















Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Level 1						
Stationary toe touch	From a standing position on two feet, skaters hinge at the hips to touch their toes with a slight bend in the knees.	Skaters learn to control the balance on their blades as they shift their weight forwards-backwards. Having an understanding of balance points is important for maintaining upright positioning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure skaters have a strong balance position before initiating touching their toes ✓ Slight bend in knees is encouraged 	Simon Says Follow the Leader Partner Mirrors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Weight is balanced evenly between the two skates approximately hip distance apart ✓ Knees remain relatively straight (testing hamstring flexibility) 	Simon Says
 Marching on the spot	Skaters stand stationary on the ice, with feet approximately hip distance apart, and alternate lifting the left and right foot.	Skaters begin to learn how to utilize and balance on each foot. This transfer of weight is essential to developing a skating stride.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In a natural stance, emphasize lifting each foot off the ice to initiate weight transfer ✓ Skaters should develop a natural rhythm in their march 	Simon Says Partner Mirrors Captain's Coming (climb the mast)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 10 marches (5 left and 5 right) sequentially ✓ Body remains relatively motionless in space ✓ Fluid, natural rhythm 	Simon Says
Sideways steps <i>Left and Right</i>	Skaters take multiple lateral steps to the left (and to the right), with each foot coming off the ice and remaining parallel to each other.	Skaters begin to learn how to utilize and balance on each foot. This lateral transfer of weight is essential to developing a skating stride.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters should take steps approximately shoulder width apart ✓ Emphasize the push off the inside edge to bring feet back together and initiate weight transfer 	Simon Says Follow the Leader Partner Mirrors Magic finger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 5 steps to the right, followed by 5 steps to the left ✓ Feet remain uncrossed (parallel) during the sidesteps ✓ Each foot must come off the ice 	Simon Says
Successfully participates in a 30-minute session	Skaters participate fully in a 30-minute session without requiring off-ice breaks.	Skaters begin to increase their tolerance for structured physical activity away from their parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Build healthy habits early: schedule rest breaks, model active rest, schedule water breaks, etc. ✓ Educate parents in advance (e.g. use the bathroom prior to getting on the ice, no visiting parents at rinkside for safety, trips off-ice are for urgent situations only (equipment issues, urgent bathroom breaks, significant behaviour issues threatening skater safety)) 	Modelling Parent education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters are fully engaged in their 30-minute session ✓ No off-ice breaks needed ✓ Individual adaptations for special needs are permitted 	Observation
Stable static position	Skaters balance on two blades in a stationary position with feet shoulder distance apart.	Being able to balance on blades is one of the first skills a new skater must master as part of their skating literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Feet shoulder width apart with slight bend in the knees. ✓ Head and eyes looking straight forward. 	Simon Says Follow the Leader Partner Mirrors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maintain a static, upright 2-footed position for at least 5 seconds ✓ Position must be stable ✓ Position must allow movement to begin when cued 	Simon Says
Controlled lower to the ice	Skaters can move from a stationary standing position to sitting down on the ice in a controlled fashion.	Skaters must learn body control and movement. This skill begins to teach skaters how to fall with control.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To control a slow movement to the ice, try some counting exercises to tempo the movement ✓ Ensure head and shoulders do not get ahead of the hips ✓ Skaters may use their hands to help control the lowering 	Simon Says Follow the Leader Partner Mirrors Blocked practice Seated games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Falls (intentionally + naturally + safely) without injuring self ✓ Controlled movement with some protective reactions 	Simon Says
Get up with assistance	With external support, skaters can push into a standing position.	This skill is a progression to assist skaters with the confidence of getting up on their own.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skater in a kneeling position with one knee on the ice and one blade on the ice ✓ Skaters may use various sources of external assistance: a helper to stabilize their blade on the ice, an external object to push up on, leaning slightly against the boards ✓ If skaters do not require the assistance, progress directly to getting up independently 	Simon Says Blocked practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Moves independently onto all 4's and plants one skate on the ice ✓ Pushes up into standing independently with external support 	Observation
 Make snow <i>Left and Right</i>	From a standing position on two feet, skaters can bend their knees and extend one leg by pushing one blade away from the body to make snow on the ice.	This skill is a progression for stopping. It allows skaters to begin to explore the concept of edges on their blades and how to create extra pressure to create a stopping motion on the ice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Practice on both feet ✓ Skaters who are unable to push their foot out to the side are likely not balanced on the standing leg 	Snowball target toss Erase marker on the ice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 5 pushes on left and right foot. ✓ Must push with enough pressure to generate some snow 	Snowball target toss


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  Forward steps	Skaters step and move forwards, with each foot coming off the ice.	As skaters begin to get more comfortable on their blades, taking forward steps will assist in building their confidence to gain more forward momentum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage skater to move forwards at their own pace with their head up ✓ Emphasize a marching action can help reiterate the need to pick both feet off the ice. 	What time is it Mr. Wolf Simon Says Partner Mirrors Magic Finger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 10 steps (5 left and 5 right) sequentially ✓ Body moves in a forward direction 	Simon Says What time is it Mr. Wolf
  Fundamental skating skills off the ice	Skaters complete fundamental skating skills (get up independently, march on the spot, forward steps, backwards steps, sideways steps) with their skates on, in an off-ice environment.	These off-ice skills are included to help skaters gain stability and confidence in their skates off the ice. These skills should ideally be worked on during the first few practices, before stepping on the ice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Practicing these skills off the ice is less threatening as skaters are not on the slippery ice surface. ✓ This is a great warm up activity before a practice starts. 	Simon Says Follow the Leader Partner Mirrors What time is it Mr. Wolf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skills are ideally achieved (on skates, off-ice) before going on-ice ✓ Mature movement patterns are not required 	Simon Says
