




## A Learning Progression for the Overhand Throw

**Background:** Based the following learning progression, a series of curriculum resources (e.g., teaching charts of essential skill elements, skill rubrics) are provided to assist school districts in implementing the newly revised physical education curriculum. These are valuable resources are found throughout this document.

Kindergarten	First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade
(1) Demonstrates the emerging skill of the overhand throw with one or more essential elements present (e.g., correct stance, shift in body weight from back foot to front foot).	(1) Demonstrates the overhand throwing pattern with partner with two or more essential elements present (e.g., correct stance, shift in body weight from back foot to front foot).	(1) Demonstrates the ability to use an overhand throw for distance while maintaining good balance and follow- through with three or more essential elements present.	(1) Demonstrates how to throw to a moving partner at varying distances with all essential elements present. (2) Applies the skill in small-sided lead up games.	Demonstrates how to throw to a stationary partner, while moving, at varying distances with all essential elements present. (2) Applies the skill with partners, drills, and lead-up games.	Demonstrates how to throw to a moving partner, while moving, at varying distances with all essential elements present. (2) Uses and applies throwing skill rubrics to increase skill development.



Sixth Grade	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade	Ninth Grade	Tenth Grade and Up
(1) Demonstrates an overhand throw with power/distance for accuracy (e.g., throwing a ball with accuracy and force while guarded by like-skilled opponent). (2) Knows and applies a variety of overhand throwing rubrics to increase both personal performance and in others.	(1) Demonstrates the use of the overhand throwing pattern from one sport to another (e.g., able to transfer the mechanics of the overhand throw to a tennis or volleyball spike). (2) Knows and applies throwing rubrics to improve the quality of player response.	(1) Combines and applies the overhand throwing skill to demonstrate proficiency in one lifetime sport or activity (e.g., demonstrates the basic skills needed to play tennis at the local recreation center). (2) Monitors the improvement of the overhand throwing pattern (i.e., tennis serve) as applied in one lifetime sport or activity.	(1) Combines and applies the overhand throwing skill to demonstrate proficiency in two lifetime sports or activities. (2) Based on 8th grade results, monitors and sets goals to improve performance of the overhand throwing pattern (i.e., tennis serve and volleyball serve) as applied in two lifetime sports or activities.	(1) Combines and applies the overhand throwing skill to demonstrate increased proficiency in two or more lifetime sports or activities. (2) Based on 9th grade results, monitors and sets goals to improve performance of sport specific overhand throwing patterns as applied in two or more lifetime sports or activities.

# Manipulative Skills Essential Elements<sup>1</sup>

Skill	Skill Elements/Teaching Cues
 <p><b>Catching</b></p>	<p><b>Description:</b> Catching is a skill where the hands are used to control an object like a ball, Frisbee, or beanbag.</p> <p><b>Essential Elements:</b> The student should remember –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ___ Body faces the incoming throw</li> <li>2. ___ Knees bent, feet shoulder-width apart</li> <li>3. ___ Thumbs face together for balls above the waist, thumbs face away for balls below the waist</li> <li>4. ___ “Soft” hands reach for ball, absorb impact, bring ball toward chest</li> </ol>
 <p><b>Throwing</b></p>	<p><b>Description:</b> Throwing is a skill where the hand(s) is used to propel an object like a ball, Frisbee, or beanbag.</p> <p><b>Essential Elements:</b> The student should remember –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ___ Body sideways, non-throwing shoulder faces the target</li> <li>2. ___ Elbow high</li> <li>3. ___ Step in opposition</li> <li>4. ___ Rotate hips with follow-through</li> </ol>
 <p><b>Kicking</b></p>	<p><b>Description:</b> Kicking is a skill where the foot is used to propel an object like a soccer ball or football.</p> <p><b>Essential Elements:</b> The student should remember –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ___ Place non-kicking foot beside the ball</li> <li>2. ___ Contact ball just below the bottom half with instep (shoelaces)</li> <li>3. ___ Lean backwards slightly</li> <li>4. ___ Follow-through with leg – foot follows ball</li> </ol>

<sup>1</sup> The following instructional resources have been reprinted from Teaching PE Power Standards with kind permission from the Great Activities Publishing Company, PO Box 51158, Durham, North Carolina 27717. Permission granted for individual North Carolina school use only. Copyright, 2010.

