



Topic Guide 4: Sport Psychology

GCSE (9-1) Physical Education

Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Physical Education (1PE0)

Topic Guide: GCSE Physical Education 2016 – Sport Psychology

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Introduction

This topic guide gives an overview of the specification topic: Sport Psychology. The guide is designed to give support by detailing content changes in relation to this topic and to give further clarity over the required breadth and depth that needs to be covered. The guide signposts possible resources to aid preparation and delivery and also gives some teaching ideas to assist with planning and delivery.

Content and content changes

Component 2, Topic 2: Sport Psychology

Subject content	What learners need to learn
<p>In this topic, learners will develop knowledge and understanding of the psychological factors that can affect performers and their performance in physical activity and sport through the following content.</p>	
<p>2.1 Classification of skills (basic/complex, open/closed)</p>	<p>2.1.1 Classification of a range of sports skills using the open–closed, basic (simple) –complex, and low organisation–high organisation continua</p>
	<p>2.1.2 Practice structures: massed; distributed; fixed and variable</p>
	<p>2.1.3 Application of knowledge of practice and skill classification to select the most relevant practice to develop a range of skills</p>
<p>2.2 The use of goal setting and SMART targets to improve and/or optimise performance</p>	<p>2.2.1 The use of goal setting to improve and/or optimise performance</p>
	<p>2.2.2 Principles of SMART targets (specific, measureable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) and the value of each principle in improving and/or optimising performance</p>
	<p>2.2.3 Setting and reviewing targets to improve and/or optimise performance</p>
<p>2.3 Guidance and feedback on performance</p>	<p>2.3.1 Types of guidance to optimise performance: visual; verbal; manual and mechanical</p>
	<p>2.3.2 Advantages and disadvantages of each type of guidance and its appropriateness in a variety of sporting contexts when used with performers of different skill levels</p>
	<p>2.3.3 Types of feedback to optimise performance: intrinsic; extrinsic; concurrent; terminal</p>
	<p>2.3.4 Interpretation and analysis of graphical representation of data associated with feedback on performance</p>
<p>2.4 Mental preparation for performance</p>	<p>2.4.1 Mental preparation for performance: warm up; mental rehearsal</p>

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This complete topic is new for 2016. A requirement of all GCSE PE specifications is the inclusion of sport psychology so that learners have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of skill development. It also gives learners the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of how best to organise learning so that skill development can take place to improve performance in physical activity and sport. This area of the specification meets these requirements by focusing on four subject areas: classification of skill; goal setting; guidance and feedback; and mental preparation. Each subject area gives an introduction to this area of sport psychology, forming a foundation for future development as learners progress through their education.

All specification topics have the same Assessment Objectives. This means any topic within Component 1 and Component 2 could be used to assess the learner's:

- knowledge and understanding of factors underpinning performance
- ability to apply their knowledge and understanding of factors underpinning performance
- ability to analyse and evaluate factors underpinning performance

In this topic, learners will develop knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of sport psychology and their effect on performance in physical activity and sport through the following content.

Sport Psychology: skill classification

2.1 Classification of skills (basic/complex, open/closed)	2.1.1 Classification of a range of sports skills using the open-closed, basic (simple)-complex, and low organisation-high organisation continua
	2.1.2 Practice structures: massed, distributed, fixed and variable
	2.1.3 Application of knowledge of practice and skill classification to select the most relevant practice to develop a range of skills

Learners will be expected to **know and understand**:

- examples of the skills/techniques required in their practical activities, e.g. a line-out in rugby, or a centre pass in netball, so that they may use examples of these to support their answers as appropriate
- how skill continua can be used to classify skills
- the three different skill continua:
 - open – closed
 - basic – complex
 - low organisation – high organisation.

Learners should be able to sketch a continuum and place a skill or technique from a range of activities on the continuum, based on a description of the skill or technique.

