

Tootsie Roll Flexibility Lesson

Equipment needed:

1 frozen Tootsie Roll per student
space for safe movement

Objective: Students will know that it is best to warm-up the muscles with an aerobic activity before trying to improve flexibility with stretching exercises.

Lesson: Gently and slowly, have students try to perform a v-sit and reach stretch. Have students mentally record how tight they feel and how difficult it is to perform the stretch.

Now, drop one frozen Tootsie Roll on the floor or desktop in front of each student. Students should not touch the Tootsie Roll until directed to do so.

Using sense of hearing, what can the students' tell about the Tootsie Roll (it makes a sound, so it's hard-frozen)? Teacher directs students to touch the Tootsie Roll with one finger. Using sense of touch, students identify that Tootsie Roll is frozen.

Direct the students to unwrap the Tootsie Roll and have 10-15 seconds to try to stretch the frozen Tootsie Roll. If they bend it and it snaps in two, that's a good time to teach about a pulled muscle-tearing because it is not stretched out.

After 10-15 seconds, have students re-wrap the Tootsie Roll and hold it gently in their hand while they do about five minutes of exercise (jog, jump rope, dance, etc.). At end of five minutes, have students identify increased heart rate, increased warmth/sweat. Have students perform v-sit and reach stretch again. Students should find it easier to perform and less discomfort.

Now, unwrap the Tootsie Roll and try to stretch it out-see how gentle they can stretch it and how long it can stretch. Again, if it tears-make reference to similarity to a pulled muscle tearing if you pull too fast or hard. Then, allow students choice to eat the Tootsie Roll or discard. Ask students: when is the best time to work on flexibility, before or after warming up the muscles?

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