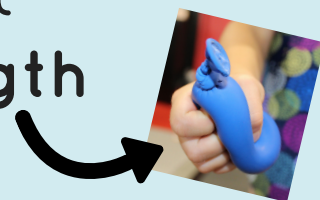


MONKEY WEEK

Get Ready to Monkey Around!

Skill of Focus: Grip Strength



This week we are all about monkey swings, holds, and, most importantly grip strength on bars. The gymnasts will be squeezing things, rolling things up and holding on tight to the bars in an effort to build up that grip strength.

Young children are proportionally very top heavy, which can make supporting their own body weight a challenge, especially on bars. This is why we are focusing on stations that promote strength rather than supporting their whole body weight.

Stuff you May Need:

In possibly the weirdest edition of "stuff you may need", we are going to build some "sensory balloons", or "texture balloons" for our gymnasts this week. These are balloons filled with stuff, so the gymnasts can squeeze and build up their grip strength. You will notice your kids who LOVE sensory input are the ones who will squeeze the hardest (it feels great for them).



Other Stuff You May Need:

It would be helpful to have some kind of squeezy stress balls as well. You can find these either on your desk (ha!), the dollar store or an office supply store. The gymnasts will love them even more if they have eyes that pop out or light up.



How to Make Sensory Balloons



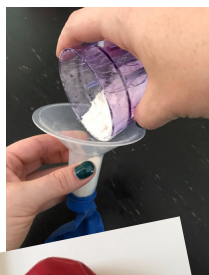
Get Some Balloons (Not the Cheap Ones)

This is not the time for dollar store balloons. How do I know this? OH! One of the balloons popped mid week. Luckily it was the flour one, so it was a quick vacuum up and done. I think if I had slightly higher quality balloons, we would have been fine.



Use a Funnel to Fill Balloons With Stuff That Feels Cool & Has Different Textures

You want each balloon to have its own 'feeling'. Filling each balloon was a unique challenge, but totally doable! I filled mine with: flour, smooth rocks, play dough and sand. I was conscious about if the balloon popped, I didn't want a big clean up, plus it needed to be safe for kids (non toxic). But, some of you are more brave than I am and here is a list of 'other stuff' to put in your balloons: corn meal, hair gel, popcorn seeds, rice.



**Ta Da! Kids Will Love Squeezing,
You Will Love Building Up Their
Grip Strength for Bars!**





Rotation One: Monkey Week

We begin to 'monkey around' with some solid grip strength stations in rotation one. Your kids will LOVE the sensory balloon station! When we used this lesson plan, the kids loved squeezing the balloons so much, we actually had to move the balloons to the Bosu ball station so they could have more time to squeeze!

Warm Up: **No More Monkeys**

Have all of your gymnasts hanging on the bar(s). Sing the five little monkeys song, but change the words to "Five (or how many kids are in your class) little monkeys swinging on the bar, one fell off (they all fall off) and bonked her head (everyone does a safety roll). Coach (your name) called the doctor (everyone uses their foot phone to call the doctor) and the doctor said (everyone yells) 'NO MORE MONKEYS SWINGING ON THE BAR!' Repeat the song until you've counted all the way down.

Slight modification: You can sing in a circle doing "jumping on the bed" instead of "swinging on the bars". Each time, change what type of jump you are practicing (tuck, straddle, turns, etc).

Ex: 5 little monkeys jumping on the bed (gymnasts are doing straddle jumps) one fell off and bumped her head (everyone does a safety roll) Coach (your name) called the doctor (foot phone)....etc.

1

COACH'S SPOTTING STATION



4-Kinder: Gymnasts push up to front support. Gymnasts cast back to sit on the air barrel. Roll under the bar to stand up. Extra challenge for Kinder: Cast back to bounce bum on the air barrel and push back up to front support.

Monkey Bounce and Swing



PT (and if you do not have an air barrel): Push to front support. 3 and Up: Front support, then tummy roll with 'motorcycle hands'.