# Manipulative Skills Essential Elements

Skill	Skill Elements/Teaching Cues
 <p><b>Striking</b></p>	<p><b>Description:</b> Striking is a skill where an implement (e.g., bat, racquet) is used to hit an object like a softball or tennis ball.</p> <p><b>Two-Hand Hitting (Bat) Essential Elements:</b> The student should remember –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ___ Body sideways, weight on rear foot</li> <li>2. ___ Small step with lead foot</li> <li>3. ___ Rotate hips toward pitcher</li> <li>4. ___ Swing through ball</li> </ol> <p><b>One-Hand Forehand (Paddle/Racquet) Essential Elements:</b> The student should remember –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ___ Body sideways, paddle back (open door)</li> <li>2. ___ Small step with lead foot, paddle swings forward (close door)</li> <li>3. ___ Rotate hips to face forward</li> <li>4. ___ Swing through ball</li> </ol>
 <p><b>Dribbling</b></p>	<p><b>Description:</b> Dribbling is a skill where the hand (as in basketball) or the foot (as in soccer) is used to control the ball.</p> <p><b>Basketball Dribble Elements:</b> The student should remember –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ___ Ball on side and front of the body</li> <li>2. ___ Use finger pads to push ball (yo-yo)</li> <li>3. ___ Keep ball at waist height or lower</li> <li>4. ___ Eyes look forward</li> </ol> <p><b>Soccer Dribble Elements:</b> The student should remember</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ___ Kick ball gently with inside or outside of foot (hockey stick)</li> <li>2. ___ Ball is directly in front of body when kicked</li> <li>3. ___ Eyes front, stay close (2-4 feet) to the ball</li> <li>4. ___ Move with ball at a speed slightly faster than walking</li> </ol>

# THROW



## Throwing Skill Elements

1. \_\_\_ Non-throwing shoulder faces the target
2. \_\_\_ Elbow high
3. \_\_\_ Step in opposition
4. \_\_\_ Rotate hips with follow-through

**Description:** This is a short review of the essential elements (teaching cues) for the overhand throw. This basic manipulative skill is used as the foundation for many games and activities found at the middle school level.

## What is the Most Important Throwing Cue?<sup>2</sup>

Based on a bit of “action research,” numerous elementary and middle school physical education teachers say the most important teaching cue for a strong overhand throw is reinforcing the need to reach back - “**pick an apple from an apple tree.**” Here’s a typical 6-point throwing checklist for your consideration:



1. **Swing Down, Around & Back:** “Swing throwing arm down and around (make a “smiley face”) and reach far back “pick an apple from an apple tree,”
2. **As You... Turn Side to Target:** “Pivot body so that the non-throwing shoulder is facing the intended target,”
3. **Step:** “Step with opposition, place lead foot so it points toward the target,”
4. **As You... Rotate Hips:** “Rotate forward so the body is facing the intended target,”
5. **Throw:** Swing arm forward, releasing the ball at about 2:00 o’clock,
6. **Follow Through:** Arm moves forward and across body.

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<sup>2</sup> From Teaching PE Power Standards for Grades 6-8 (Great Activities Publishing Company).

**Other Throwing Cues:** If you have been teaching for a while, you most likely have your own personal method for teaching an overhand throw. Here are a few simple throwing rhymes and cues to consider:

- “Elbow low, it’ll go slow.”  
“Elbow high, watch it fly!”
- “The shoulder points,”  
“Get your hand back and high,”  
“Step and turn,”  
“Watch it fly!”
- “Thumb to thigh,”  
“Elbow’s high,”  
“Finger’s to the sky,”  
“Wave bye-bye.”
- “T-position,”  
“Rotate,”  
“Step,”  
“Throw!”

