



## Overview

---

Elementary physical education programs emphasize the importance of physical activity and personal fitness. Fitness is developed through the activities in the daily lessons, which emphasize physical activity, continuous movement, and challenges that involve overloading the major muscle groups. Students have opportunities to understand the fitness components, fitness assessment, and the need for a lifetime of physical activity. Participation in physical activity also can be an important venue for the social, psychological, and emotional development of children.

The elementary school physical education program emphasizes the development of fundamental locomotor, nonlocomotor, and manipulative skills. The movement framework, basic biomechanical and motor learning principles (see Appendixes C, D, and E in the *Physical Education Framework for California Public Schools* [California Department of Education 2009]), and fundamental game tactics are also part of the content for elementary school students.

State law requires that schools provide students in grade three with at least 200 minutes of physical education each 10 school days. Recess and lunch time do not count toward the required instructional minutes.

The grade-three physical education model content standards are organized by five overarching content standards. Under each of the overarching standards are grade-level model content standards that provide a vision of what students in grade three need to know and be able to do. Together, the content standards represent the essential skills and knowledge that all students need in order to be physically active and enjoy a healthy lifestyle.

Fitness activities become increasingly important at this age, as early signs of poor posture and decreases in flexibility begin to appear. Grade three is a good time for students to create personal fitness and motor skill goals and monitor their progress. It is also a pivotal time in the development of students' movement skills.

**Grade three is a good time for students to create personal fitness and motor skill goals and monitor their progress.**

## What Third-Grade Students Should Know

---

By the end of grade two, students correctly performed the more difficult locomotor skills of skipping and leaping. They repeatedly jumped a rope. They demonstrated smooth transitions between even-beat locomotor skills and uneven-beat locomotor skills. They performed rhythmic sequences alone and with a partner. Students learned and described the correct technique for foundational manipulative skills. For example, they threw balls for distance, kicked slowly rolling balls, dribbled balls with their hands and their feet, and caught gently thrown balls. They learned, in terms appropriate for grade-two students, the meaning of *impact force*, *base of support*, and *open space*.

During second grade, students started measuring their own fitness levels and monitoring their personal improvement in fitness and physical activities. They learned the names of some important muscles and how to strengthen and stretch them. They learned about the fuel (water and nutritious foods) their bodies need to be physically active and how physical activity helps them maintain good health. They also learned to encourage their peers, show respect for others and equipment, and work cooperatively in a variety of group settings.

## What Students Learn in Third Grade

---

Grade three is a pivotal time in the development of students' movement skills. In grade three, students begin to focus on combining locomotor and nonlocomotor skills into new movement sequences. Students who cannot perform the skills using the proper technique will need additional learning and practice opportunities to improve these foundational skills. Practice opportunities throughout the school year allow them time to develop the proper form for manipulative skills, such as rolling an object, throwing, catching, dribbling, kicking, and striking. By the end of grade three, students should have mastered the proper form for locomotor and nonlocomotor skills and learned to manipulate objects in a variety of ways. Students experiment with and explore alternative movements, such as tumbling, creative dance, and formal dance.

### **Overarching Standard 1: Students demonstrate the motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.**

Students improve their locomotor skills as they apply the skills to chasing, fleeing, and dodging in tag-type games; dancing the beginning steps of line, circle, and folk dances; and jumping a rope that loops forward and backwards. They refine their body management skills as they perform forward rolls, straddle rolls, and tripods. They also practice body management skills as they move along a ground-level balance beam.



Manipulative skills take on a greater role in physical education in grade three than in previous grade levels. Students are honing their throwing, catching, kicking, and striking skills. They practice hand dribbling and foot dribbling while traveling and dodging obstacles. They throw and catch an object with a partner, maintaining accuracy as they throw from greater distances. While moving, they catch an object thrown by a stationary partner. Students focus on correct technique and are provided with many opportunities to practice new skills.

### **Overarching Standard 2: Students demonstrate knowledge of movement concepts, principles, and strategies that apply to the learning and performance of physical activities.**

Standard 2 represents the cognitive knowledge that supports the skills learned in Standard 1. Students in grade three can describe the correct technique for manipulative skills in detail (e.g., the correct hand position when catching a ball at different levels). In addition, they can describe differences in techniques when applying manipulative skills in different situations (e.g., throwing to a stationary partner, throwing to a moving partner). They learn the key elements for increasing accuracy when rolling or throwing a ball. In preparation for game play in later grades, students learn about altering speed and direction to avoid an opponent. They also learn to watch the torso of opposing players for signs of changes in direction.

Rhythmic skills in grade three build on the rhythmic sequences students performed in grade two. During the school year, students learn the definition of the terms *folk dance*, *line dance*, and *circle dance*. They compare and contrast folk dances, line dances, and circle dances and perform each type with a partner.

### **Overarching Standard 3: Students assess and maintain a level of physical fitness to improve health and performance.**

In grade three, students perform moderate to vigorous physical activities three to four days each week for increasing periods of time. Muscular strength and endurance are developed as students perform increasing numbers of exercises such as curl-ups, push-ups, and lunges. Students practice basic stretches, holding the stretch for increasing periods of time to improve their flexibility. They demonstrate the correct technique for warm-up exercises before vigorous physical activities and cool-down exercises after vigorous activities. To monitor their progress, students measure and record their improvement in fitness activities and performance on health-related physical fitness assessments. They also use logs or other methods to record the time spent in physical activity when not in school.