Level 2						
 Stationary 360 degree rotation	Skaters turn on the spot in a complete circle (360 degrees), with or without lifting their feet from the ice. Can be done in either direction.	Skaters learn to control the balance on their blades as they shift their weight in a rotational direction. Having an understanding of balance points is important for maintaining upright positioning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters should focus on maintaining a square position with their shoulders and hip throughout the turn. ✓ Skaters will have a natural turning direction, allow them to turn in which ever direction is most comfortable for them. 	Simon Says Follow the Leader Partner Mirrors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skater turns on the spot, either stepping or spinning ✓ Must remain standing throughout, including stopping the turning motion at the end 	Simon Says
 Stationary 1-foot balance <i>Left and Right</i>	From a standing position on two feet, skaters lift one foot off the ice and maintain a balanced position.	Skaters standing on one foot are exploring the concept of weight transfer. Having an understanding of balance points is important for maintaining upright positioning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To improve balance: have skaters choose a (visual) focus point and/or allow one fingertip contacting a surface ✓ Some skaters may have more success with moving 1-foot balance to build confidence 	Simon Says Follow the Leader Partner Mirrors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Balance on each leg (left and right) for the count of "I love to speed skate" ✓ Non-standing leg must be completely off the ice 	Simon Says
 Stationary 2-foot jump	From a stationary standing position on two feet, skaters jump and land back on two feet maintaining stability.	Skaters executing a jump on the ice learn to put downward pressure into the ice followed by an explosive extension of the legs in order to lift themselves off this ice. Skaters will utilize a similar connection and extension as they learn to accelerate their stride.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Emphasize the downward pressure and connection to the ice. ✓ Emphasize the powerful extension needed to get off the ice. ✓ The jump doesn't have to be big, but ensure the skater gets two feet off the ice. 	Simon Says Speed bump Popcorn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Take off and land on two feet ✓ Both feet must leave the ice at the same time. ✓ Must retain balance throughout the jump and landing 	Simon Says
 Pick up object off the ice in stationary standing	From a standing position on two feet, skaters hinge at the hips to pick up an ankle-high object placed in front of their feet.	Skaters learn to control the balance on their blades as they shift their weight forwards-backwards, while also needing to direct attention elsewhere (the object). Having an understanding of balance points is important for maintaining upright positioning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This is a fun skill for the skaters. To advance this skill, experiment with different-sized objects to challenge a skater's flexibility, balance, and accuracy. 	Mini Clean Sweep/"Mess" Catch (with large ball or balloon)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Picks up an object (approximately ankle-height high and placed immediately in front of the skater) ✓ Maintains balance when bending and when returning to standing ✓ Knees remain relatively straight (testing hamstring flexibility) 	Catch
  Get up independently on-ice	Skaters get up from the ice to a standing position independently.	This is a very important skill to master early in a skaters development to ensure independence on the ice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure the skater is keeping their blade flat (anchored) on the ice ✓ Skaters can push off the ice or their knee with their hands 	Sit/stand games Blocked practice Car crash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pushes up into standing independently (skaters can push off their knee or the ice) ✓ Maintains balance once standing 	Simon Says



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 Forwards skate	Skaters move forwards with a natural rhythm, allowing the blades to glide between steps.	This is a very important movement pattern in the sport of speed skating, other ice sports and skating recreationally. It will continue to be technically refined as a skaters continues to develop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A push glide sequence should be emphasized: pushing to the side and returning pushing leg to the centre of the body ✓ Although we may not see it at this stage of development, emphasize bent knee to extension movement pattern ✓ Skills will begin to be measured in metres. On a hockey rink, distances can be approximated using <u>hockey markings</u> 	Mini Clean Sweep Freeze Tag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Moves forward without falling for at least 10m 	Observation
2-foot glide	After generating forward movement, skaters glide on two feet parallel to each other approximately hip distance apart.	Skaters learn to maintain forward momentum with the execution of a glide. This is an important skill in skating literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters first must be able to generate some momentum in a forward direction in order to maintain a glide. ✓ Ensure blades are parallel and knees are slightly bent in glide position 	Snakes and ladders How far can you glide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Initiates forward movement independently ✓ Glides on two (parallel) skates for 3m ✓ Acceptable to have some instability in the ankles, provided feet remain parallel and hip distance apart 	Snakes and ladders
Backward steps	Skaters can step backward, with each foot coming off the ice.	Skaters must be able to move in all directions on the ice. This is important skill in skating literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ When travelling backwards, skaters must shift their weight slightly forward ✓ Encourage skaters to go at their own pace with little steps ✓ Momentum is gained through pushing off the inside edge in C cut pattern 	Simon Says Partner mirror Line dancing Magic finger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 10 steps (5 left and 5 right) sequentially ✓ Body moves in a backwards direction ✓ Fluid, natural rhythm 	Simon Says
Push an object	Skaters push an object forwards on the ice (chair, teaching aid, bucket, mats etc).	When skaters push an object, they have an extra aid for stability and therefore feel more confident to move faster. This sense of security can allow them to explore acceleration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure skaters do not bear weight or lean on the object. ✓ Ensure skaters do not solely rely on skating with an object. It should be used to gain confidence in their own skating ability. 	Clean Sweep (push objects) Big/little push 2-handed bucket race Sleigh rides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Push a bucket, half-mat, or other similar object in a straight line for 10m ✓ Grip on the object should be for balance only (excessive weightbearing through the object is not acceptable) ✓ May use a combination of forwards skating and forwards gliding ✓ Acceleration in the skaters speed should be evident 	2-handed bucket race
