

Mastering Movement: A Gymnastics Challenge with Max

Learning objective: To develop an understanding of gymnastic sequences, body tension, and the principles of balance and stability.

Read each question carefully and apply your knowledge of physical education. For the practical application questions, think like Max the monkey—break down the movements into smaller, logical steps.

Max the monkey is preparing for a gymnastics showcase. He knows that a successful performance relies on more than just jumping; it requires precise control, a steady centre of gravity, and smooth transitions between movements.

Word bank: tension · sequence · centre of gravity · extension · balance · symmetry · transition · composition

1. Max is holding a 'statue' pose on one leg. Explain why keeping his core muscles tight (tension) makes it easier for him to maintain his balance. (2 marks)

2. When moving from a forward roll into a balance, why is it important to consider the 'transition' phase? Describe how a gymnast ensures this movement remains fluid. (2 marks)

3. Compare and contrast a 'tuck' position with a 'pike' position. How does the body's shape change the centre of gravity in each? (3 marks)

4. If Max wants to create a sequence that demonstrates symmetry, what must he ensure happens with his body parts on either side of his spine? (2 marks)

5. Justify your answer: Why is it safer to land a jump with bent knees rather than locking your legs straight upon impact? (3 marks)

6. What might happen to a gymnast's performance if they do not maintain body tension during a travelling movement like a cartwheel? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a storyboard showing a three-part gymnastics sequence. Label each frame with the name of the movement (e.g., balance, travel, roll) and draw an arrow to show the direction of movement.



Extension challenge: Design a 30-second gymnastics routine for a partner. Write down your sequence using technical terms from the word bank. Then, evaluate your routine: Which part of your sequence is the most physically challenging, and how could you modify it to improve your stability?