

Gymnastics Mastery with Max the Monkey

Learning objective: To understand, sequence, and justify the biomechanics of basic gymnastic movements, focusing on balance, tension, and control.

Max the Monkey is designing a gymnastics routine, but he needs to ensure the movements are sequenced correctly to keep his balance. Look at the movements in the 'Questions' section. Sort them into the correct order of a sequence, then explain the importance of the technical elements required for each move.

Word bank: tension · balance · extension · sequence · transition · alignment · posture · stability

1. Max wants to perform a tuck jump, a pencil roll, and a bridge. Order these three movements from start to finish and justify why the 'pencil roll' is the safest movement to place first in a beginner sequence. (3 marks)

2. Explain why 'tension' is vital when holding a steady pose, such as an arabesque. What might happen to a gymnast's balance if they lose this tension? (3 marks)

3. Compare and contrast a 'tuck' position with a 'star' position. How does the distribution of weight change the gymnast's stability? (3 marks)

4. Max is trying to improve his transition between a forward roll and a standing shape. Suggest one way he could ensure a smooth, controlled movement rather than a jerky one. (2 marks)

5. If Max were to perform a routine on a balance beam, justify why keeping his eyes focused on a fixed point ahead would improve his performance. (2 marks)

6. What might happen to the safety and flow of a routine if a gymnast rushes the 'extension' part of their jump? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a storyboard of three gymnastic shapes in a sequence. Label each shape with the correct terminology (e.g., tuck, pike, or star) and draw an arrow showing the direction of movement.



Extension challenge: Design a 6-move routine for Max. Create a table showing each move, the muscle groups you think are being used, and a 'difficulty rating' from 1 to 10. Explain your reasoning for your difficulty ratings.