 Fun interactions with fellow skaters	Skaters contribute to, and enjoy, fun interactions with each other a majority of the time.	During Active Start and Fundamental stages of Long Term Development, skaters should be enjoying their activity and having fun with their friends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A quality sport program keeps participants engaged in a fun environment while at the same time developing sport skills ✓ Skaters will need modelling and support with this skill, as their social and intellectual skills are not yet fully developed 	Modelling Parent education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enjoys age-appropriate interactions with other skaters, as demonstrated by positive behaviours (smiling, laughing, chatting) ✓ Manages conflict with support from an adult 	Observation
Level 3						
Moving 180 degree rotation <i>Clockwise and Counter clockwise</i>	While skating forwards along a trajectory, skaters turn their bodies to backwards and maintain backwards movement.	Skaters learn to control the balance on their blades as they shift their weight in a rotational direction. Having an understanding of balance points is important for maintaining upright positioning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Most skaters will use a stepping action, or a combination of a spin + steps, to achieve a 180 degree rotation ✓ Encourage skaters to make the rotation as tight as possible ✓ Skaters are encouraged to explore turning in both directions (clockwise and counter clockwise) 	Circuits Simon Says Follow the leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skater gains some forward momentum and turns by either stepping or spinning, while maintaing some momentum in the exiting in the backward direction ✓ Must remain standing throughout 	Simon Says
Stationary kick object <i>Left and Right</i>	Skaters can safely kick an object placed on the ice with one foot/skate.	Skaters balance on one leg while the non-standing leg is in motion. Developing this balance will help skaters be able to glide on one leg for longer during the skating stride.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Practice on both feet ✓ Be extra cautious of practicing this skill with skaters in close proximity to each other ✓ Be cautious of the kicking action while skaters have sharpe blades on their skates. 	Curling (kick to target) Soccer dribbling (with balloon) Puck soccer Hula hoop kick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cleanly kicks the object in the intended direction ✓ Kicking leg must be off the ice ✓ Must remain standing throughtout 	Curling (kick to target)

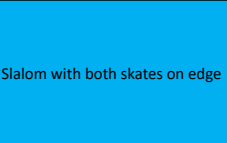
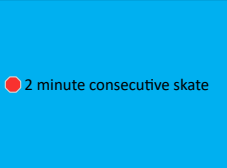
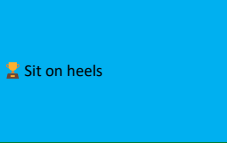
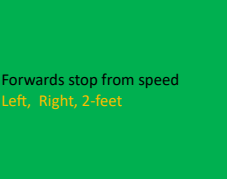
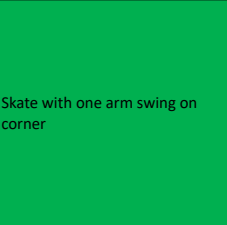

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Bubbles	Skaters initiate a repeatable forward "bubble" pattern on the ice beginning with their heels together, bending their knees and applying pressure to the inside edge of their skate to create bubble shapes with their skates, finishing the movement by bringing their toes together.	Skaters learn to utilize their inside edges to move in a forward direction without picking their feet up off the ice. This movement requires purposeful blade contact and connection to the ice to maintain the movement. Skaters learn to apply and release this pressure which will assist in stride development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Emphasize knee bend and downward pressure into the ice to complete the widest part of the bubble with some rise in the knees to restart the movement pattern. ✓ Can say "toes together, heels together, as key words during the movement" 	Bubble races Obstacle course Follow the leader Simon Says	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Must complete 5 bubbles ✓ Skates must open to wider than hip width, then narrow to nearly touching, while maintaining contact with the ice (skates lifting off the ice is not acceptable) 	Simon Says
🔥 Forwards stop Left, Right, 2-feet	Skaters stop their forward momentum by an indicated location. The stop is initiated with one foot (left or right) or two feet.	Skaters learning to stop is a very important aspect of skating literacy, safety and independence on the ice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use short skating distances in order to repeat the stop frequently ✓ Ensure skaters explore stopping with two feet, the left foot and the right foot. 	Circuits Cross-ice What time is it Mr. Wolf? Line shuttles Red light/green light	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Left foot, right foot, or 2-foot wedge stops are accepted ✓ Must completely stop forward motion by the indicated location ✓ Must maintain balance after stopping 	Line shuttles
Start from static on a cue	Skaters stand stationary on the ice, then begin forward movement when cued.	In a learn to skate environment, this skill introduces the concept of starts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use short skating distances in order to repeat the start frequently ✓ To add fun to this skill, cue skaters with a funny sound or stimulus (ie rubber chicken) 	What time is it Mr. Wolf? Line shuttles Red light/green light	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maintains a static 2-footed position (that would allow movement to begin) for at least 2 feet ✓ Starts moving forward without falling when directed 	Line shuttles
1-foot glide Left and Right	After generating forward movement, skaters shift their balance (centre of gravity) and glide on one foot.	Skaters that can glide on one foot are developing the concept of weight transfer. Having an understanding of balance points is important for maintaining upright positioning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure skaters transfer their weight to their gliding leg to maintain a balanced position ✓ Non-standing leg should be clearly off the ice in a controlled position 	Cross-ice Circuits Follow the leader Airplanes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Initiates forward movement independently ✓ Glides on each skate for 1m with non-standing leg off the ice 	Simon Says Follow the leader
🔥 Backward skate	Skaters move backwards, allowing the blades to glide between steps.	Backwards skating develops balance and coordination. Having the ability to skate backwards allows skaters to participate in other skating pursuits (leisure skating, hockey, ringette, figure skating, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters should transfer their weight from one leg to another and move their blades in a C shape motion, shifting the balance point on their blade 	Circuits Cross-ice Line shuttles (fwd/back)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Moves backward without falling for at least 10m ✓ Skates remain on the ice ✓ Wiggling motion used to generate motion 	Simon Says Follow the leader
