4.9 Mental Rehearsal, Imagery and Visualisation in Sport: 30-minute Pack

AQA 8582 · Calculators not allowed · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer in full sentences for questions worth 3 marks or more.

1 Define what is meant by 'kinaesthetic imagery' as it might be used by a gymnast preparing for a floor routine.

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 Describe one advantage of a footballer using internal imagery before taking a penalty kick.

(Total for Question 2 is 1 mark)

3 Describe one advantage of a gymnast using external imagery to review a routine during a competition break.

(Total for Question 3 is 1 mark)

4 A tennis player uses imagery after a point to reflect on a mistake. State two short-term benefits of using imagery in this way during a match.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

5 Evaluate the effectiveness of mental rehearsal and imagery for a performer preparing for an important competition, using a named sporting example such as a gymnast preparing for a national final. Make a clear judgement and support it with reasons and evidence.

(Total for Question 5 is 6 marks)

6 A penalty taker occasionally finds themselves accidentally picturing the ball missing the target rather than scoring. Explain why it is important that a performer can CONTROL the content of their imagery.

(Total for Question 6 is 2 marks)

7 State one limitation of using mental rehearsal and imagery as a mental preparation technique.

(Total for Question 7 is 1 mark)

8 Explain one way a swimming coach could support a nervous young swimmer in using mental rehearsal effectively before their first big gala.

(Total for Question 8 is 2 marks)

9 A tennis player uses imagery to prepare for an opponent they have played, and beaten, before. Explain one tactical benefit of using imagery in this way.

(Total for Question 9 is 2 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

10 Explain three specific benefits a footballer recovering from a serious knee injury could gain from using mental rehearsal regularly during a long rehabilitation programme.

(Total for Question 10 is 3 marks)

11 Discuss how the shooter's use of mental rehearsal and imagery could differ before, during and after the match, applying at least one specific use to each of these three points in time, and reach a judgement about which is likely to be the most valuable use for this shooter.

(Total for Question 11 is 6 marks)

12 A footballer experiences anxiety before a penalty shootout. Explain two ways external imagery could help reduce anxiety and improve decision making for the penalty taker.

(Total for Question 12 is 2 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

13 A diver called Kwame is about to perform an important dive and uses internal imagery immediately before his run-up. Explain three specific aspects Kwame should imagine to prepare physically and mentally for the dive.

(Total for Question 13 is 3 marks)

14 Compare how easily a beginner and an experienced, elite performer are likely to be able to create a detailed and accurate mental image of a complex skill.

(Total for Question 14 is 2 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

Mark scheme · 4.9 Mental Rehearsal, Imagery and Visualisation in Sport: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

imagining the feel/physical sensations of performing the movement in the muscles and body, rather than only seeing a picture of it, oe **B1**

Answer: Kinaesthetic imagery means imagining the feel of the movement in the muscles and body, rather than only seeing a picture of it.

Question 2

increases focus by rehearsing the feeling and timing of the kick, oe **B1**

Answer: It increases focus by allowing the player to rehearse the feeling and timing of the kick from their own perspective.

Question 3

helps spot form or alignment errors by viewing performance from outside, oe **B1**

Answer: External imagery helps the gymnast spot form or alignment errors by mentally viewing the routine from outside.

Question 4

helps quickly identify and correct technical errors, oe **B1**

helps regain focus and reduce rumination about the mistake, oe **B1**

Answer: It helps the player quickly identify and correct technical errors, and helps them regain focus and reduce rumination about the mistake.

Question 5

Level 3 A balanced and well developed evaluation, using a named sporting example, that explains multiple benefits and limitations of imagery, links each point to performance outcomes, and reaches a clear, supported judgement. **5-6**

Level 2 A clear discussion with some developed points about benefits and limitations and an overall judgement, but may lack full depth or example linkage. **3-4**

Level 1 A limited response that states a few relevant points about imagery with little development or application to the named example. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- Benefits: imagery can build confidence by repeatedly picturing successful execution, reducing pre-competition anxiety for a gymnast.
- Benefits: imagery rehearses timing, spatial awareness and kinaesthetic feel when physical practice is limited, conserving energy and sharpening mental preparation.
- Limitations: imagery does not provide the same kinaesthetic feedback as physical practice, so technical errors may persist unless combined with physical rehearsal.
- Limitations: poorly guided imagery or vivid focus on failure could increase anxiety; the performer needs correct content for imagery to be effective.
- Application: a gymnast could use internal imagery to feel rotations and landings and external imagery to review form, but must also do physical run-throughs to check muscle conditioning and safety.
- Judgement: a reasoned conclusion might state that imagery is an effective complementary tool that enhances focus and confidence when used alongside physical practice, but is unlikely to replace the need for physical rehearsal entirely.

