single-file with alternating leaders dashing up from the end of the line

**IN A GYM**

Try an advanced variation by setting the course that u-turns back and forth like a long queue at TSA. Run evenly spaced 5 meters apart and fill the gym like the airport on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

**CUES:**

Refer back to prior learning about pacing and running form. Check for understanding about running at a slow (shag-jog) pace. What pace would you need to get to pass the whole group?

**GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:**

- This is a teamwork activity. The place that it can break down and become frustrating is if the leader does not settle back into a slow jog. Then, the pace gets too fast and the next leaders can’t get to the front. To get it right make sure kids understand to carefully slow down to a slow jog after the surge.
- Reinforce reteach previous skills.
STATION 14

IMAGINATION STATION

CREATE TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Guide imaginations toward being future track & field stars! In this session, kids get to check out top track athletes on usatf.tv and pretend they are running, jumping, and throwing at the highest levels.

HOW TO TEACH IT:

- With accessible media players, this activity can happen anywhere. A large group of children can watch the clips on a big screen in a classroom together. Or, one child can look at a clip on her own phone.
- Set up a designated time and space to imagine competing at the highest levels
- Lead children through guided imagination practice
- A 10-minute station could be part of a single-day event. Or, an imagination element can be added to an instructional segment or the cool-down

ADVANCED VARIATION

Assign video watching and imagination as homework.

ANOTHER ADVANCED VARIATION

Combine with a lesson on pace and intensity in Learning about Jumping. Watch a video of a Team USA Track Star long jump at the Olympics and then imagine doing the move at 50% intensity and then practice a pop-up!

CUES:

Evoke the senses for more powerful imagination. What do you see, hear, and feel as a world-class track & field star?

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- This will be a powerful experience for some kids.
- If you hear them talking about it a few days later, you got it right.
STATION 15

PIZZA BOX HURDLES (ADVANCED)

SET UP PIZZA BOXES ASミニ-HURDLES FOR AN ADVANCED CHALLENGE

This advanced station is called Pizza Box Hurdles because the barriers are propped-up pizza boxes! Running rhythmically over evenly spaced hurdles is extremely fun for some kids. But it is an advanced move. Children must demonstrate good proficiency in jumping to attempt hurdling over any barrier, even a pizza box.

BALANCE → RUNNING → JUMPING → HURDLING

HOW TO TEACH IT:

Note: Running over pizza boxes strategically placed on a grass field is a safe and fun activity for fit, strong, and athletic kids. It is not safe for kids with insufficient balance and strength. Kids that will be successful are easily identified in earlier stations.

1. A short dash course (40 yards) and 5 pizza boxes per lane must be set-up in advance
   • The mini-cardboard modified hurdles are propped and spaced 7-8 adult strides apart
2. Focus on rhythm, posture and balance. This is not a race!
3. The “lead leg” is the leg that goes over the hurdle first. Children do not need to try to lead with one particular leg. The focus is running with rhythm and tall posture. Leap the barrier with either leg forward to maintain rhythm.

CUES:

Clap your hands for an auditory cue to teach and reinforce rhythm.

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

Children practicing this event should be confident and having fun. Hesitation and fearfulness have no place in the hurdles. Allow kids that are not ready an easy opt-out option.
TEMPO WORK (ADVANCED)

APPLY PACING SKILLS
Skills have been introduced in “Find Your Gears” and “Be The Leader.” Now try to use them with structured speed-play, intervals, and repetitions.

FIND YOUR GEARS → LEARN ABOUT RUNNING → BE THE LEADER → TEMPO WORK

Important Note: For competitive teen-agers and grown-ups, this activity is sometimes called a “hard workout.” In RunJumpThrow, this is not a hard workout. This is advanced instruction on the skill of pacing.

HOW TO TEACH IT:

1. This activity can be for children of all fitness levels. The focus is on learning pacing as a skill. An overweight child, for example, would get great benefit from being taught the skill of walking at 20-minute mile pace.

