

Name/Title: Spotting Good Serves

Purpose of Event: For students to practice making accurate and consistent serves in a challenging situation.

Prerequisites: Previous practice and success with the underhand serve (cues: Hold ball in front of "favorite" shoulder; Step with "opposite" foot; Swing hand alongside body; Strike ball) to general space, a partner, and against a wall; Catching.

Suggested Grade Level: 4-5

Materials Needed: Enough volleyball standards and nets or rope so that each group of 4 students has an area with a line over which to serve; cones to mark off areas for each group; enough volleyball trainers, beach balls, and other types of balls for students of differing abilities to serve with; one polyspot or other such marker for each student.

Description of Idea

This game is played at the end of a unit, after students have been practicing **underhand serving** and other volleying skills. To set up for the game, put up your nets and/or ropes so that there are as many "game" areas as possible for students to play in (for example, each group of 4 has one-third of a regular court area in which to play--2 students on each side). Use cones to mark off these "game areas". Put **one polyspot** for each student in a group in a different place on their "side" of the net (i.e., one closer to the net, one farther away).

Demonstrate the game to students as outlined, then have each group move to an area and begin to play. Students or the teacher form groups of four; these players then decide who will be on each "**side**" of the net (i.e. 2 groups of 2). While standing on their polyspot, students take turns underhand serving a ball of their choice over the net to the other side. If it lands "**in bounds**", their side earns **one point**. If a ball is caught by a player on the opposing side (players must stay on their polyspot), lands out-of-bounds, or hits the net, **no point** is scored. Then a player on the opposite side of the net gets to serve, again earning a point if it lands in-bounds. Play continues back and forth, each person on each side taking turns serving, until a designated number of points has been reached (for example, 5).

At the end of each "game", each player must move to the other polyspot on their side of the net (this way, each player gets to serve from a different area of the "court".) Students may also decide to change who plays on which side (to make sides more fair).

While students are playing, **observe** students' abilities to correctly use the cues previously taught for the underhand serve.

Variations:

Ability group students beforehand into the groups of 4, then let them choose their "sides".

With older students who are very successful with the serving cues, the "next step" can be to emphasize where NOT to serve -- i.e., the strategy of placing the ball to where the defense IS NOT. While students are playing, the teacher can observe to see how successful each person is in serving to where the defense is not.

If space is limited, try to have no more than 8 students in a group -- four on each side. Space can be slightly increased (for example, each group gets half the court). Remember, though, that the less number of students in a group will allow for each student to get the most practice serving as possible.

Assessment Ideas:

Use a [Cue Checklist](#) sheet such as found in PE Central's Assessment section to mark down each student's ability to correctly serve the ball.

Students who are not able to participate can also use a student observation checklist to observe one person at a time for the same cues.

Submitted by **Brad Carroll** who teaches at A.M. Kulp Elementary School in Hatfield, PA. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 10/2/2001.**

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