

Evaluating and improving performance in gymnastics and athletics essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

From the question above I am able to see that there are four important connections which need to be addressed when evaluating and improving performance.

Underlying these big connections there are little connections that have similarities and differences with gymnastics and athletics. For example; concentrating on the fitness element, there are many attributes which are similar in athletics and gymnastics such as stamina, agility, flexibility and power. In this assignment I will be concentrating on balance, and strength in both gymnastics and athletics and offering ideas to how these can be evaluated and improved. Physical Education develops pupils' physical competence and confidence, and their ability to use these to perform in a range of activities including gymnastics and athletics. In Key Stage 2 pupils should be taught the knowledge, skills and understanding through five areas of activity.

Pupils must study dance, games and gymnastic and two activity areas from swimming and water safety, athletics, and outdoor and adventurous activities. Balance" Balance is the ability to retain the centre of mass of the body above the base of support. It is the awareness of the body's position in space and depends on the co-ordination between ears, brain, skeleton and muscles" (Davis, Bull, Roscoe, Roscoe, 1996, Pg 118). Balance is used extensively in all aspects of gymnastics at all ability levels. It could involve individual work, partner work or large groups where the support of others is needed. For example; balance is needed when performing sequences on a beam or at a more basic level when rolling, turning and jumping on the floor.

As mentioned balance is an essential aspect of gymnastics, in both floor work and apparatus. Through gymnastics young children should develop an understanding of their body and their own limitations through movement. When conducting basic balances such as balancing on one foot and one hand, or walking across a bench they are learning to control their bodies and ensuring their centre of gravity is over the area of support. Balance is also required in athletics although not to the same extent as gymnastics.

Balance is an essential skill required for both track and field events. In order to run a track event at any distance you need to be able to distribute your body mass evenly so you do not fall over whilst running. When throwing a discus or a shot put balance is required to keep control of the body so you don't fall over the line, it is also needed when recovering from the action. Balance can be evaluated in many different ways such as observing a child perform a planned sequence. By looking at the accuracy and control of individual movements and overall body control one is able to gain a good indication to how well the child is able to gain and keep a sense of balance.

Many young children may appear to be 'clumsy' as they have not yet gained the complex skills and learnt how to put them together in order to balance. However through gymnastics and practising basic skills such as running, jumping and skipping children will be able to gain the co-ordination, flexibility and body strength so that they are able to balance. Strength" Strength is defined as the force exerted by muscle groups during a single maximal muscle contraction" (Davis, Bull, Roscoe, Roscoe, 1996, Pg 117).

Strength is an aspect of fitness and is closely linked with endurance, stamina, and power. It is an important aspect in gymnastics but perhaps not <https://assignbuster.com/evaluating-and-improving-performance-in-gymnastics-and-athletics-essay/>

so much in children at key stage 2. Children will need strength in gymnastics when performing sequences which involve jumping, rolling and doing headstands or handstands.

At a higher level gymnasts will need upper body strength in order to perform on the rings and the pommel horse and lower body strength which is needed when performing jumps or when moving from apparatus to floor work.

Strength is vital in all areas of athletics and with improvement enables one to work hard over a long period of time. At a high level athletes will use strength when running, doing hurdles or during a field event such as throwing the javelin. At a more basic level, one will use strength when running, jumping and throwing.

There are many ways in which strength can be tested such as conducting a vertical jump to test the strength of the legs. It is important to note that in order to test strength accurately a person must use 100% effort and with children in key stage 2 this can prove difficult. This problem could be overcome if with assistance the children set their own tasks as they are more aware of what they are able to do. The children could then evaluate their activity and maybe make it more difficult if they need to. In order to improve strength at any level lots of continuous practise is needed, depending on the activity a person could concentrate on one muscle group or several. Strength could be improved with the use of equipment such as weights or by using the human body, for example; jumping would improve leg strength and throwing and headstands or handstands would improve the strength in the arms.

Conclusion Although I have only concentrated on two specific areas of fitness it is important to note that skills, tactics, compositional ideas and fitness and health are all strongly linked and are important areas in gymnastics and athletics. For example; when performing a jump balance and strength are both needed. If I look at a gymnastic sequence on the floor I can see that specific skills are needed such as conducting a headstand, tactics are needed when deciding where and when to start the sequence. Compositional ideas are needed when organising equipment and good health and fitness is needed in order to conduct the sequence effectively. Even though all the connections in which I have mentioned are apparent in both gymnastics and athletics they do not always occur to the same extent. For example; speed is extremely important in a 100m sprint but not so important when moving across a beam in gymnastics.

In order for a child's performance to improve, their work needs to be evaluated so that weaknesses can be monitored. I believe it is important that the children learn to assess and analyse each others work so they are able to gain ideas and 'spot' weaknesses in order to improve their own work.