The four different forms of practice structures and the conditions when each would be used to develop skill:

- massed
- distributed
- fixed
- variable

Learners will be expected to **apply** their knowledge through:

- classification of a range of skills using the three identified continua
- provision of examples of skills or techniques that match specific classifications, for example, identification of an open skill in football and a closed skill in volleyball
- justification of skill classifications based on the nature of the skill, for example, a penalty is a closed skill because it can be practiced and the conditions under which it is executed are broadly the same each time
- selection of the most relevant practice to develop a range of skills.

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Learners will be expected to **analyse and evaluate** skills and practice structures for learning of specific skills. An analysis could involve breaking down a skill to understand its classification or a practice session to see how each aspect is used to support the learning of a skill in physical activity or sport.

An evaluation could involve a comparison of different practice structures to determine the best method to support learning of a particular type of skill.

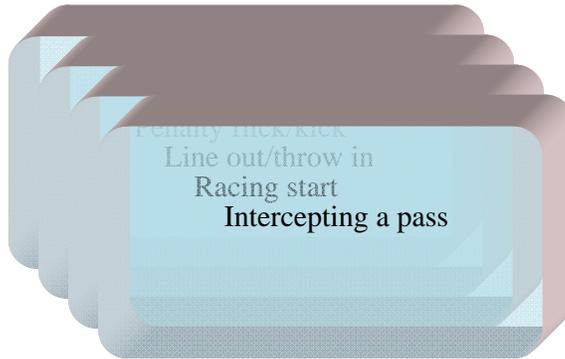
Sport psychology: skill classification and practice structures – activity ideas

Activity 1

Delivery of this topic through a mixture of theoretical and practical work should support learner understanding.

As with all topics, there are a number of general resources you, or your learners, could develop that could be utilised across a range of topics, for example:

- short video clips or a PowerPoint presentation of performers carrying out a range of techniques from a variety of sporting activities:
 - an athletics field event, e.g. javelin
 - rowing a boat
 - kicking a rugby ball
 - heading a football
 - playing a forehand drive in tennis
 - a weights session, e.g. demonstration of a bicep curls
 - hitting a ball in cricket.
- a set of cards with a different skill or technique stated on each card.



Either of these resources could be used in a number of ways across several specification topics:

- to introduce the topic
- to check understanding. For example, in the context of this topic, learners could work in pairs and analyse a specific movement on the clip so they could:
 - classify the skill **(Activity 1a)**
 - analyse the skill to determine the best method of practice to learn the skill **(Activity 1b)**
 - evaluate the optimal practice structure to develop the skill **(Activity 1b)**
 - discuss the type of guidance that should be given when teaching the skill to a beginner or an expert **(Activity 1c)**
 - explain the type of feedback that would be possible depending on the type of skill, the ability of the player or where the skill was being performed **(Activity 1d)**

- for revision
- the cards could be used in the same way, with learners working in pairs or small teams, each team could have a set of cards they worked through within the group, or as a group against other groups in the class.

Activity 2

An alternative starting activity could be by running the session in a practical space. Using a hand-out similar to that shown below, learners could engage in a skills circuit. Before moving on to the next station, they could complete the hand-out and compare classifications at the end of the session. At this point learners would not be aware of the meaning of the continua; therefore, they would be reliant on reading the descriptions that define the continua, helping to reinforce the reasons why skills are classified as they are, and the names of the continua.

Skill classification circuit

Open – need to react/adjust due to opponent Closed – predicatable environment, e.g. penalty	Basic – a simple skill, little thought to complete Complex – need to concentrate a lot to carry it out	Low organisation – skill can be broken down into phases, e.g. tennis serve High organisation – cannot break the skill down				
Circle the classification that applies to each station on your circuit						
Basketball set shot	Open	Closed	Basic	Complex	Low org	High org
Skipping	Open	Closed	Basic	Complex	Low org	High org
Kick up's/ chest passes against the wall	Open	Closed	Basic	Complex	Low org	High org
Shuttle runs	Open	Closed	Basic	Complex	Low org	High org

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Volleying continuously above head height	Open	Closed	Basic	Complex	Low org	High org
Dribbling a ball between cones	Open	Closed	Basic	Complex	Low org	High org

Knowledge gained through this activity could be reinforced by:

- creating a number of sporting montages for display to further reinforce learning. Each learner could be given a specific skill classification and asked to collect images of any technique from a range of sports that falls into that classification. One learner could collect images of open skills, another of closed and so on.