2. This type of training does not need to be done on a track, but it helps. If you don’t have a track, measure out a course on a grass field. An oval with equal sized curves and straights is best (example: a 400m track with 100m straights and 100m curves).
   - It may also be helpful to put cones every 50m to assist in learning pace
   - Ideas on how to measure out a simple out-and-back or loop course are provided in the guidelines for setting up a practice meet section below

3. Three types of advanced running tempo work:
   - **INTERVALS**: bouts of tempo walking or running defined by timed rest periods (example: 3 x 176 yard at medium-hard pace with 2 minutes rest between runs)
   - **REPETITIONS**: high quality walks or runs of a specified distance (example: 2 x 300m near top speed)
   - **FARTLEK**: a more organized version of “Find Your Gears” with bouts of fast running mixed with jogging. Fartlek means “speed play”
     Examples:
     - 20 min jog with a 15 second fast surge every 2 minutes
     - 12 min jog with three one-minute medium-fast surges
     - Run an hourglass shape on a sports field & run in a fast gear on the short lengths & a slow gear on the long lengths

4. Could also be adapted for walking

5. On a 176 yard mini-track a simple guide to pacing:
   - 1 lap in ½ minute = 5 minute mile fast running pace
   - 1 lap in 1 minute = 10 minute mile running pace
   - 1 lap in 2 minutes = 20 minute mile walking pace

CUES:
Reinforce posture and breathing with cues:
   - Stand tall, strong feet, etc.
   - Introduce, reinforce good rhythm

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:
   - Get it right and keep the focus on instruction.
   - Teach pace as a skill.
JUMP THE RIBBON (ADVANCED)

LEARN HOW TO JUMP UP!

Children practice jumping a ribbon held by two partners. Strict rules for a safe landing on the feet are enforced. Be clear, by the nature of the activity, a leader not in control of the situation can quickly find themselves cheering along with the children as Jamie the Jumper tries to leap a nose-high ribbon. That can happen later at the practice meet. Create instructional sessions where kids safely get repetitions clearing very low heights with total success and confidence.

CUES FOR HOW TO TEACH IT:

USE 12-FOOT LONG SECTIONS OF 1 OR 2” CAUTION TAPE AS THE CROSSBAR

HURDLE STYLE

- Approach the ribbon straight-on with a very short run (less than 5 meters)
- Leap off one foot to clear the ribbon and run away a few steps on the other side

SCISSOR STYLE

- Approach from short diagonal (keep it really short, <4m, kids do not need much speed for this activity, jump UP!)
- Jump off outside foot
- Scissor over inside leg first then outside
- Land on feet (no touching the ground with hands to stabilize)

SET-UP

- Demonstrate the activity to the entire group
- Small groups of 6-12 kids break off in the area to practice
  1. All kids take turns holding the ribbon and jumping
  2. Partners holding the ribbon can rotate in with the group for turns at jumping
  3. Partners hold first at knee height and then progress to thigh, hip, navel, chest, neck, and nose height
  4. Try 10 jumps from each side at an easy height and focus on balance and posture and jumping UP!

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- Everyone lands on their feet!
- Groups set up so kids get 10 repetitions each leg safely clearing the ribbon.
- Don’t let it become a contest! Practice jumping UP!
HOMEWORK

MOVES YOU CAN USE TO GET FASTER AND STRONGER

Show kids how to do exercises like the push-up so they can do them at home to grow stronger and get faster! Children learn the skills of a routine that takes no equipment and can be done anywhere.