2



Squeezy Balloons

PT & 3s: Gymnasts step up to beam, squat by each set of plates and squeeze the balloon. Gymnasts move the balloon to the other side of the beam.

4-Kinder: Same at PT, but straight jump onto the beam, and straight jump to the next set of plates (instead of walking).

3



Hoop Roll Balance

All: Gymnasts roll the hoop while walking down the beam. At the end, gymnasts put their hoop in the pile and jump into the hoop. Extra challenge for older gymnasts: Straddle jump dismount into the hoop.

(PT) Peek a Boo How Do Ya Do?



Parent and child stand back to back in a straddle stand. Reach down, say "peek a boo!", then grab hands, hold them and say "how do you do?" (like they're shaking hands). This station is guaranteed giggles for both parent and child!

4



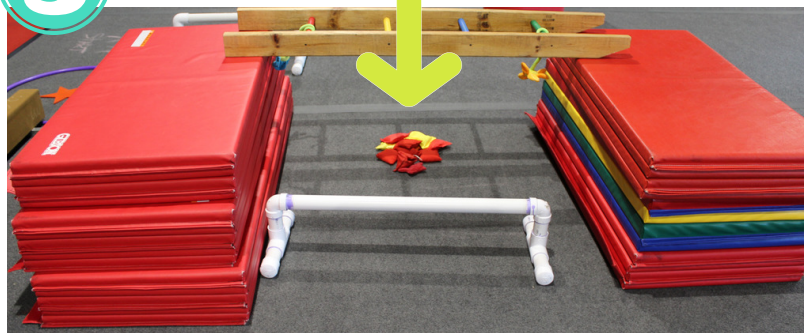
Monkey Runs

PT: See Modification

3-Kinder: Gymnasts get into push up position with their feet on the mat stack. Gymnasts run their feet down (onto the floor) and back up on to the mat stack, making "Oh, Oh, Ah, Ah!" Monkey noise.

Fire!

5

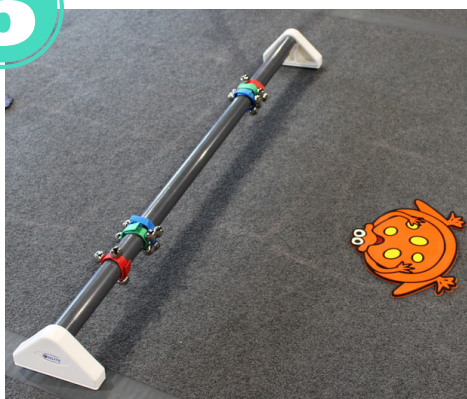


Swinging From Branch to Branch

PT & 3s: Gymnasts put their feet on the single rail bar and hands on the ladder. Gymnasts pull their bodies off of the ground and hold for "oh oh ah ah (monkey sound)".

4-Kinder: Gymnasts put their feet on the single rail and hands on the ladder. Gymnasts walk their hands down the ladder, keeping their backs up off of the 'fire'.

6



Monkey Toe Ding a Lings

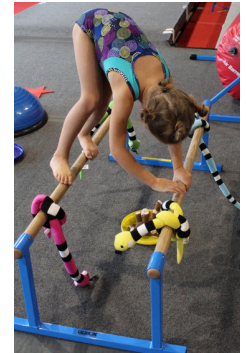
PT & 3s: Gymnasts get into a push up position with hands on the bar. Using one hand at a time, to shoot the bells from one side to the other.

4-Kinder: Gymnasts lay on their back holding the bar. Gymnasts pull their body up in straddle to ring the bells with their monkey toes.

7



Turn all
the way
around



Monkey Tornado

All: Gymnasts climb up to pbars with both hands on one bar and both feet on the other bar. Gymnasts move their bodies in a circle, looking at the monkeys below.

8



Monkey Grip Squeeze and Bounce

All: Gymnasts bounce or stand on the Bosu ball while squeezing the squeezey balls.