Question 6

if a performer cannot control their imagery, they may picture the skill going wrong (e.g. missing the target) rather than succeeding, oe **B1**

rehearsing a mistake in the mind can reduce confidence and increase the chance of actually making that mistake, so controllable, positive imagery is needed for the technique to help rather than harm performance, oe **B1**

Answer: If a performer cannot control their imagery they may picture the skill going wrong rather than succeeding, and rehearsing a mistake in the mind can reduce confidence and increase the chance of actually making it, so controllable, positive imagery is needed for the technique to help rather than harm performance.

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

Question 7

e.g. some performers find it difficult to create clear/vivid mental images, or it takes practice to use effectively, or it cannot fully replace physical practice of a skill, oe (any one valid limitation) **B1**

Answer: Some performers find it difficult to create clear, vivid mental images, and it cannot fully replace actual physical practice of the skill.

Question 8

the coach could talk the swimmer through a positive, successful mental image of the race in detail, e.g. describing the start, stroke technique and finish, oe **B1**

this can help the swimmer build a clearer, more controlled and more confident picture than they might create alone, oe **B1**

Answer: The coach could talk the swimmer through a positive, detailed mental image of the race, describing the start, technique and finish, helping the swimmer build a clearer, more controlled and confident picture than they might create alone.

Question 9

the player can mentally rehearse specific tactics or shots that worked well against this opponent before, or picture how to respond to the opponent's known strengths, oe **B1**

this can help the player feel more prepared and confident about their game plan going into the match, oe **B1**

Answer: The player can mentally rehearse specific tactics that worked well against this opponent before, which can help them feel more prepared and confident about their game plan going into the match.

Question 10

maintains the mental picture/memory of key movements and skills while the player is unable to train physically, oe **B1**

helps reduce anxiety about re-injury when eventually returning to full training or matches, oe **B1**

helps maintain focus and motivation during what can be a long, frustrating rehabilitation period, oe **B1**

Answer: Mental rehearsal maintains the mental picture of key skills while the player cannot train physically, helps reduce anxiety about re-injury on returning, and helps maintain focus and motivation through a long, frustrating rehabilitation period.

Question 11

Level 3 A well-developed discussion that applies at least one clear, accurate use of imagery to each of before, during and after the match for the named shooter, and reaches a well-justified judgement about which use is most valuable, supported by reasoning. **5-6**

Level 2 Some accurate application of imagery to at least two of the three time points, with a judgement offered but only partly justified. **3-4**

Level 1 Basic or generic statements about mental rehearsal with little application to the specific timing of before, during or after the match, and no clear judgement. **1-2**

Level 0 No relevant content. **0**

Indicative content:

- Before the match: the shooter could use internal imagery to mentally rehearse taking and scoring shots from typical positions, building confidence and a controlled, vivid mental picture of successful performance before play begins.
- During the match: at a break in play, such as a timeout or between quarters, the shooter could briefly use imagery to mentally reset after a missed shot, picturing the correct technique for the next attempt rather than dwelling on the miss.
- After the match: the shooter could review the game by mentally replaying key moments, picturing what could be done differently in similar situations next time, using imagery as reflection rather than preparation.
- A shooter's imagery content should reflect the specific, repeated skill of shooting under pressure at goal, so vividness and controllability of the image (seeing and feeling a successful shot rather than a missed one) matter at every time point.
- A balanced judgement might argue the before-match use is most valuable, since it sets up confidence and readiness for the whole game, or alternatively that the during-match use is most valuable, since it can immediately repair confidence after a specific mistake when it matters most.
- Overall, using imagery at all three points gives the shooter a more complete mental preparation and recovery routine than relying on only one point in time.

Question 12

external imagery can help the player see successful execution from outside, building confidence by picturing success, oe **B1**

external imagery can help the player evaluate body position and run-up mechanics as if coached, improving decision making about placement, oe **B1**

Answer: External imagery can help the player picture a successful kick from outside, which builds confidence, and can let the player mentally evaluate body position and run-up mechanics as if coached, improving decision making about placement.

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

Question 13

imagine the exact body position and tension during take-off to prepare muscles, oe	**B1**
imagine the timing of the jump and rotation to coordinate kinesthetic sense, oe	**B1**
imagine a successful entry into the water to build confidence and reduce negative thoughts, oe	**B1**

Answer: He should imagine the exact body position and muscle tension during take-off, imagine the timing of the jump and rotation so his kinesthetic sense is primed, and imagine a successful entry into the water to build confidence and reduce negative thoughts.

Question 14

an experienced/elite performer is likely to find it easier to create a detailed, accurate mental image, because they already have a clear understanding of what the correct technique looks and feels like, oe	**B1**
a beginner may struggle to picture the skill accurately or in detail, since they have less experience of performing it correctly to draw on, oe	**B1**

Answer: An experienced or elite performer is likely to find it easier to create a detailed, accurate mental image, because they already know what the correct technique looks and feels like, whereas a beginner may struggle to picture the skill accurately since they have less experience of performing it correctly.

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk