

Dressage C Level Mounted Lesson Plan

TITLE: *BALANCING AND STENGTHENING THE RIDER'S SEAT*

OBJECTIVES

Long Term Goal: Riders will be able to influence the horse with their seat.

Short Term Goal: Riders will become aware of being balanced on their seat bones and allow their seat to follow the horse's movement.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

An enclosed riding arena of suitable size for the number of students in the lesson (preferably a flat, level surface).

AGE AND RATING OF STUDENTS

Appropriate for students approximately 11 years of age or older and D3 rating and above.

What (phases)	How (exercises, system, games)	Why (goal setting)	Time (Estimates may be adjusted)
Intro/ Welcome	After introductions, ask each rider to tell what the best and worst thing is about their riding.	To allow the instructor to determine the rider's own awareness of his/her strengths/weaknesses	(Est. 5 min)
Warm-up	Ask the riders to take the next 10 minutes to do their normal warm-up routine that is appropriate for his/her mount.	During this time the instructor can determine if he/she agrees or disagrees with the information each rider provided in the introduction. He/She can also assess the riders' abilities for riding w/o stirrups.	(Est. 10 min)
Feedback	Bring in each rider during the warm-up individually and check how he/she feels about his/her strong/weak points today and discuss what the instructor sees.	To see what level of body awareness the rider has and if it is accurate as to what is actually happening.	(Est. 3-5 min per student)
Transition	Ask students to come into the center and remove their feet from the stirrups. You can give them the option of taking the stirrups off completely or just crossing over w/buckle pulled down so not to rub their leg. Explain the goal of today's lesson and what the long-term goal is.	This is the opportunity for the instructor to discuss the importance of developing a stronger seat while riding w/o stirrups.	(Est. 3 -5 min)
Lesson	1. While all riders are standing still, ask them to sit tall and relaxed, then grasp their right shin with their right hand, and hold the leg up in front of them (it is important that the rider keeps the lower leg hanging down w/out the foot coming back). The rider's upper body must not rock forward or back.	1. This exercise allows the rider to clearly feel (find) each seat bone in the saddle. 2. Staying balanced while in motion without gripping or hanging on with legs.	(Est. 20-30 min) depending on student level of understanding and ability.

	<p>Gently put the leg down, while maintaining the feel. Repeat on other side.</p> <p>2. Now that each seat bone is clearly felt, ask the riders to move off at the walk and maintain this feel. If any of them lose the feel, repeat the exercise at the walk.</p> <p>3. Ask the riders to now tell you when they feel each seat bone slide forward.</p> <p>4. Then progress to trot and help each rider follow the horse with relaxed legs and a swinging pelvis.</p> <p>5. Have riders tell you when the inside hind leg pushes their inside seat forward.</p> <p>6. Progress to canter if ability level and time allows.</p>	<p>3. This gives the instructor the opportunity to explain that while the seat bone is sliding forward on one side, the hind leg is pushing it. This leads to discussion of timing of aids, as it is this moment the rider can most influence the hind leg to either reach more under, or to cross over.</p> <p>4. During the trot, ask each rider to keep track of their seat bones. If they lose the feeling on one side, they can return to the halt or walk and repeat the above exercise.</p> <p>5. Be prepared to deal with individual horse and rider issues.</p>	
<p>Conclusion/ Feedback</p>	<p>Ask each rider how he/she felt about his/her seat and balance at then end of the lesson. Did he/she notice if the horse went differently for him/her when they paid close attention to feeling their seat bones and the motion created by the horse in their pelvis.</p>	<p>Determine if the riders understood and were able to translate their feelings into words. Did they perform the exercise accurately?</p>	<p>(Est. 5-10 min)</p>