Rotation Two



Rotation Two: Monkey Week

Skill of Focus: Grip Strength

In this rotation, we get to work on bars! On station one, I totally understand that not everyone has access to a sweet scooter board. The general purpose of the station, though, is to create a downward pull where the gymnasts have to hang on tight, thus working their grip strength. You can substitute the scooter board for an octagon if needed.



1



COACH'S SPOTTING STATION

Scooter Swing

PT: Try this station the same way as 3-Kinder, but very slowly. If gymnasts aren't into it, let them sit on the scooter and slide down.

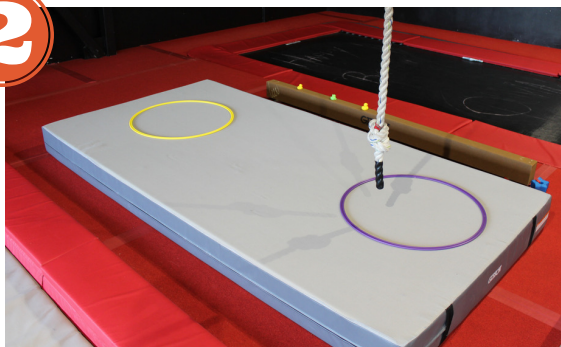
3-Kinder: Gymnasts put their feet on the scooter, swing out and roll it down the wedge. Not everyone has a scooter (but you should consider it, they're really cool!), you can use a big octagon roly mat instead or put a parachute on the wedge and gymnasts can try to slide their legs down that.



Happy Gym Hot Tip

If you'd like to get a scooter, go to flaghouse.com (they're about \$19 each).

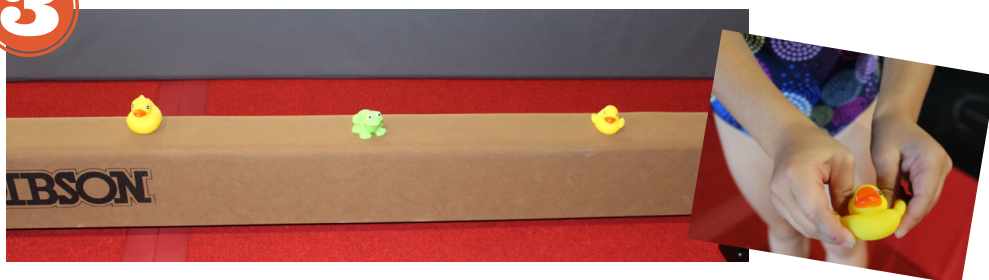
2



George of the Jungle Swinging on the Vine

All: Gymnasts monkey swing through the jungle to land in the hoop.

3



Squeeze the Duck

Pt & 3s: Gymnasts squeeze the ducky, put it down and step over it.

4-Kinder: Same as PT, but straight jump over the duckies.



DOUBLE DUTY BEAM!



This beam pulls double duty this week, serving as two separate stations.

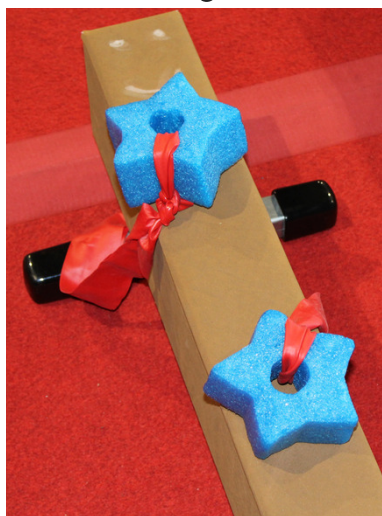
Her hands are working hard!



4

Call the Doctor Station

All: Mama called the doctor and the doctor said...
Gymnasts pull the phone to their ear to call the doctor.