Sport Psychology: SMART targets

2.2 The use of goal setting and SMART targets to improve and/or optimise performance	2.2.1 The use of goal setting to improve and/or optimise performance
	2.2.2 Principles of SMART targets (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) and the value of each principle in improving and/or optimising performance
	2.2.3 Setting and reviewing targets to improve and/or optimise performance

This topic is intended as an introduction to the value of target setting and the principles of SMART targets. Learners are not expected to know about other types of goals, although knowledge of short-term and long-term goals may help when considering the principle of time-bound goals. Despite the location of this topic in the specification, centres may wish to defer coverage of this part of the topic to coincide with the delivery of Component 4, the Personal Exercise Programme (PEP), as learners are required to select and justify SMART targets to help them achieve their PEP goals.

Learners will be expected to **know and understand**:

- the value of goal setting in improving or optimising performance
- the principles and values of SMART targets:
 - specific
 - measurable
 - achievable
 - realistic
 - time-bound.
- how to set and review targets to improve performance.

Learners will be expected to **apply** their knowledge through application of the principles of SMART targets to a range of sports performers.

Learners will be expected to **analyse and evaluate** the targets they set themselves in their PEPs; this will also be assessed in Component 2. Learners may be asked to analyse goals to establish if they really are SMART or evaluate the effectiveness of goal setting to bring about improvement in performance.

Sport psychology: SMART targets – activity ideas

Activity 3

Learners should be familiar with the principles of goal setting and SMART targets from other areas of their school work; this knowledge can be drawn upon and emphasis can be placed in class on the higher order skills of application, analysis and evaluation.

The following type of activity could reinforce learning.

(a) Complete Table 1 by listing the benefits of goal setting to a sports performer.

Check learning

(a) Benefit of goal setting

(a) Benefit of goal setting
Increase attention/focus on what needs to be achieved
Increase motivation/effort
Increase task persistence
Allow you to assess progress over time
Decrease stress

(b) Complete the second column of Table 1 by adding the relevant SMART principle that, if applied, could bring about the stated benefit of goal setting.

(a) Benefit of goal setting	(b) Principle(s) of SMART Applied
Increase attention/focus on what needs to be achieved	
Increase motivation/effort	
Increase task persistence	
Allow you to assess progress over time	
Decrease stress	

Check learning

(a) Benefit of goal setting	(b) Principle(s) of SMART Applied
Increase attention/focus on what needs to be achieved	<i>Specificity</i>
Increase motivation/effort	<i>Measureable/ time-bound</i>
Increase task persistence	<i>Achievable/realistic/ time-bound</i>
Allow you to assess progress over time	<i>Measureable</i>
Decrease stress	<i>Achievable</i>

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(c) Complete the third column of Table 1 by adding an example of a goal that would be set if applying the stated principle of SMART.

(a) Benefit of goal setting	(b) Principle(s) of SMART Applied	(c) Example of application of SMART principle from PEP
Increase attention/focus on what needs to be achieved	<i>Specificity</i>	
Increase motivation/effort	<i>Measureable/ time-bound</i>	
Increase task persistence	<i>Achievable/realistic/ time-bound</i>	
Allow you to assess progress over time	<i>Measureable</i>	
Decrease stress	<i>Achievable</i>	

Sport Psychology: guidance and feedback

2.3 Guidance and feedback on performance	2.3.1 Types of guidance to optimise performance: visual; verbal; manual and mechanical
	2.3.2 Advantages and disadvantages of each type of guidance and its appropriateness in a variety of sporting contexts when used with performers of different skill levels
	2.3.3 Types of feedback to optimise performance: intrinsic; extrinsic; concurrent; terminal
	2.3.4 Interpretation and analysis of graphical representation of data associated with feedback on performance

Learners will be expected to **know and understand**:

- the different types of guidance and the advantages and disadvantages of each:
 - visual – demonstration
 - verbal – instruction
 - manual – physical manipulation by coach
 - mechanical – physical manipulation by coaching aid.

