

TEACHING STROKES 101

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BUTTERFLY

Considerations:

- Not about power, but rhythm and timing.
- Allow for plenty of practice time.
 - *Repetition is the heartbeat of every skill.
 - *A level of conditioning will enhance ability to improve technique.
- Teach timing to achieve undulation through modeling and choral responses.
- Teach kick timing to enhance propulsion through modeling and choral responses.
- Feedback (FB) is essential, but too much FB has been shown to hinder performance. Don't forget, practice is the heartbeat of skill. When we get too full of ourselves and we start talking more than they're practicing—you know you're overteaching!

Teaching Drills/Ideas:

1. Single arm fly
 - emphasize timing for the rise of the hips
 - incorporate choral response during modeling: when hand enters, swimmers respond "UP!", "UP!"
2. Single arm fly
 - emphasize timing of kick
 - incorporate choral response during modeling: when hand enters, swimmers respond, "kick" and when hand passes waistline: "kick"
3. Whole Stroke
 - emphasize other components, i.e., recover pinkies on top, catch, thumbs to centerline on pull, etc.
 - *alternate kick drills, stroke drills, and whole stroke variations.

BACKSTROKE

Considerations:

- teach swimmers early to kick and swim on their sides.
- Why?
 - a. less drag
 - b. hips elicit more powerful pulls
- high, still head position (not back!)

Teaching Drills/Ideas:

- underwater applause.
- Penny on forehead to encourage "still head position" during drills.

 1. Side kick (bottom arm extended)
 - emphasize small, fast kicks while on hip.
 2. Kick waka waka Kick waka waka Pull, Roll (repeat original side)
 - teaches getting the hips involved in the pull.

-emphasize bend at the elbow during pull.

*not an easy drill, but extremely valuable.

3. Six Kicks on the Side and Stroke

-encourage the continuous fast, steady kick as one leaves the side to stroke.

4. Three Kicks on the Side and Stroke

-same emphasis, but takes the swimmer a step closer to the whole stroke.

5. Whole Stroke

-give feedback congruent with the fundamentals you've been teaching.

BREASTSTROKE

Considerations:

- anatomical phenomenon
- dryland kick exercise – "Flex like a frog." "Point like a ballerina."
- Problem word- "pull"

Teaching Drills/Ideas:

- Uses cues: try traffic light colors
 - Base position: Red
 - Outsweep/press: Yellow
 - Inward sweep and recovery: Green

 1. Breaststroke Arms with Freestyle Kick (head up)
 - try fins and a noodle under the armpits.
 - have swimmers choral respond colors as they execute the arm action going down the pool.
 - Emphasis: hands in front
 2. Breaststroke Arms with Freestyle Kick (add breathing)
 - emphasis: breath timing. Breathe during the cue "green," looking at bottom during red and yellow (This is wave-style breath timing. We teach it immediately).
 3. Breaststroke Arms with Freestyle Kick
 - emphasis. Sea snake – Pinky fingers must remain in the water, at least the thumbs break the surface tension.
 4. Breaststroke Arms with Dolphin Kick
 - emphasis: Kick timing and hip action.
 - one kick per stroke, occurs during "green" cue.
 5. 2-1 Drill
 - emphasis: Base position, kick and timing.
 - Two kicks are taken during base position (red). At the conclusion of the second kick, execute outsweep (yellow), insweep and recovery (green) as well the kick.
 6. Whole Stroke
 - emphasis: timing and/or areas of strokes that need refinement.

FREESTYLE

Considerations:

- K.I.S.S. (not the rock group!)
- Stroke Cues:
 1. Reach/front extension

(Teaching continued on page 8).

(Teaching continued from page 7).

2. Catch and Pull (elbow up, hand and forearm pitched back as a paddle).
3. Elbow High/Shark Fin (encourage swimmers to get hand and forearm as vertical as possible on recovery. Teach swimmers to keep the hand as close to body and face as possible during recovery.
4. Small, Fast, Steady Kick
5. Head Still

Teaching Drills/Ideas:

Olympic Games Competition/Exercise

Instructions: You could win a medal (imaginary) based on how well you perform the event (specific stroke component). Not how fast, but how precise/perfect. In this Olympic games, we could have 3 gold medals, 4 silver medals, 6 bronze medals, or no medals at all. Winning a medal is not guaranteed, but if you swim with good technique, you will be rewarded that medal. Now if you don't win a medal, does that mean that you are worthless blob of pond scum? No! Of course not. If you are in the Olympic games, you are one of the best athletes in the world. Whether you win a medal or not. But always, always do your best and try to win that medal. If you do, I want you to celebrate by throwing your fists up in the air and falling backward into the water!

1. The first event is the "front extension" event.
If you're straightening your elbows before you pull, you could win a medal!
2. The second event is the "catch and armful" event.
If you're ... you could win a medal.
3. The third event is the "head position" event.
If you're ... you could win a medal!
4. The fourth event is the "kick" event.
If you're ... you could win a medal!
5. The fifth event is the "whole freestyle" event.
If you're ... you could win a medal!■