

LESSON PLAN 9 – Teach the rider to sit in the correct jumping position.

<u>Pony Club Venue:</u>	<u>Date:</u>
<u>Rider:</u> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.	<u>Pony:</u> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.
<u>Topics and goals for session:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To maintain a safe and correct position for jumping.2. To stay balanced and upright.3. To understand why we use the position.4. To revise, integrate and consolidate previously learnt skills, school figures, arena language/protocol into the lesson, wherever appropriate.	
<u>Equipment needed and layout:</u> Enclosed arena. Long stick to demonstrate correct position (or can use a long whip). Spare neck straps in case needed for riders who turn up without one. Trot poles (4 for trot pole exercise and some extra to use as 'placement poles'). Several small jumps set up in arena.	
<u>Introduction to session (key points):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce yourself and chat to riders about themselves and their mount (some combinations may be new to you, and you also need to know what they have been working on since the last rally).• Revise previously taught skills, school figures, arena language/protocol (if appropriate) – a good time to integrate & consolidate areas causing problems.• Explain the 3 point position and difference between upright and 3 point. (Can also explain the 2 point but state that it will not be used at this stage.)• Explain rein releases – short and long crest, and automatic. (Automatic is not used at this level - only used by a more advanced rider with perfect balance.)• Explain why we need to shorten our stirrup length.• Revise correct procedure for altering stirrup length.• Explain why we use neck straps and make sure that they are correctly fitted.	

Gear Check (List gear to be checked): As per Gear Checking Rules for Pony Club.

- **Rider:** Clothing - Clean & correctly attired with appropriate Club uniform including safe boots & correctly numbered helmet;
Hair - Long hair tied back;
Jewellery - Check jewellery;
Fitness - Age of rider; weight of rider in comparison to mount.
- **Horse:** Gear - clean; correctly fitted; approved; stitching OK; safe;
Condition - clean/groomed (no bot eggs), including feet;
Fitness - age; soundness; what work has mount been doing?
(Are pony/horse and rider capable of doing planned lesson?)

Warm up activities and rider exercises:

In `leading file' halt, walk and trot using upward and downward transitions, and large school figures (where appropriate), to ensure pony/horse is sound, attentive and listening to rider, especially halt, to make sure the mounts have brakes. (Canter could be included in the warm up but would depend on the rider's level of skill & ability.) Change from upright to 3 point position etc. (We don't want riders using the 2 point position when they start off jumping as the 3 point keeps them much more secure, especially if things start to go wrong.) Have riders warm up in and around poles and jumps so that horses get used to them prior to lesson, and it also gives the coach a chance to ascertain the jumping temperament of the ponies/horses.

Select some rider exercises to complete on a 20 metre circle.

New Skill/s (name of skill):

- Teach correct jumping position.

Key teaching points and demonstration method:

Demonstrate using one rider out in front of group (use different rider for each demonstration and ask riders questions to keep them alert and interested).

Demonstrate the correct procedure for altering stirrup lengths. (Make sure that you get riders to check their girth tightness after warm up.)

Demonstrate (using long stick or whip) the difference between 3 & 2 point position.

- 3 point – shoulder, centre of thigh, ball of foot.
- 2 point – shoulder, knee, toe. (Will not be used in this lesson.)
- Show how folding from the hip achieves these lines.

Demonstrate how to use a neck strap.

- When folding from the hip, put hands forward up the neck to neck strap.

Demonstrate short and long crest release, plus the difference of `automatic' release.

- Show how to place hands further up the neck of the horse on crest.
- Show how `automatic' requires perfect rider balance and contact, with a straight line from rider's elbow through to bit. (Not used in this lesson – will be used later on when rider has achieved good 3 and 2 point positions and can maintain consistent good balance on the pony/horse.)

Demonstrate heels down keeping leg still, stable and in contact.

Practice activities:

- Practice altering stirrup lengths.
- Practice bringing hands forward to neck strap at walk.
- Practice walking and trotting over a line of poles with crest release.
- At markers, or between jumps set up in arena, change from upright position to 3 point at walk, trot and canter (if level appropriate).
- Play game `Simon Says`.

Cool Down:

Long rein walk using appropriate school figures.

Session Evaluation and Summary:

- Riders to line up in an orderly fashion.
- Discuss with riders if they understand the difference between a 3 and 2 point position, the difference between the various releases and why it is so important that we alter our stirrups for jumping – PRACTICE MAKES IT EASIER. Give them some more tips - something to take home to practice – stress the importance of using a neck strap at home. All riders to be involved in this session using question techniques rather than dictating coach's thoughts.
- Evaluate the lesson – BE HONEST! - What did you as the coach like?
 - What worked well or didn't work?
 - What would you do differently?

Note: It's a good idea to always get every rider in the lesson to wear a neck strap. By doing so, you don't single out any of the riders and make them feel inadequate within the group. Also it is generally inevitable that, at this stage of learning, all riders actually do need to use a neck strap for the comfort and well being of their mounts.