- the different types of feedback a coach could use to optimise performance:
 - intrinsic
 - extrinsic
 - concurrent
 - terminal.

Learners will be expected to **apply** their knowledge of guidance by suggesting appropriate forms for a range of specific sporting contexts.

For example, the method of guidance best suited to teach a group of beginners badminton.

Learners will be expected to **apply** their knowledge of feedback, considering the factors that could impact on choice before suggesting an appropriate form.

For example, they would consider the ability of the performer, the type of skill and where the skill is being performed before selecting the most appropriate form of feedback.

Learners will be expected to **evaluate** the types of feedback to arrive at the best method or combination of methods to use with a given group within physical activity.

Learners will be expected to develop knowledge and understanding of data analysis and apply this knowledge where appropriate across the specification. Some opportunity for analysis and evaluation of data could be found within this topic, see data activity below.

Sport psychology: guidance and feedback – activity ideas

Activity 4

To introduce the topic of guidance learners could:

- be asked what they thought 'guidance' meant
- be introduced to the names of the four forms of guidance
- be asked to discuss in pairs, based on the title, what each form of guidance might involve – feedback to group
- confirm meaning of the different forms with the group
- think of examples where they have been recipients of guidance across a range of sports, e.g. athletics, gymnastics, swimming, games, and then feedback their examples
- consider whether the different types of guidance they have received would be suitable in all situations, for all learners, e.g. U5's, U11's, U19's, O35's, O70's.

Activity 5

If at all possible this topic area could be taught via practical work depending on facilities and/or resources. Learners could work in pairs, using a different form of guidance to teach a novel (safe) skill where success can be easily measured, for example, throwing a bean bag into a bin left handed, hitting a shuttle into a target, juggling. Guidance conditions (depending on the nature of the group) could be:

- visual only
- verbal only (use of eye masks to prevent visual learning)
- a combination of visual and verbal.

After comparing pre-test and post-test results they could discuss the guidance methods and try to rationalise their results, looking for advantages or disadvantages that they experienced, either as the performer or as the coach.

Activity 6

A similar method could be adopted to see the impact of feedback on performance; the test conditions when completing a (safe) novel skill could be:

- no extrinsic feedback
- extrinsic feedback
- extrinsic concurrent feedback
- extrinsic terminal feedback.

Again learners could compare pre-test and post-test results and then discuss the feedback methods and try to rationalise their results, looking for advantages or disadvantages that they experienced, either as the performer or as the coach.

Activity 7

If working in a classroom, scenario cards could be produced. For example:

John has recently joined a trampoline club. He is quite good at the basic skills and is now being taught how to complete a front somersault.

Explain the method of guidance and type of feedback you would use with John.

Learners could work in pairs to think about the guidance they would give and how this might change as the performer became more skilful.

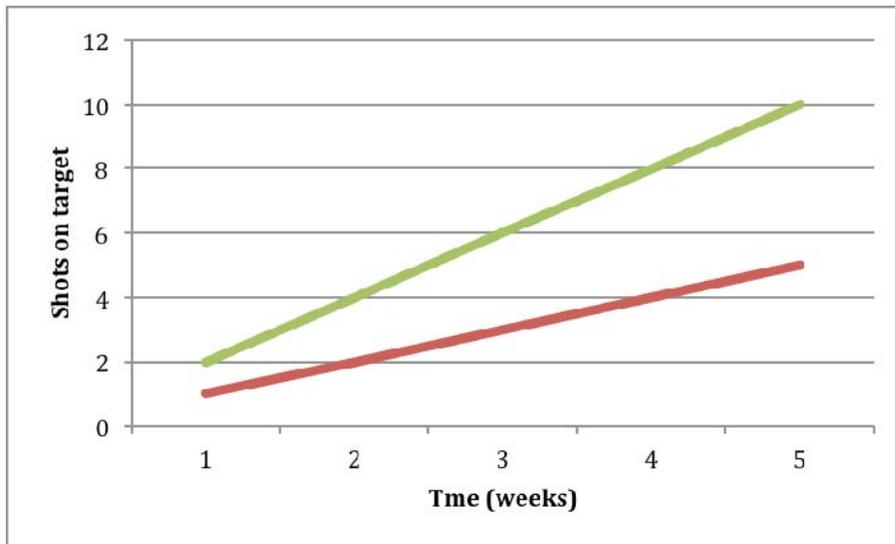
Learners could create scenarios based on their own experience and use these to test their classmates' ability to apply their knowledge.