2-foot turn Left and Right	Skaters follow a defined curve with two feet on the ice and maintain a forward direction.	This is the first skill that introduces turning around a curve. This is an important skill for skating literacy leading to all skating activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage skaters to keep feet parallel and a consistent distance apart ✓ Encourage skaters to explore the impact of upper body rotation and body lean entering the turn 	Circuits Mini figure 8's Mini circles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Follows the defined curve (at least 180 degrees with a radius of approximately 2m) ✓ Stays within 2m radius of the centre point of the curve 	Circuits
🔴 Skate independently to the lesson	Skaters locate, skate to, and stop at the coach's location to begin the practice.	As the practices become more complex, skaters will be required to meet the coach in various locations on the ice. It is important that skaters can arrive into a group setting in a controlled manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Be sure to be visible on the ice and wave skaters in your group over if you notice them looking for you. ✓ If possible, have identifiable markers or signage on the ice that indicates where a group is starting their lesson for the day. 	Blocked practice Modelling Whistle blast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Arrives independently from the ice entry point to the coach ✓ Stops in a controlled fashion when joining the group 	Observation
Willingness to try new challenges	Skaters are eager and interested to try new activities offered by the coach.	Skaters will require the confidence to attempt novel activities as they begin more sport-specific activities in the upcoming levels. Some encouragement from a friendly and trustworthy adult is expected at this stage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Always encourage skaters to try their best. ✓ Make new challenges exciting ✓ Always ensure skater safety is number one ✓ Never force a skater to do something they do not want to do. 	Modelling "Free"play time on ice Parent education Let's Pretend (animal movements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consistently attempts the practice activities presented 	Observation

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Swipe up object when moving L Hand, R Hand, 2 Hands	While gliding on two feet parallel to each other, skaters hinge forwards to pick up an object off of the ice.	Skaters learn to control the balance on their blades as they shift their weight forwards-backwards, while also needing to direct attention elsewhere (the object). Having an understanding of balance points is important for maintaining upright positioning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use bigger objects to start, progressing to smaller objects ✓ Consider the gloves skaters are wearing- do they allow dexterity? 	Clean sweep Stuffy toss (and retrieve)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Glides on two (parallel) skates for 10m total ✓ Maintains forward momentum while hinging to pick up an object on the ice at the 5m mark 	Clean sweep
Successfully participates in a 45 minute session	Skaters participate in a 45 minute session without requiring off-ice breaks.	Skaters continue to increase their tolerance for structured physical activity away from their parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Build healthy habits early: schedule rest breaks, model active rest, schedule water breaks, etc. ✓ Educate parents in advance (e.g. use the bathroom prior to getting on the ice, no visiting parents at rinkside for safety, trips off-ice are for urgent situations only (equipment issues, urgent bathroom breaks, significant behaviour issues threatening skater safety)) 	Modelling Parent education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completes a 45 minute practice without off-ice breaks (adaptations for individual needs are permitted) ✓ On-ice breaks are taken appropriately (i.e. no lying on the ice or "sitting out" on the buckets) 	Observation
Backwards stop	Skaters come to a full stop from a backwards glide.	Learning to stop is a very important aspect of skating literacy and independence on the ice. For safety, skaters should be able to stop when travelling in a backwards direction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters must commit to pushing their feet backwards/leaning bodyweight forwards to execute a stop ✓ Maintain a knee bend for balance ✓ Skaters should expect to "slide" along the ice before they come to a stop 	Tag Cops and robbers Line shuttles (fwd and back)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Independently initiate backwards movement, transitioning to a backwards 2-foot glide ✓ Stop backwards movement via a reverse wedge stop ✓ Must completely stop backwards movement by the indicated location 	Line shuttles
1-foot turn Left counter clockwise, Right counter clockwise Left clockwise, Right clockwise	Skaters follow a defined curve with one foot on the ice.	Skaters learn to control their body position, edge and lean as they explore 1-foot turns in each direction on each foot. Being comfortable lifting both the left and right foot in a clockwise and counter clockwise direction is a very important progression for crossover development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A smaller radius of turn (resulting in a shorter distance of glide) is generally easier ✓ Practice turning in both directions and on each foot. Generally turning on the "outside" foot of the turn will be easier 	Circuits Figure 8's Mini F1 Mini Mario Kart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Follows the defined curve of at least 180 degrees (with a radius of approximately 2m) ✓ One foot remains on the ice with the other foot clearly lifted off the ice 	Circuits
👟 Walking crossovers Left and Right	Skaters step sideways, using a crossover technique, in both directions.	This skill is a progression to assist the development of crossovers. This skill exposes the skater to an outside edge transfer of weight to the opposite crossing foot. Getting comfortable with this movement is imperative in the development of crossovers on a trajectory with speed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters should keep their body square to the direction of movement. Use the "headlights" or "laser" analogy to explain staying square to young skaters ✓ Use simple cues such as "cross, uncross BEHIND" ✓ Skaters may benefit from external support when starting. Allow skaters to use 1-2 "fingertips" on the boards or mats (fingertips improve balance without allowing significant weightbearing through the hands). Progress to "hovering" the hands, then stepping away from the support. With a varied group of skaters, allow "skater's choice" for which challenge level they use 	Partner mirrors Simon Says	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 5 crossovers to the right, followed by 5 crossovers to the left, without external support ✓ Skates remain parallel with the body square to the direction of movement 	Simon Says