### **Overarching Standard 4: Students demonstrate knowledge of physical fitness concepts, principles, and strategies to improve health and performance.**

Standard 4 provides the cognitive information to support the fitness activities described in Standard 3. Students learn why warm-up and cool-down activities are important for readying the body for activity and recovery. They learn to identify the body's reaction (e.g., increased heart rate, increased breathing) to physical activity. They also learn about the relationship between the heart, lungs, blood, and oxygen during physical activity.

Students learn the five components of health-related fitness (body composition, aerobic capacity, flexibility, muscle endurance, and muscle strength); the principle of progression (workloads must be increased to improve fitness); the names of major muscles; proper lifting techniques to prevent back injuries; why a particular stretch is appropriate preparation for a particular activity; and unsafe flexibility exercises that should be avoided.

Students can explain the link between fluids and energy expenditure. They understand that oxygen and fuel must be available during ongoing muscle contractions so that heat and waste products are removed. They learn that their bodies consume calories and burn fat at different rates, depending on their level of activity.

**Students learn the five components of health-related fitness (body composition, aerobic capacity, flexibility, muscle endurance, and muscle strength)...**

### **Overarching Standard 5: Students demonstrate and utilize knowledge of psychological and sociological concepts, principles, and strategies that apply to the learning and performance of physical activity.**

Students in grade three enjoy assuming responsibility for setting goals, working toward goals, and monitoring their progress either alone or with others. This interest in their progress supports the standards that call for students to set a goal to improve a motor skill, work toward their goal when not in school, and record their progress toward mastery of the motor skill. Another self-responsibility standard calls for students to learn the benefits of safety procedures and rules and the consequences of disregarding them.

As students' social interaction skills improve, they learn to coach other students by using movement cues (e.g., watch the ball, extend your arms) and words of encouragement. This stage of social development is also a time when students' increasing ability to work with others helps them learn to accept and appreciate differences in physical abilities between individuals.

## Support for English Learners

---

The goal of physical education programs in California is to ensure universal access to high-quality curriculum and instruction so that every student can meet or exceed the state’s physical education model content standards. To reach that goal, teachers design instruction to meet the instructional needs of each student. Different instructional approaches may be needed for English learners to gain access to physical education content. Specially designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE), also known as sheltered instruction, provides students with a variety of interactive and multimodal means to obtain information. With sheltered instruction techniques, teachers modify the language demands of the lesson. Cooperative learning with high levels of interaction may also be an effective strategy. (See the *Physical Education Framework for California Public Schools* [California Department of Education 2009], Chapter 7, “Universal Access,” for more information.)

Physical education instruction provides opportunities for students to develop their English-language skills. Students learn new vocabulary through physical activity instruction that is modeled by other students (e.g., “Stand on the blue square”; “Move around the cone”) and demonstrations of locomotor movements that include labeling of the movement (e.g., the teacher says, “Move to the right,” and students demonstrate the change in direction). Working cooperatively in groups, coaching other students, and speaking and listening about physical education concepts and skills also provide opportunities for English learners to acquire academic vocabulary and practice both informal and formal English.

## Support for Students with Special Needs

---

Successful participation in physical activities by students with special needs depends on the teacher’s skill and training in providing instruction and support to all students. When systematically planned differentiation strategies are used, students with special needs can benefit from appropriately challenging curriculum and instruction. The strategies for differentiating instruction include pacing, complexity, depth, and novelty. Despite the modifications made, however, the focus is to always help students meet the physical education model content standards to the best of their ability.

In helping students achieve at their grade level, teachers use instructional resources aligned with the standards and provide additional learning and practice opportunities. Some students with 504 Plans or individualized education programs (IEPs) are eligible for special education services in physical education. A student’s 504 Plan or IEP often includes suggestions for techniques to ensure that the student has full access to a program designed to provide him or her with appropriate learning opportunities and that uses instructional materials and strategies to best meet his or her needs. The 504 Plan or IEP also determines which services or combination of services best met the student’s need. See the *Physical Education Framework for California Public Schools* [California Department of Education 2009], Chapter 7, “Universal Access,” for more information. The framework is posted at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/pe/cf/index.asp>.

## The Standards

The following grade-three physical education model content standards were adopted by the California State Board of Education on January 12, 2005.