# The Overhand Throw



## Throwing Skill Elements

1. \_\_\_ Make a “smiley face” and “pick an apple,” as you...
2. \_\_\_ Turn side to target
3. \_\_\_ Step with opposition, as you...
4. \_\_\_ Rotate hips to face forward
5. \_\_\_ Swing arm forward, releasing the ball (2:00)
6. \_\_\_ Follow through (arm moves forward and across body)

# Assessing the Overhand Throw



## **Do you know the six throwing skill elements?**

1. \_\_\_\_ Make a “smiley face” and “pick an apple,” as you...
2. \_\_\_\_ Turn side to target
3. \_\_\_\_ Step with opposition, as you...
4. \_\_\_\_ Rotate hips to face forward
5. \_\_\_\_ Swing arm forward, releasing the ball (2:00)
6. \_\_\_\_ Follow through (arm moves forward and across body)



## A Review of Throwing Skill Elements



### Throwing Cues:

1. Bring throwing hand down and back
2. Align non-throwing side of body towards target
3. Elbow high
4. Step with opposition
5. Rotate hips
6. Follow through – hand to opposite knee

# Physical Education Throwing Rubric

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Partner: \_\_\_\_\_

**Assessing Directions:** Score yourself based on your consistency performing the critical elements of catching a softball/baseball. At the end of each self check, think about what you can do to improve the next time. Ask your partner to call out any teaching cues you might need to help you remember.

**Scoring:**      4 = Consistently performed this  
                     3 = Most times  
                     2 = Usually performed this  
                     1 = Sometimes performed this

Teaching Cue	1 <sup>st</sup> Self Check Date: _____	2 <sup>nd</sup> Self Check Date: _____	3 <sup>rd</sup> Self Check Date: _____
“Pick the apple”			
“Turn to target”			
“Step with opposition”			
“Elbow leads”			
“Release at 2 o’clock”			
“Follow through”			

**1) List a performance improvement goal following your self-check assessment #1.**

Example: *I will focus on releasing the ball at 2 o’clock so my throws will reach my target.*

**2a) List a performance improvement goal following your self-check assessment #2.**

**2b) What improvements did you make from assessment #1?**

**3a) List a performance improvement goal following assessment #3.**

**3b) What improvements did you make from assessment #2?**

**4) What overall improvements did you make from this assessment experience?**

**5) How did your partner help you?**

## **SOFTBALL SKILLS RUBRIC (Student Feedback Checklist)**

**Name:**

**Partner's Name:**

### **Catching**

**Dates Observed by Partner**

- ☐ Above the waist – thumbs in
- ☐ Below the waist – thumbs out
- ☐ Uses both hands to catch
- ☐ Moves to get in front of ball
- ☐ Catches while moving
- ☐ Catches a fly ball

### **Catching Ground Balls**

- ☐ Ready position
- ☐ Can catch rolling ball
- ☐ Can catch rolling ball, left and right
- ☐ Can field ball and throw

### **Throwing**

- ☐ "Smiley face" to high elbow
- ☐ Turns body out – non-throwing shoulder points toward target
- ☐ Steps with opposition
- ☐ Rotates hips to face forward
- ☐ Follow-through to opposite side
- ☐ Can throw for distance
- ☐ Can throw to moving target
- ☐ Can throw to stationary target while moving
- ☐ Can throw to moving target while moving

### **Batting**

- ☐ Grip – middle knuckles aligned
- ☐ Stance, hands by back shoulder
- ☐ Short stride with lead foot
- ☐ Hip rotation – finishes with belly button to pitcher
- ☐ Contact ball in front of plate

# Physical Education Volleyball Rubric<sup>3</sup>

**Name of Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Assessing Directions:** Using the skill checklists below, monitor your progress on learning the volleyball spike and block.

## The Spike

Skill Element	4 Consistently	3 Most times	2 Usually	1 Sometimes
Uses a 2-3 step approach				
Jumps (2 feet) with arms down and behind body				
Arms come up with body, hitting arm past ear behind head				
Hitting arm swings forward at highest point of jump and contacts ball				
Ball is contacted with heel of open hand, wrist is snapped				
Lands on both feet				

## The Block

Skill Element	4 Consistently	3 Most times	2 Usually	1 Sometimes
Ready position near net				
Knees and arms bent in ready position				
Tracks spiker's movements				
Jumps directly in front of net slightly after spiker				
Arms up, hands open, fingers spread reaching over net				
Wrists snap to block the ball				

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<sup>3</sup> From Teaching PE Power Standards for High School (Great Activities Publishing Company).