5



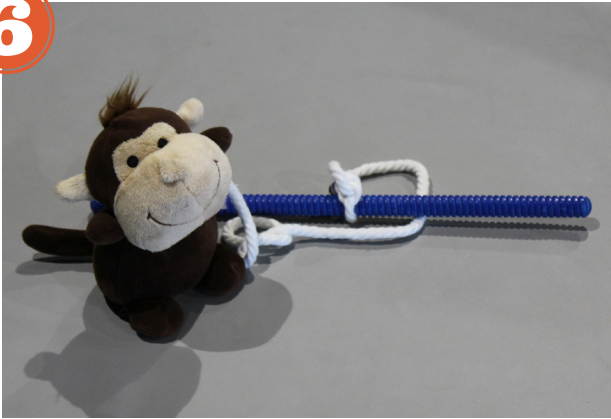
Monkey Arm Handstand

All: Gymnasts do a wall crawl handstand and tickle their armpits while making their best monkey sound.

Happy
GYMNASTICS



6



Roll Up the Monkey

All: Gymnasts roll the monkey up the vine. Make sure to show how to roll using their wrists rather than their fingers.

7



Swing & Kick

PT & 3: Gymnasts swing on the bar and try to kick the light up wands. Note: Make sure the stuff that hangs down is close enough for their short legs!
4-Kinder: Gymnasts pike swing and kick the light up wands.

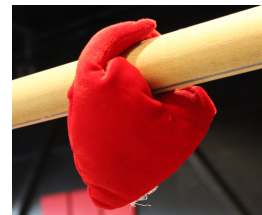
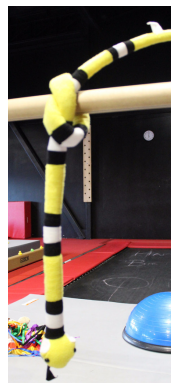
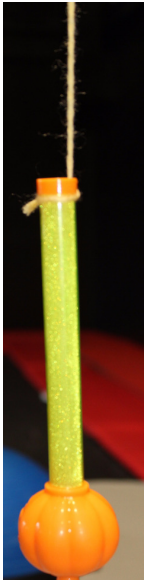


Happy Gym Hot Tip

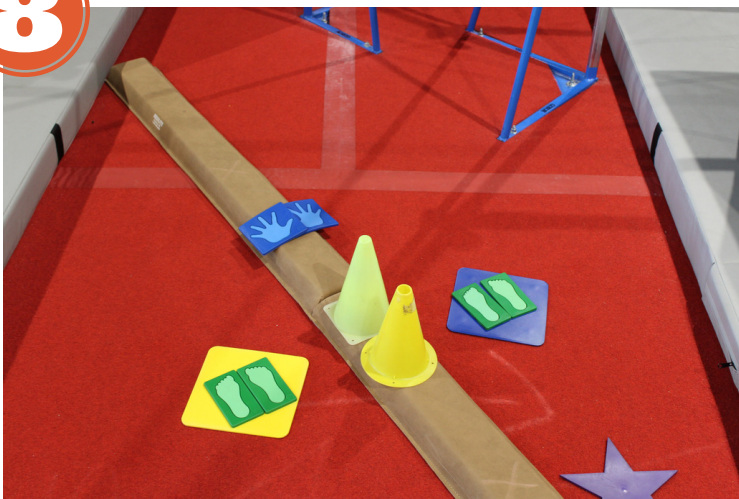


Other Cool Stuff to Hang From the Bar

When you hang things from the bar, it creates a cool target for kids to get a BIG swing going in order to kick it. This is an ideal station if you've got a small set of uneven bars. Here are some other ideas for things to hang:



8



Bananas Monkey Jump

PT-3s: Lay 'bananas' (cones) down so they aren't so tall. Gymnasts monkey jump over the bananas.
4-Kinder: Hands on the balance beam. Monkey jump over the bananas.



Thank You for Your Purchase!

If you have any questions, please email
me at:

Sarah@happygymnastics.com

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