Physical Education Model Content Standards Grade Three	
<b>STANDARD 1: Students demonstrate the motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.</b>	
<b>Movement Concepts</b>	
1.1	Chase, flee, and move away from others in a constantly changing environment.
<b>Body Management</b>	
1.2	Perform an inverted balance (tripod) by evenly distributing weight on body parts.
1.3	Perform a forward roll.
1.4	Perform a straddle roll.
<b>Locomotor Movement</b>	
1.5	Jump continuously a forward-turning rope and a backward-turning rope.
<b>Manipulative Skills</b>	
1.6	Balance while traveling and manipulating an object on a ground-level balance beam.
1.7	Catch, while traveling, an object thrown by a stationary partner.
1.8	Roll a ball for accuracy toward a target.
1.9	Throw a ball, using the overhand movement pattern with increasing accuracy.
1.10	Throw and catch an object with a partner, increasing the distance from the partner and maintaining an accurate throw that can be easily caught.
1.11	Kick a ball to a stationary partner, using the inside of the foot.
1.12	Strike a ball continuously upward, using a paddle or racket.
1.13	Hand-dribble a ball continuously while moving around obstacles.
1.14	Foot-dribble a ball continuously while traveling and changing direction.

<b>Rhythmic Skills</b>	
1.15	Perform a line dance, a circle dance, and a folk dance with a partner.
<b>STANDARD 2: Students demonstrate knowledge of movement concepts, principles, and strategies that apply to the learning and performance of physical activities.</b>	
<b>Movement Concepts</b>	
2.1	Describe how changing speed and changing direction can allow one person to move away from another.
<b>Manipulative Skills</b>	
2.2	Explain and demonstrate the correct hand position when catching a ball above the head, below the waist, near the middle of the body, and away from the body.
2.3	Explain the difference between throwing to a stationary partner and throwing to a moving partner.
2.4	Identify the key elements for increasing accuracy in rolling a ball and throwing a ball.
2.5	Identify the differences between dribbling a ball (with the hand and the foot, separately) while moving forward and when changing direction.
<b>Rhythmic Skills</b>	
2.6	Define the terms <i>folk dance</i> , <i>line dance</i> , and <i>circle dance</i> .
2.7	Compare and contrast folk dances, line dances, and circle dances.
<b>STANDARD 3: Students assess and maintain a level of physical fitness to improve health and performance.</b>	
<b>Fitness Concepts</b>	
3.1	Demonstrate warm-up and cool-down exercises.
3.2	Demonstrate how to lift and carry objects correctly.
<b>Aerobic Capacity</b>	
3.3	Participate three to four days each week, for increasing periods of time, in continuous moderate to vigorous physical activities that require sustained movement of the large-muscle groups to increase breathing and heart rate.
<b>Muscular Strength/Endurance</b>	
3.4	Perform increasing numbers of each: abdominal curl-ups, oblique curl-ups on each side, modified push-ups or traditional push-ups with hands on a bench, forward lunges, side lunges, and triceps push-ups from a chair.

3.5	Climb a vertical pole or rope.
<b>Flexibility</b>	
3.6	Hold for an increasing period of time basic stretches for hips, shoulders, hamstrings, quadriceps, triceps, biceps, back, and neck.
<b>Body Composition</b>	
3.7	Sustain continuous movement for increasing periods of time while participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
<b>Assessment</b>	
3.8	Measure and record improvement in individual fitness activities.
<b>STANDARD 4: Students demonstrate knowledge of physical fitness concepts, principles, and strategies to improve health and performance.</b>	
<b>Fitness Concepts</b>	
4.1	Identify the body's normal reactions to moderate to vigorous physical activity.
4.2	List and define the components of physical fitness.
4.3	Explain the purpose of warming up before physical activity and cooling down after physical activity.
4.4	Recognize that the body will adapt to increased workloads.
4.5	Explain that fluid needs are linked to energy expenditure.
4.6	Discuss the need for oxygen and fuel to be available during ongoing muscle contraction so that heat and waste products are removed.
<b>Aerobic Capacity</b>	
4.7	Describe the relationship between the heart, lungs, muscles, blood, and oxygen during physical activity.
4.8	Describe and record the changes in heart rate before, during, and after physical activity.
<b>Muscular Strength/Endurance</b>	
4.9	Explain that a stronger heart muscle can pump more blood with each beat.
4.10	Identify which muscles are used in performing muscular endurance activities.
4.11	Name and locate the major muscles of the body.
4.12	Describe and demonstrate how to relieve a muscle cramp.

4.13	Describe the role of muscle strength and proper lifting in the prevention of back injuries.
<b>Flexibility</b>	
4.14	Identify flexibility exercises that are not safe for the joints and should be avoided.
4.15	Explain why a particular stretch is appropriate preparation for a particular physical activity.
<b>Body Composition</b>	
4.16	Differentiate the body's ability to consume calories and burn fat during periods of inactivity and during long periods of moderate physical activity.
<b>STANDARD 5: Students demonstrate and utilize knowledge of psychological and sociological concepts, principles, and strategies that apply to the learning and performance of physical activity.</b>	
<b>Self-Responsibility</b>	
5.1	Set a personal goal to improve a motor skill and work toward that goal in nonschool time.
5.2	Collect data and record progress toward mastery of a motor skill.
5.3	List the benefits of following and the risks of not following safety procedures and rules associated with physical activity
<b>Social Interaction</b>	
5.4	Use appropriate cues for movement and positive words of encouragement while coaching others in physical activities.
5.5	Demonstrate respect for individual differences in physical abilities.
<b>Group Dynamics</b>	
5.6	Work in pairs or small groups to achieve an agreed-upon goal.