



PE.SP9 Mental Rehearsal, Imagery and Visualisation in Sport

AQA 8582 · Calculators not allowed · about 25 minutes

Total Marks

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Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer in full sentences for questions worth 3 marks or more. Allow 25 minutes for the full pack.

1 Which of the following best defines mental rehearsal or imagery in sport?

- ☐ A) Practising a physical skill repeatedly with a coach present
- ☐ B) Seeing or feeling a skill or performance in the mind before or during doing it
- ☐ C) Warming up the muscles before competition
- ☐ D) Measuring progress using performance statistics

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 Define internal imagery in the context of a gymnast mentally preparing for a floor routine.

(Total for Question 2 is 1 mark)

3 Define external imagery in the context of a footballer visualising taking a penalty kick.

(Total for Question 3 is 1 mark)

4 State two differences between internal and external imagery, using a named sporting example in the prompt to set context: a diver preparing for a dive.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

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

(Total for Question 5 is 1 mark)

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

(Total for Question 6 is 1 mark)

- 7** A high jumper uses imagery in the warm-up before a meet. State two specific things the athlete could rehearse using internal imagery to improve performance.

(Total for Question 7 is 2 marks)

- 8** 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 8 is 2 marks)

- 9** Aerial skater Priya practices a new sequence of moves. Describe one way she could use imagery during practice sessions to speed up learning of the sequence.

(Total for Question 9 is 2 marks)

- 10** 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 10 is 3 marks)

- 11** 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 11 is 2 marks)

- 12** Name one sensory modality besides visual imagery that performers might include when mentally rehearsing a gymnastics routine.

(Total for Question 12 is 1 mark)

- 13** A football captain uses imagery during half-time to plan tactical changes for the second half. Explain three ways this use of imagery could support decision making and team communication.

(Total for Question 13 is 3 marks)

- 14** 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 14 is 6 marks)

Mark scheme · PE.SP9 Mental Rehearsal, Imagery and Visualisation in Sport

Question 1

- **B1 B**
- **Answer: B (Seeing or feeling a skill or performance in the mind before or during doing it)**

Question 2

- **B1** seeing the skill from the performer's own point of view, oe
- **Answer: Internal imagery is picturing the routine from the gymnast's own eyes, as if they are experiencing the actions themselves.**

Question 3

- **B1** watching oneself perform from an outside viewpoint, oe
- **Answer: External imagery is picturing oneself performing the kick as if watching from outside the body, like viewing a replay.**

Question 4

- **B1** internal: seen from diver's own eyes, oe
- **B1** external: seen as if watching the diver from outside, oe
- **Answer: Internal imagery: the diver sees the dive from their own eye line; External imagery: the diver sees themselves from outside, like a spectator or coach.**

Question 5

- **B1** increases focus by rehearsing the feeling and timing of the kick, oe
- **Answer: It increases focus by allowing the player to rehearse the feeling and timing of the kick from their own perspective.**

Question 6

- **B1** helps spot form or alignment errors by viewing performance from outside, oe
- **Answer: External imagery helps the gymnast spot form or alignment errors by mentally viewing the routine from outside.**

Question 7

- **B1** rehearse the run-up rhythm and stride pattern from their own viewpoint, oe
- **B1** rehearse the take-off timing and body position at the bar from their own eyes, oe
- **Answer: For example, rehearsing the run-up rhythm and stride pattern from their own viewpoint, and rehearsing the take-off timing and body position at the bar from their own eyes.**

Question 8

- **B1** 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
- **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.**

Question 9

- **B1** use internal imagery to mentally rehearse the feeling and timing of each movement in sequence, oe
- **B1** combine mental rehearsal with physical practice so that practising mentally between attempts reinforces the motor pattern, oe
- **Answer: She could use internal imagery to mentally rehearse the feeling and timing of each movement in the sequence, and do this between physical attempts so the mental rehearsal reinforces the motor pattern.**

Question 10

- **B1** 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
- **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 11

- **B1** helps quickly identify and correct technical errors, oe
- **B1** helps regain focus and reduce rumination about the mistake, oe
- **Answer: It helps the player quickly identify and correct technical errors, and helps them regain focus and reduce rumination about the mistake.**

Question 12

- **B1** kinesthetic or kinaesthetic (feeling of movement) or auditory or tactile
- **Answer: Kinesthetic (feeling of movement).**

Question 13

- **B1** imagery can help the captain mentally rehearse specific plays, making the tactical idea clearer to communicate, oe
- **B1** imagery can help anticipate opponents' positions and likely responses, improving decision making, oe
- **B1** imagery can help the captain practise concise instructions and body language to use when speaking to teammates, improving clarity of communication, oe
- **Answer: Imagery can help the captain mentally rehearse specific plays so the tactical idea is clearer to communicate, help anticipate opponents' positions and likely responses to improve decisions, and help practise concise instructions and body language to use when speaking to teammates.**

Question 14

- **Level 3** (5-6): 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.
- **Level 2** (3-4): A clear discussion with some developed points about benefits and limitations and an overall judgement, but may lack full depth or example linkage.
- **Level 1** (1-2): A limited response that states a few relevant points about imagery with little development or application to the named example.
- **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.