🏁 Complete 1 lap	Skaters complete one full lap of the ice unaided.	Exposing skaters to the full ice surface allows them more space to develop their stride, speed and explore acceleration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Celebrate this achievement! It represents the culmination of the SKATE skills in the Learn to Skate section of the program ✓ Practice in both directions 	1 lap race 1 lap skates Fast track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Track size approximates a short track speed skating track (certified track not required) ✓ Similar length of skating (~100m) may be substituted on a long track or non-traditional ice surface 	1 lap skate

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Follows rules of a game	Skaters follow the flow and safety rules of an on-ice game.	Skaters begin to develop listening and application skills in a sport environment. Games and other practice activities will be used for training and to prepare skaters for eventual competitive (racing) opportunities. It is critical that skaters can follow key safety and sportsperson rules.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Begin with simple games (e.g. freeze tag) where rules are easily understood and memorized ✓ Add complexity to the same game once the group is competent (e.g. bandaid tag). ✓ Repetition builds neural pathways and a mastery of the rules builds competence and confidence 	Tag Clean sweep Cops and robbers Stuffy toss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consistently follows up to 3 key points emphasized by the coach ✓ Adjusts behaviour if given a reminder about rules ✓ Participates in games fairly and encompasses good sportspersonship. 	Tag
Linear relays with tag	Skaters take a turn in a linear relay race, before safely tagging a teammate to hand off the relay.	Skaters begin to explore the concept of racing and teamwork in a fun and safe environment with their peers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Demonstrate appropriate tags to skaters: controlled approach and gentle tag ✓ For a continuous game, teams of at least 3 must be made (skaters 1 and 3 start at position A; skater 2 is waiting at position B lined up across from position A) 	Line relays Cross-ice relays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Waits appropriately for their turn ✓ Receives a tag without losing balance ✓ Completes their leg of the relay ✓ Approaches and tags their teammate with appropriate speed and force 	Line relay
Follows instructions from coach	Skaters follow the flow and technical elements of on-ice activities.	As skaters continue to develop their skating abilities, they must learn to listen to their coach, especially regarding technical instruction. Being a coachable athlete will contribute to great success as one progresses through their pathway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keep instructions to skaters short and concise. Summarize the key points (max 3) as the send-off message before skaters begin the activity ✓ Provide short and clear in-activity corrections to skaters. Use age-appropriate language (e.g. a young skater may react well to, "Check your headlights!" during walking crossovers) 	Modelling Parent education Good ears acknowledgement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consistently follows up to 3 key points emphasized by the coach ✓ Makes adjustments when provided with feedback 	Observation
Assists with safety equipment	Skaters assist with putting on their required personal safety equipment.	As skaters begin to take the next step as speed skaters, it is important that they understand the importance of their safety equipment. Learning independence to put each piece of equipment on properly is imperative before transitioning to Levels 5-10 of the program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make safety equipment check a group routine at the beginning of each practice ✓ Have spare equipment available for those who have forgotten. Skaters should not participate on-ice without the proper equipment! 	Modelling Blocked practice Parent education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Assists to put on any of the following: helmet, gloves, long sleeves and pants 	Observation
Level 5						
Moving 2 foot jump	While gliding forwards, skaters jump and land back on two feet without falling.	The skill of jumping requires balance and agility on skate blades. These skills are important, even for a sport that does not require jumping as a core skill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review stationary 2 foot jumps, then progress to moving 2 foot jumps at a slow speed ✓ As skaters gain confidence and begin moving faster, ensure they are taking off on 2 feet and landing on 2 feet. The tendency at faster speeds will be a running hop (taking off and/or landing on 1 foot) 	Obstacle course with line jumps Snakes and ladders Red Light/Green Light (speed bump)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Take off and land on two feet ✓ Must retain balance throughout the jump and landing 	Red Light/Green Light
Speed skating turtle fall	From skating, skaters fall to the ice in a controlled manner and group their limbs to avoid collisions and injury.	Skaters learn to control their body when falling on the ice, to avoid injury and collisions with other skaters or the boards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Integrate this safety skill regularly into practice activities at a young age to build the motor pattern of a controlled fall and quick get up ✓ Set an early expectation that flopping/sliding on the ice is not acceptable for safety reasons ✓ Emphasize that skaters should avoid a single limb protruding as they fall. This reduces the risk of force-based injury (sprains, fractures, bruises) to the limb as it is the single contact point with the ice or boards, and reduces the likelihood of cuts from other skaters' blades 	Red Light/Green Light (car crash) Obstacle course with cued fall Simon Says Biathlon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Falls from moving without a protruding limb ✓ Maintains this position until body is no longer sliding ✓ Gets up quickly once body is under control/slide is controlled 	Red Light/Green Light

Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Skate with arm swing	Skaters coordinate the movement of their arms with their legs, as they swing their arms in a forward-backward direction.	Skaters learn to coordinate arm and leg movements together to improve the efficiency of their skating.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use age-appropriate terms to explain arm swing: "Show me a speed skating arm swing. No spaghetti arms, no robot arms, and no hockey arms!". Skaters may also respond well to the cue, "thumb to nose" to encourage forward-back arm swing that does not cross the centre line Skaters who are matching the wrong arm and leg together may do better if the only instruction is, "Swing your arms" (remove the hyperfocus on coordinating the swing and allow the movement to occur naturally) 	<p>Long straights Skate your age (with arm swing) Simon Says</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arms swing to midline of the body on the straight, with the front elbow bent and the back elbow extended, close to the body Opposite arm from the standing leg swings forward Arm swing matches the tempo of movement and the degree of leg extension 	Red Light/Green Light