Sport psychology – analysis and evaluation of data

Learners may be expected to interpret and analyse graphical representations of data associated with feedback on performance. NB Learners would only need to interpret the graphically presented data, they would not be expected to know about the underlying principles behind the data.

For example, learners could be presented with simple graphs and asked to identify the trends, or make some observations about the data in the following graphs:

Graph 1: Number of shots on target by two football players in each weekly match

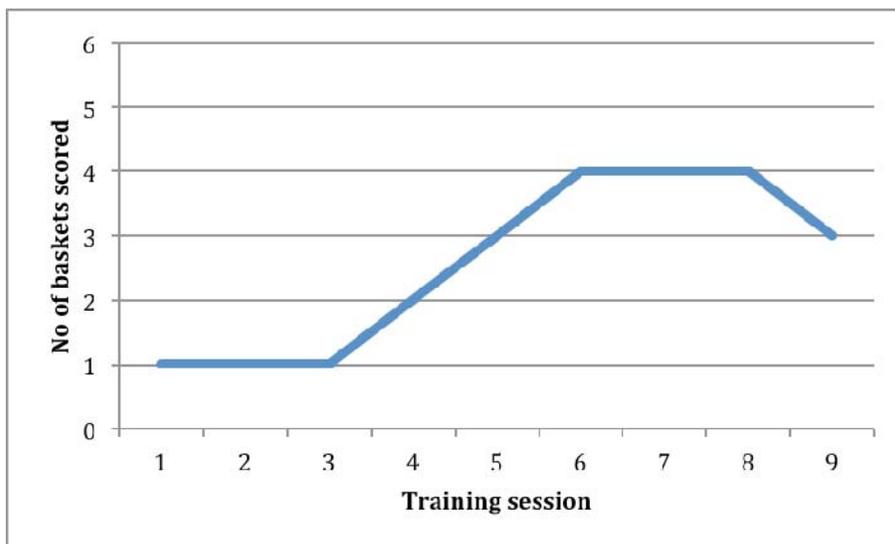


Two observations might be:

The green person is more skilful at the task than the red person.

The green person improves by 2 each week, but the red person only improves by 1 therefore green is improving twice as quickly as red.

Graph 2: Number of baskets scored each week after training



Two observations might be:

The training isn't very effective, as they don't start to improve until week 3.

Although by session 9 they are more likely to score a basket than before they started training, there was a dip in their performance in the last week.

Sport Psychology: mental preparation

2.4 Mental preparation for performance	2.4.1 Mental preparation for performance: warm up; mental rehearsal
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Learners will be expected to **know and understand**:

- how a warm up can be used for mental preparation
- the use of mental rehearsal as a method of mental preparation
- the benefits of mental preparation on performance.

Learners will be expected to **apply** their knowledge through the provision of examples of mental rehearsal and its benefits for a range of performers across different sporting activities.

Sport psychology: mental preparation – activity ideas

Activity 8

Learners should be aware of the reasons why mental practice is thought to be beneficial to performance, and the reason why you see so many elite performers mentally rehearsing the actions they are about to complete, especially in the field of athletics. Once learners understand the concept of mental rehearsal, they should be able to pick out images from the internet and other media sources that show elite performers mentally rehearsing. They could also conduct some research on the internet, or in newspapers, looking for articles where performers have talked of their mental preparation for the event, or blamed poor preparation on a loss. The activity below could be completed to check understanding. Learners should complete the table to give an example of the type of skill the stated performer could mentally rehearse before executing. Learner responses could be shared and discussed.

