



# CANADIAN OLYMPIC ACTIVITY CHALLENGE



## FIGURE SKATING

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The name “figure skating” refers to making figures in the ice, and it is a sport that involves art and skills. Figure Skating first started in Scotland in 1742, and was first seen in the Olympic Games as a summer sport in 1908 and 1920. It was later featured at the first Olympic Winter Games in 1924 in Chamonix, France.

There are different events in figure skating, where athletes skate either alone or with a partner. The skaters compete in one of four events including the men’s and women’s singles, pairs, and ice dance. In all of these, the skaters will perform a short and a long program.

In pairs and ice dance, the skaters will compete as a couple. Pairs involve jumps and lifts, where they are lifted in the air above a shoulder level. Ice dance is different, the position is more like in ballroom dancing. It focuses more on the footwork and skills. While there are no jumps in ice dance, there are spins. The judges are much more focused on expression and technique.

The equipment used are skates with a sharp blade which help create patterns on the ice. The blade is sharpened with a groove in the middle to create an inside and outside edge. The toe of the blade has jagged teeth (toe picks) that help launch the skaters in the air for jumping. The clothing the skaters wear in Figure Skating are beautiful and flashy, and compliment the music style.

The judges assign a base score to all the elements in skating. They then grade the skaters on their technical execution and artistic performance

Learn more about Figure Skating at: [www.skatecanada.ca](http://www.skatecanada.ca).



# FIGURE SKATING TRIVIA

## HIGHLIGHTS



Barbara Ann Scott

- With 25 Olympic medals, Canada is one of the best figure skating countries in the world. Other strong nations include the United States and Russia.
- The first Canadian figure skater to win Olympic gold was Barbara Ann Scott at St. Moritz 1948. After winning the European Championships in 1947, the City of Ottawa gave her a car. She had to return it to retain her amateur status. After winning the Olympic gold, the City gave her back the car with the license plate "48-U-1".
- Canada's Patrick Chan and the ice dance pair of Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir hold world records for the highest scores in their events.

## FEATURED ATHLETE



### KAETLYN OSMOND

OLYMPIAN, SOCHI 2014

Kaetlyn Osmond grew up in the small community of Marystown, Newfoundland. She watched her big sister (Natasha) skate, and it wasn't long before she decided to give figure skating a try. When her family moved to Montreal for Natasha's skating, Kaetlyn started to shine. Soon, she began to win. At the age of 16, she beat the older skaters to win the Skate Canada International. Kaetlyn didn't stop there. Two years later she won an Olympic silver medal in Sochi 2014, and a silver at the 2017 World Championships. Marystown was so proud that they named their arena after her.

Learn more about Kaetlyn Osmond at [www.olympic.ca](http://www.olympic.ca).

# FIGURE SKATING ACTIVITIES


Described below are daily figure skating physical activities that can be used in the classroom and gym. Have fun!

## FREESKATE PROGRAM

In the Freeskate Program, skaters must skate a routine to music that contains jumps, spins, and footwork. This includes performing 5 to 7 jumps, 2 to 3 spins, and a step sequence. This activity will simulate what is expected from a skater during a program, using a continuous lane format.

 **Participants:** 2 small groups of approx. 10-12 students

 **Space:** gymnasium

 **Equipment:** 6 hula hoops, 12 cones/pylons, 4 agility ladders (or similar set up and length)

### SET UP:

In two separate areas, randomly place 3 hula hoops, 6 cones and 2 agility ladders (or similar set up and length)

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: SPIN POSITIONS



Pirouette debout



Pirouette assise



Pirouette arabesque

2. Visit each pylon/cone and perform a full rotation jump.
  3. Visit the agility ladder and perform “fancy footwork” through the ladder.
- In between skills, the students must continue moving.
  - Only 1 student at a time per cone/pylon, hoop or agility ladder.
  - This activity should take between 2 – 3 mins.
  - Students should try to cover as much distance as possible between elements (e.g., do a jump at one end, then go to the other end to do their next jump).
  - When all the elements have been completed, the student will choose a spot to stop in a pose and hold until everyone else is done.

### ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

- Have students space themselves around and in the set-up area, not in a hoop, ladder or beside a pylon.
- On **the teacher’s signal**, the students must:
  1. Visit each hula hoop and hold a different stationary spin position for 5 seconds, to simulate a spin on the ice. Each spin must be in a different basic position: Camel, Sit or Upright. See variations available for Upright. Se rendre à chaque cône pour y effectuer un saut avec une rotation complète.