Backwards skate width of ice (~15m)	Skaters skate backwards using c-curves for the width of a hockey ice rink surface (approx 15m).	Backwards skating develops balance and coordination. Having the ability to skate backwards allows skaters to participate in other skating pursuits (leisure skating, hockey, ringette, figure skating, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skaters respond well to the instruction to "wiggle your bottom". As they gather speed, this movement initiates weight transfer and will evolve into c-curves 	<p>Shuttle sprints (forward/backward) Red Light/Green Light (reverse)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skates the width of the ice backwards using c-curves Pulls blades back to the centre line at the completion of each c-curve Similar length of skating (~15m) may be substituted on a long track or non-traditional ice surface 	Red Light/Green Light
 Static basic position	Skaters demonstrate a stable and efficient representation of basic position.	Skaters begin to learn the essential speed skating skill of basic position. This position becomes the basis for all other speed skating technical skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasize a good base of support early: skates must be on "train tracks" with vertical alignment of the knees over the feet ("no kissing knees!") The ragdoll method of getting into basic position works well: set a good base of support, ragdoll forward to touch toes, push knees forward over toes, put arms on the back and look up 	<p>Simon Says Partner Mirrors Toilet tag</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feet should be parallel and hip width apart Shoulders, knees and toes are vertically aligned Arms relaxed on a rounded back Looking ahead without significantly extending the neck Knees are bent close to 90 degrees, with shoulders as low as the hips 	Simon Says
Sculling around track	Skaters move around the circumference of a short track speed skating track, gliding on the left leg while pushing out with the right leg to generate speed.	Skaters begin to practice cornering/turning drills on a speed skating track (~5-7m radius). Sculling requires significant weightbearing on the inner leg. Sculling teaches the appropriate direction of push in the corner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasize the inside leg is the "balance leg" and the outside leg is the "pushing leg". Skaters who cannot do a full leg extension typically have their weight too centred and need to shift onto their inside leg Skate blades should be largely parallel with a push to the side, ending with a slight inward hook of the toe to help steer around the corner Try going clockwise with the left leg sculling 	<p>Sticky skate races On-track obstacle course with sticky skate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must complete one full corner on an 80-100m track without losing balance/falling Use the left leg for support and push the right leg to the side into full extension (pushing significantly backwards with the right leg is not acceptable) Right leg is returned while resting on the ice Majority of the weight must be on the left leg with an effort to have the left skate on the inner edge (acceptable to not fully achieve inner edge) Similar length of skating may be substituted on a long track or non-traditional ice surface 	Sticky skate
Follows start procedure	Skaters follow the speed skating start procedure commands of "Go to the start, Ready, Go".	Repeated exposure to speed skating start commands familiarizes skaters to the procedure to the point of automaticity, allowing skaters to focus on technical and tactical components of the start.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach the proper start procedure early, using age-appropriate terms (e.g. "The line is lava!", playing on the popular "Floor is Lava" game to encourage toes behind the line) Teach the start procedure and the start position as two separate skills to minimize overload with cues 	<p>Silly Starts SPUD End to end starts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently follows start commands and regulations (toes behind the line, maintaining stable and still position between "Ready" and "Go") Start position should be stable and should allow the skater to begin forward movement on cue; does not need to be a traditional speed skating start position 	Silly Starts
Skates with high cadence (foot speed)	Skaters increase their speed of skating by moving their feet faster than their baseline skating.	Initially, skaters will generate speed by moving their feet faster. This skill is essential for skating and racing at speed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect that the quality of the skating technique will decline with increased speed. Allow skaters to experiment to find the maximum foot speed they can achieve before losing control of their skating Use appropriate tone and pace of voice to help skaters "feel" the pace and energy of high cadence skating 	<p>PB&J Short races (0.5, 1 Lap) End to end relay races Tag Cops and Robbers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skates 1 lap of the ice with leg speed (cadence) faster than the skater's usual Must maintain control for the entire lap with high cadence Must do at least 6 straightaway strides per straight (on 100m track) Similar length of skating may be substituted on a long track or non-traditional ice surface 	PB&J

Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
 Follows general racing rules	Skaters follow the flow and safety elements of a speed skating race.	Skaters continue to develop listening and application skills in a sport environment. It is critical that skaters can follow key safety and sportsperson rules as applied to a race.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Emphasize two points: skate outside the blocks, and avoid contact with other skaters. The nuances around the second point will be introduced as the skater develops ✓ Avoiding contact with other skaters includes the concept of avoiding abrupt/unexpected track pattern changes. Skaters should be instructed to stay consistent 	1, 2, 3, 4 lap races 1, 2, 3, 4 lap group skates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consistently follows 2 key points emphasized by the coach: skates outside the blocks and avoids contact with other skaters ✓ Adjusts behaviour if given a reminder about rules 	Observation during mock or official races
Skates fast and slow laps	Skaters understand and demonstrate the ability to change their pace of skating during lap skating.	Skaters are introduced to the skill of pace and speed changes. This is the first tactical skill skaters are introduced to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use age-appropriate language to describe speed (e.g. "Please skate at speed 3 out of 10. 10 is the fastest you can skate. 5 is half-speed. 3 is quite slow.") ✓ Emphasize that going slower should not mean adding pauses at any point, it simply requires a slower movement pattern and/or a less powerful push 	PB&J 2 lap intervals at varying speeds ("x out of 10")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Demonstrates 2 laps of "slow" skating as compared to 2 laps of "faster" skating, when directed by coach ✓ Difference in speed must be obvious; however, cadence does not need to be as high as in "high cadence skating"- speed of forward movement is what is being assessed ✓ Similar length of skating may be substituted on a long track or non-traditional ice surface 	2 lap intervals at specified speeds