CUES FOR HOW TO TEACH IT:

- Arrange children so they have personal room and can see the instructor
- Teach the movements with description and demonstration and then allow some practice time offering encouragement and corrective cues

ROUTINE DESIGN

PUSH-UPS AND UPPER BODY VARIATIONS

- Basic technique
  1. Back straight
  2. Hands under shoulders
  3. Spread hands out and put pressure on all five fingers and the palm evenly
- Variations
  1. Push-ups with balance on one hand and point to sky
  2. Dips on bench

CORE OR HIP FLEXOR VARIATIONS

- **V-ups**: Balance on bottom and bring upper body and legs up together to form a V shape
- **Standing and twisting with strong feet**: Head faces same way as chest during rotation

LOWER BODY OR HIP EXTENSION VARIATIONS

- Body weight squat variations
  1. Keep back straight
  2. Keep feet flat on the floor
  3. Feet shoulder width
  4. Toes face slightly out
  5. Drop hips down far enough that upper leg is parallel with the floor
- One-leg squats
  1. The leg that is not on the is held up in-front of the body
  2. Some people call this move the “pistol squat”
- Lunge variations
  1. Forward, sideways, and backwards
  2. Keep knee above foot
  3. Spine stays straight up and down
WHOLE BODY MOVEMENTS

- Mountain climbers
  1. In the four point start position
  2. Support with arms and bring legs forward alternatively in piston-like motion
- Squat thrusts/burpees
  1. Start in a standing position
  2. Reach up
  3. Squat down and touch the floor
  4. Support with arms and shoot legs back to pushup position
  5. Support with arms and bring legs back to original position
  6. Jump up!
  7. Repeat 3 – 10 times

GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- Good posture throughout the moves.
- Leader suggesting modifications so all children can find success.

STATION 19

RANGE OF MOTION

TEST FUNCTIONAL FITNESS

Functional fitness is using the body to do physical tasks. Three tests are introduced that can be done with no equipment.

CUES AND HOW TO TEACH IT:

Spread out in the area so children have enough room to lay down with their arms and legs extended.

THREE MOVES

SIT-AND-REACH TEST This familiar test shows back and hamstring flexibility. Seated with legs straight in front and the feet facing up, children reach with long arms toward their toes.

- Easily reaching beyond the toes shows flexibility
- Tightness in the back and legs not allowing the hands to reach the feet can be worked on at home with daily, easy stretching
- Hold the position for 3-7 seconds

SIT-TO-STAND TEST Children begin seated with their legs crossed. Then they stand up and count how many supports they use to stand. For example if they put one hand on the floor, then their knee, then a hand on the knee, that would be 3 total supports. Try to stand with zero supports.

L7 TEST This is also known as the hurdler’s stretch. The child is seated with one leg in front with the other bent at the knee and back as if they were hurdling.

- Spine perpendicular with ground
Angle of front and back upper leg form an “L” shape
Angle of knee of back leg forms a “7” shape
As homework, children can learn to sit in this position comfortably for an extended period (10 or more minutes)
At events or practice, only hold the stretch for 3-7 seconds

**GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:**
The goal of this activity is not to have perfect functional fitness. The goal is to test functional fitness levels. It’s OK to praise those who already can do it. But getting it right as a leader here means encouraging all children to know themselves and try to improve.

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**STATION 20**

**COOL DOWN: THREE TIMES CLOUD HANDS**

**REINFORCE SKILLS**
Reteach content learned in the posture and breathing instruction as you cool athletes down. This routine marks the end of the practice or clinic and is a time to slow down, relax, and breathe. The routine is a pattern of slow arm motions with deep breathing.

**CUES AND HOW TO TEACH IT:**
Children face the teacher so they can hear and see. Everyone needs at least an arm’s length of personal space.

**ROUTINE (REPEAT 3 TIMES)**
1. Begin in good posture with feet under shoulders
2. Bring hands to front as if holding a ball
3. Slowly lift hands up to face height while inhaling
4. Continue to lift hands to sky while exhaling
5. Inhale and sweep arms wide to the side
6. Exhale and slowly sweep arms down to beginning position

**TEACHING TIP**
- Demonstrate and describe the arm movements and breathing pattern before trying the routine as a group for three repetitions
- It is difficult to teach breathing while teaching running. Teach breathing as a skill separately and then guide children toward better breathing while running.