### ACTIVITY EXTENSIONS:

- Add music to be interpreted throughout this exercise.
- Add forwards, backwards and sideways movement between skills.
- Perform the exercise in pairs (mirror each other).

# JUMP CHALLENGE

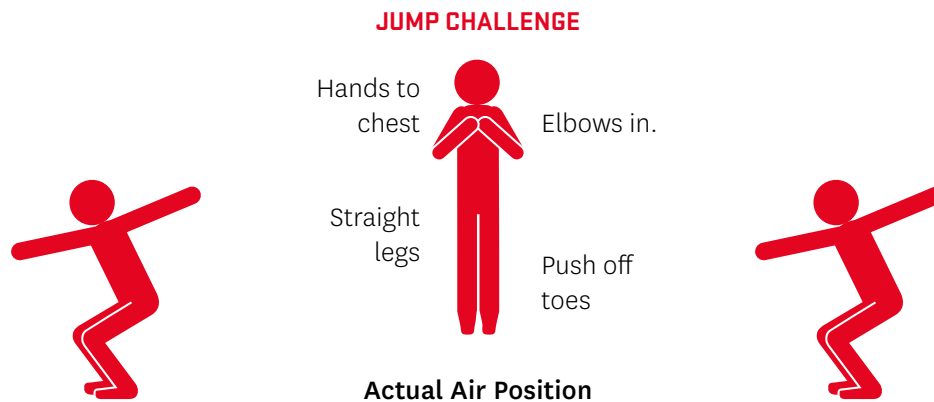
In figure skating, skaters must perform jumps in the air with multiple rotations. This exercise will introduce students to rotational axis, stability, and body awareness.

 **Participants:** 1 group

 **Space:** gymnasium or other wide space

 **Equipment:** none

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: JUMP POSITIONS



## ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

- Have students space themselves on the gym floor.
- To ensure each student has enough space around them, have the students extend their arms out fully and rotate upper body. They should not be able to touch another student.
- Starting in a square position (feet parallel and under hips, shoulder square with hips), have the students bend their knees slightly to lower their centre of gravity and bring their core forward over their knees.
- With arms extended to start, have students jump into the air, by pushing downward through their knees, ankles, and toes, and bring arms into the body (elbows down and at sides, with hands close to the chest, hand holding fist, if possible).
- In the air, legs and body should be straight.
- To land, have students attempt to place their feet in the exact spot of take-off, easing their body weight gently over the balls of their feet, and returning to the exact take-off position (knees slightly bent, and core slightly forward).
- Repeat exercise 5 times.


## VARIANTES :

- Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  rotation in the airAjoutez un demi-tour dans les airs.
- Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  rotation in the air
- Add 1 full rotation in the air
- Add 1- $\frac{1}{2}$  rotations in the air.
- Add 2 rotations in the air
- Add speed between landing and take-off of next jump

# CREATIVE EXPRESSION

In figure skating, there are 2 areas of performance; technical (jumps and spins) and artistic (interpretation to the music). This exercise explores creativity, expression, and body movement that can be used on the ice.

 **Participants:** 1 group

 **Space:** gymnasium

 **Equipment:** music, music player, speakers

## SET UP:

- Create a playlist of different samples of music with a variety of tempos, rhythms, and styles.
- Recommended length of music: 45-60 seconds.

## ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

- Have students space themselves on the gym floor and strike a pose.
- Play music and have the students explore moves that match the timing, expression or mood of the song.
- Encourage use of space and levels (high, medium, low).
- Identify different types of movement (sharp, slow, continuous) as well as intent of movement (forceful, shy, scared, etc.).
- Repeat exercise with next selection of music.

## VARIANTES :

- Add scarves or other props to encourage or extend movement.
  - Challenge students to only use one primary part of the body (e.g., only the hands, elbows, shoulders, knees, heels, toes, etc.).
- Perform in pairs as a mirror exercise. Perform in pairs or as a group, as a relay exercise.

# BRINGING IT TO THE CLASSROOM

Use the Internet to research one of Canada's Olympic figure skaters. Imagine that you are an announcer at the PyeongChang 2018 Olympics. Write and perform for your class an introduction for your skater.

## INSTANT ACTIVITY:

Only have a minute of classroom time to get up and be active? This activity will get the heart pumping. Figure skaters need flexibility and balance to perform their spins.

Stand on one foot, bend from waist and with upper body parallel to the floor, extend your other leg backwards and up so that you are in a camel spin position. Hold this position for as long as you can. Now try the other leg.