Push a partner	Using an appropriate push technique, skaters push a partner skater forward on the ice.	Although speed skating is often considered an individual sport, team events (relays, team pursuit and team sprint) are official events at many speed skating competitions. It is important for skaters to learn teamwork and the skills required for team events early.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consider demonstrating a push on each skater so they experience a straight, true push. Always ask permission before touching the skaters ✓ Skaters will often require a reminder about hand placement (on the hips) and pushing evenly with both arms ✓ The skater being pushed should be in basic position to increase stability 	Push and Chase Race Car relays Shopping Cart Push through tunnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Push a skater in a straight line (while skating) for 10m ✓ Partner glides in basic position ✓ Complete the activity by launching the partner forward with a straight and true push ✓ Grip on the partner should feature the palms facing each other, on the sides of the partner's hips 	Race Car relays
Basic knowledge of warm up	Skaters skate warm up laps using appropriate speed and effort.	A proper warm up prepares the body to perform optimally and to avoid injury. Skaters learn this skill early to build healthy habits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make warm up laps a group routine at the beginning of each practice. Young skaters will tend to get on and skate as quickly as possible if not otherwise instructed 	3 lap intervals at slower speeds ("4 out of 10") Skate your age Education/modelling at every practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Demonstrates warm up skating for 3 laps ✓ Completes warm up laps at a moderate pace before beginning faster-paced skaters ✓ Similar length of skating may be substituted on a long track or non-traditional ice surface 	Observation during warm-up
Basic knowledge of cool down	Skaters skate cool down laps using appropriate speed and effort.	A proper cool down helps with injury prevention and recovery. Skaters learn this skill early to build healthy habits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make cool down laps a group routine at the end of each practice. Young skaters will tend to lose focus at the end of the practice without a closing routine 	3 lap intervals at slower speeds ("4 out of 10") Skate your age Education/modelling at every practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Demonstrates cool down skating for 3 laps ✓ Completes cool down laps without accelerating or becoming distracted ✓ Similar length of skating may be substituted on a long track or non-traditional ice surface 	Observation during cool down
Thanks coach after practice	Skaters independently show appreciation to the coach in a manner they are comfortable with (e.g. verbal thank you, high five, etc.).	Skaters are building a coach-athlete relationship in which respect is both given and received. Thanking the coach for their time and effort builds the relationship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make coach appreciation a group routine at the end of each practice ✓ Allow skaters to express their gratitude in a manner that feels comfortable to them (e.g. high 5, verbal thank you, head nod). Skaters' comfort levels will vary widely based on culture, upbringing, sport history, etc. ✓ Thank skaters for attending and they soon will model your behavior 	Modelling Parent education Group high fives Group cheers Kudos Posting <u>True Sport</u> signage Coach thanks skaters for attending/effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consistently shows gratitude to coach without cueing from parent ✓ Uses a method that is familiar and comfortable to the individual (allow for wide variation) 	Observation
 Independent hard skate guard use	Skaters manage their hard skate guards without assistance from an adult.	Skaters continue to increase their independence in sport activities. Learning to manage their own skate guards improves the flow of practice and prepares skaters for managing their own guards during practices and in the heat box at competitions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure hard skate guards fit properly (guards that are too tight are difficult to put on/take off) ✓ Ensure skaters are wearing their gloves when working with their guards to avoid cuts 	Blocked practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Puts on and takes off hard skate guards independently from a seated position ✓ Correctly identifies their own guards when lined up with the guards of fellow skaters 	Observation

Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Level 6						
 Slalom with both skates on edge	Skaters turn around 8 slalom points (1m apart) on two feet, with both blades on edge.	Being comfortable on the inside and outside edges of a speed skating blade allows skaters to work towards correct execution of both straightaway and corner technical skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Feet should be hip width apart or narrower, with both skates on the same "corner edge" (outside edge of the inner skate and inside edge of the outer skate) ✓ Practice upright and in basic position ✓ Start with slalom points further apart and progress towards 1m apart 	Obstacle course Snakes and ladders Giant slalom race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maintains contact with the ice with both feet through the entire slalom course ✓ Feet stay parallel ✓ Consistent effort to achieve corner edges around the curves (inner/inner edges are not acceptable) 	Obstacle course
 2 minute consecutive skate	Skaters complete a continuous 2-minute flat-paced skate around a track without rest breaks.	The longest short track speed skating races at the youth level are approximately 3-minutes in duration. Skaters start to build towards this capacity with a 2-minute skate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Build up to a skate with no rest breaks- start by allowing the skaters to self-direct when they might need a rest ✓ Encourage skaters to reflect if they finished at the same speed as they started. Use a simple rating scale such as, "What speed was I skating at on a scale of one to ten?" 	Clean sweep on track Skate your age (x2 if necessary) Pit stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completes 2-minutes of skating without a rest break ✓ Manages pace adequately to finish at approximately the same speed as the start of the skate 	Pit stop
 Sit on heels	Skaters glide on two feet crouched down with their buttocks near their heels.	This skill requires flexibility, balance and agility. Skaters work on applying these attributes in a novel task.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters can hold lightly onto their toes to help balance ✓ Try moving and stationary ✓ This movement is known by many nicknames: "mousey", "mini me", "squat" etc. ✓ Add an extra challenge and have skaters attempt to get to standing without falling 	Follow the leader Obstacle course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Glides the length of the straightaway (~15m) with the hips below the knees in a crouch position ✓ Maintains balance by shifting weight forwards ✓ Similar length of skating may be substituted on a long track or non-traditional ice surface 	Obstacle course