**GETTING IT RIGHT! WHAT TO LOOK FOR:**
- Everyone synchronized and paying attention!
- No fidgeting!
- Face and shoulders relaxed.
- Slow, controlled movements and deep breathing to stimulate oxygen flow.
This section describes how to use the stations to put together a single-day event. Administrators may choose to execute a single-day event as part of their block lesson plan, below.

**FIRST, CONSIDER WHAT YOU HAVE TO WORK WITH**

**FACILITY**
Indoor or Outdoor?

**DATE**
Consider putting together RJT events at places and times when a lot of kids will already be together (expos, camps, church events, track meets, etc.)

**TIMEFRAME**

**GREAT FLEXIBILITY FOR EVENT ORGANIZERS**

**A VERY SMALL EVENT** could be 2 college track stars doing a guest appearance for 45 minutes at the local 5th grade PE class.

- This small timeframe also works well with summer free-lunch programs in community parks and schools.
- Examples
  1. 45 min Example 1: Posture & Breathing, Balance Moves, Loosen Up from Head to Toe
  2. 45 min Example 2: Posture & Breathing, Loosen Up from Head to Toe, Dynamic Warmup, Ready, Set, Go!, 3x Cloud Hands
  3. 45 min Example 3: Posture & Breathing, Walking Find-Your-Gears, Walking Tempo-Work to Learn 20 min mile walking pace

**5-4 HOURS** is a good timeframe for an event. This timeframe fits well into other events. For example, organize a 3 hour RJT event at the finish line of a local marathon.

- In 3 hours there can be 5-7 stations, a rest, and then a practice competition.
  1. **3 hour example 1**
     1. Posture & Breathing and Loosening-Up as a big group
     2. Dynamic Warmup as big group
     3. Split big group in half for two 15 minute stations
        - Learn about Jumping
        - Ready, Set, Go!
     4. Back to big group for 5 times easy rhythmic running over pizza box hurdles
     5. Practice meet
        - Standing long jump
        - 10m speed bound
        - Short dashes
        - Shuttle relay
  2. **3 hour example 2**
     1. Circle-warm up (combine Locomotives and Loosening-Up moves)
     2. Learning about Running
     3. Break into two groups
        - Be The Leader
        - Learning about Throwing
     4. Practice meet
        - Overhand throw
        - One mile walk/run (or, 12 min. walk/run)
3 hour example 3
1. Lesson on Rules
2. Posture & Breathing
3. Loosening-Up and then Dynamic Warmup
4. Find Your Gears on 176 yard track
5. Ready, Set, Go!
6. Fun With Relays
7. Learning about Jumping
8. Practice meet
   - Short dash
   - 5 hops for distance (left leg, right leg, both legs)
   - 4 x 44 yard relay

A SINGLE-DAY EVENT could be quite large, lasting 6-8 hours and involving hundreds of kids and adults.

6-8 hour Example
1. Build-a-Track (with help from kids and parents getting there early)
2. Whole group
   - Posture & Breathing
   - Loosening-Up
   - Dynamic Warmup
3. Break into four groups for 15 min. stations
   - Learning about Running
   - Ready, Set, Go!
   - Fun With Relays
   - Learning about Throwing
4. Homework: lesson on general strength routines
5. Range of Motion Assessment
6. Lunch Break
7. Practice meet
   - Dashes
   - Mid-distance run for pace
   - Relays
   - Jumping events
   - Overhand throw

BUILD-A-TRACK:
- A typical track is 400m and is designed with two 100m straits and two 100m curves
- Scale this shape down to kids’ size by making a 10 lap to the mile, 176 yard track
- A 176 yard track has two 44 yard straights and two 44 yard curves
- Make the track by setting two radius points 44 yards apart
- The curves are semi-circles with a 14 yard radius
- Use 5-7 plastic chairs or big cones to make the shape of the curves
- Put a few cones or chairs on the straight too
GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICE MEETS