Activity/performer	Mental rehearsal of
Footballer	
Netballer	
Show jumper	
Racing driver	
Hockey player	
Gymnast	
High jumper	

Check learning:

Activity/performer	Mental rehearsal of
Footballer	Throw on
Netballer	Centre pass
Show jumper	Clearing a difficult jump on the course
Racing driver	Overtaking nearest rival on the course
Hockey player	Penalty flick
Gymnast	Floor routine
High jumper	Successfully clearing the bar

Learners could extend the table, giving some more examples from different sports, or they could consider the skills they could mentally rehearse for their practical activities.

Developing statements in written responses

To ensure learners acquire the ability to use their knowledge and understanding to develop any response to match the demands of the question, they should practice this skill. This skill can be developed in the classroom by giving a series of statements that need justifying. This idea can be applied to any theoretical topic in the specification. For example, learners could be given the following statements and asked to expand on them to develop the initial point being made.

- Closed skills should be taught in a different way to open skills....
- Set plays can be considered closed skills....
- Players need to be fit to carry out effective massed practice....
- Extrinsic feedback helps beginners learn a skill....
- The type of guidance given could vary depending on the skill of the performer....

Sample assessment questions

Assessment of knowledge:

(c) Which one of the following would be classified as a high organisation skill?

(1)

A	An easy skill requiring little thought to carry out	[]
B	A skill made up of several clear, discrete parts	[]
C	A skill that has a clear beginning and end	[]
D	A skill that cannot be broken down and practised separately	[]

(d) Identify the type of practice being described.

'Practice that occurs without rest between trials.'

(1)

A	Distributed	[]
B	Fixed	[]
C	Massed	[]
D	Variable	[]

Assessment of ability to apply knowledge:

Sports skills can be classified as open or closed skills.

Explain how a coach would vary a training session when coaching open and closed skills. (3)

.....

.....

.....

Assessment of ability to evaluate knowledge:

Extrinsic and intrinsic feedback are used when performing in sport.

Assess the relative importance of each of these types of feedback to a group of people who have just started to learn to swim. (3)

(i) Extrinsic feedback

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.....

.....

(ii) Intrinsic feedback (3)

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.....

.....

Evaluate the use of visual and verbal guidance to improve sports performance within a group of beginners in badminton. (9)

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Extended answer responses

In the new specification there will be two extended answer questions at the end of each paper. These questions will be marked out of 9 marks. The increase in the available number of marks should allow a better differentiation between learners, and give more opportunity to reward learners for the skills they demonstrate.

Each extended answer question will be used to assess the learner's ability to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding (AO1)
- apply their knowledge and understanding (AO2)
- analyse and evaluate relevant knowledge and understanding (AO3).

Each of these Assessment Objectives will be credited with a maximum of three of the nine available marks. This means that a learner who is very knowledgeable about a topic but unable to apply their knowledge could still gain 3 marks for their knowledge. If they were able to apply this knowledge the number of marks gained could increase to 6 marks. If they are able to form a judgement based on the knowledge presented they will be able to access the final three marks for these questions.

In this sample question, learners are asked to evaluate the use of visual and verbal guidance to improve sports performance.

A learner that knows about guidance and responds by describing each type could gain 3 marks for this knowledge. Example statements they could give to access these knowledge marks (AO1) are shown in the mark scheme on page 76 of the Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs).

Compare this type of response to the learner who is able to link the description of the guidance methods to the question context; for example, someone could use verbal guidance to tell the beginner how to perform a shot, or use visual guidance to demonstrate how to serve (AO2). This learner could score up to 6 marks.

Finally, a learner that is able to analyse and evaluate (AO3) would gain access to the last set of 3 marks. For example, the learner may discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each type of guidance, coming to a judgement of which would be best or if a combination would be better. Again, example statements are shown in the mark scheme on page 76 of the Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs).

Resources

Skill classification

<http://www.brianmac.co.uk/continuum.htm>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/intermediate2/pe/skills_and_techniques/concept_classification_of_skills/revision/1/

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MyJzoXqfVx4> (skill classification – 6 min)

Practice structure and mental preparation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6YWJ95bHjXU> (practice structure and mental preparation – 6 min)

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