INSTRUCTIONS

- The main purpose of a practice meet at a single-day RJT event is to have fun and practice the skills.
- Have a plan
  1. At least one adult is needed for every 8 kids. More adults are needed to individually support kids with special needs.
  2. Have any equipment and facilities arranged.
  3. Start and finish on time and stay on schedule.
- Introductory running events do not need to be timed or precisely measured
  1. Dashes should be kept 44 yards or less
     - Make a clear starting line and finish line
     - Lane lines are not needed but teach kids not to try to block each other!
  2. Children ages 7-12 do not need to practice long sprints
  3. Middle-distance and distance events should focus on demonstrating the skill of pacing rather than on intense effort.
     The question is how smooth and easy can you walk a 20 minute mile not walk a mile as fast as you can.

HOW TO EXECUTE A PRACTICE MEET

Create challenges for practice meets to test jumping skill not ability. For RunJumpThrow, we suggest any of the following events to be held.

SPEED HOP For rhythm with good posture

DOUBLE LEG, STANDING BROAD JUMP May or may not be measured

- If a tape is not used, kids can try to jump farther on each try based on a small marker.
- When measuring, make sure the start is consistent (no gather step).

SCISSOR JUMP Try to scissor jump each leg 10 times without hitting the ribbon, rather than jumping to failure. Children choose the height they wish to jump.

OVERHAND THROW The overhand throw is a chance for kids to heave a ball as far as possible with less concern for aim.

- A big open space is needed.
- There is no catching in this activity
  1. Allow the ball to land and roll.
  2. Volunteers retrieve ball and bring them back or the thrower can chase after the ball and bring it back as part of the activity.
  3. 3-10 full throws per kid on one day is enough.

SHORT SPRINT Have kids run from point A to point B, no more than 50 meters. Run in groups of 5-10 kids of similar age at a time.

MIDDLE DISTANCE RUN

- If a track is available, run 400-800 meters (1-2 laps). Children may run in groups of up to 20.
- If no track is available, “Build a Track.” Accuracy of the track is not important.

RELAYS

4-person relays. Run a shuttle relay (3-4 kids per relay) or traditional relay, with kids slapping hands to “hand-off.” The traditional relay should be one lap of a regulation track or 1-2 laps of a “Build a Track.”
The two charts below are examples of how the content may be programmed over the course of 5-6 weeks for a comprehensive track & field skills unit. The scope and sequence is based on a timeframe of 45 minute blocks meeting either once or twice per week. Every lesson starts with a posture and breathing lesson and loosening-up from head-to-toe. Every lesson ends with a cool-down of coordinated slow movements and focused breathing.

**CHART 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DAY 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Find Your Gears!, Locomotives, Dynamic Warmup, Ready, Set, Go!, Range-of-motion Assessment, Imagination Station, Homework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Build-a-track, Locomotives, Learning about Running, Be The Leader, Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Locomotives, Tempo Work, Learning about Throwing, Learning about Jumping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Balance, Dynamic, Ready, Set, Go!, Pizza Box Hurdles, Scissor High Jump, Lesson on Rules, Imagination Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Practice meet: dash, jumps, throw, relays, rhythm-pace run/walk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHART 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DAY 1</th>
<th>DAY 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Find Your Gears!, Dynamic Warmup, Ready, Set, Go!, Imagination Station</td>
<td>Locomotives, Learning about Running, Range-of-Motion Assessment, Homework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Balance, Learning about Running, Be The Leader</td>
<td>Locomotives, Dynamic Warmup, Pizza Box Hurdles, Scissor High Jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Ready, Set, Go!, Tempo Work, Learning about Throwing, Learning about Jumping</td>
<td>Week 3 Practice Meet! Fun with Relays, Overhand Throw, Standing Long Jump, Sit-to-Stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dynamic Warmup, Pizza Box Hurdles, Advanced Homework</td>
<td>Dynamic Warmup, Advanced Balance, Scissor High Jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Locomotives, Be the Leader, Lesson on Rules, Imagination Station.</td>
<td>Practice meet: dash, jumps, throw, relays, Rhythm-pace run/walk</td>
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</tbody>
</table>