 Forwards stop from speed Left, Right, 2-feet	Skaters stop their high-paced forward momentum by an indicated location.	While skaters should have mastered the skill of stopping in earlier levels, this skill requires a stop from speed. It is important for safety that skaters can stop in an emergency when skating quickly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage skaters to try different stopping methods (2-foot wedge stop, single foot, parallel stop) ✓ Build good habits early: insist that skaters stop completely by the target during practice activities, and that skaters stop completely when joining the group for instruction 	Shuttle sprints Red light/green light Tag Cops and Robbers Skateguard hockey Bucket basketball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Accelerates forwards for 10m, then stops by an indicated line 5m past the acceleration zone ✓ Left foot, right foot, 2-foot parallel or 2-foot wedge stops are accepted ✓ Must completely stop forward motion by the indicated location ✓ Must maintain balance after stopping 	Obstacle course
 Skate with one arm swing on corner	Skaters skate with their right arm swinging through the corner and left arm on their back.	To conserve energy, speed skaters often skate with only one (or no) arms swinging. Practicing the skill early in the skater's development means it will be more natural as they progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Comfortably rest left arm on lower back ✓ Right arm swings fluidly, with movement generated from the shoulder (when arm is behind body until in line with body), then from the elbow (when arm is in line with body to in front of the body) ✓ Skaters who are matching the wrong arm and leg together may do better if the only instruction is, "Swing your arms" (remove an over-focus on coordinating the swing) 	Cone relays Cone circles Stuff relays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Demonstrates 3 laps of skating with the right arm swinging on the corner and the left arm on the back ✓ Arm swing must be coordinated (right arm forward when right leg is extended) and smooth ✓ Similar length of skating may be substituted on a long track or outdoor-non traditional ice surface 	Skate your age
 Moving ankle stability	Skaters maintain stability at their ankles when gliding on two feet, with their knees aligned over the feet when viewing from the front.	The skill of maintaining ankle alignment when moving is a critical building block towards straightaway and corner technical skills. Instability at the ankles is not efficient and sometimes unsafe when moving at speed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Knee alignment (when viewed from the front) should be in line with the second toe on each foot ✓ Knees deviating in towards the centre are typically the result of weak/underdeveloped hip musculature. Alternate causes may be: improperly fitting skates (loose) or improper offset on their skates 	Race car relays BP tunnel glides How far can you glide?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Glides the length of the straightaway (~15m) with the knees aligned over the feet (no collapsing at the ankle) ✓ Similar length may be substituted on a long track or non-traditional ice surface 	How far can you glide?

Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
● Corner edge glide around track	Skaters glide around the circumference of a short track speed skating track on two skates with both skates on the left corner edges.	Skaters begin to apply their cornering skills to a turn approximating the size of a speed skating track. The increased circumference makes it more challenging for skaters to maintain their edges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The term "corner edges" may be helpful to differentiate from inside edges on a corner (the inner two edges around a corner) and inside edges on a straight/standing still (the big toe side of each skate) ✓ Practice on different radiuses and going in both directions to develop overall coordination and strength ✓ Allow skaters to approach the corner with adequate speed to glide around the full length of the corner. It is challenging to glide around a corner at slower speeds (and therefore less lean) 	Cone circles Figure 8's Snakes and ladders Race car relays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Must complete one full corner on an 80-100m track without losing balance/falling ✓ Both skates must be on the left corner edge for the majority of the corner ✓ Similar length of skating may be substituted on a long track or non-traditional ice surface 	How far can you glide?
Speed skating start position	Skaters demonstrate a stable, efficient and legal speed skating start position.	Building an efficient speed skating start position early is critical to allow the skater to explore variations and to practice reaction time/efficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduce components of the start sequentially as compared to all technical points at once ✓ Most skaters at this stage of development will use a traditional start position, and may experiment with a kangaroo/crossover or other position as they develop ✓ Focus on the base of support: feet opening into a wide/stable position (move away from T-start position) with slightly more weight on the front foot ✓ Hips should point forwards with external rotation to allow for the required direction of push off the start ✓ Knees should be bent with the back arm (same side as the back leg) ready to swing forward ✓ Emphasize early the importance of maintaining stillness in the start position 	Skeleton (mat game) End to end starts Partner mirror	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maintains a static 2-footed position (that would allow movement to begin) for at least 2-seconds ✓ Hips and eyes are pointed in the direction of travel ✓ Slightly more weight is placed on the front leg ✓ Starts moving forward without falling when directed 	End to end starts
Changes pace on command	Skaters understand and demonstrate the ability to change their pace while skating laps.	Speed skating races require changes of pace over the duration of the race. Skaters learn this skill in a non-competitive environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Practice with a variety of activities, interval lengths, and cues (verbal, whistle, etc.) ✓ Skaters will likely use increased cadence (foot speed) to increase their speed at this stage of development 	PB&J Red Light/Green Light	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Switches from fast to slow skating (and vice versa) on an auditory cue by a coach (i.e. during a reaction sprint exercise on the track) ✓ Must complete 4 cycles of pace change with varying length of intervals ✓ Difference in speed must be obvious 	PB&J
Maintains non-contact in a pack	Skaters avoid contact with fellow skaters in a pack while skating laps.	Short track speed skating and some long track speed skating events require skating in close proximity to other skaters. Skaters must learn early how to skate in a pack without causing contact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduce pack skating early ✓ In groups with a wide variety of speeds, use practice activities intentionally to "force" skaters into a pack moving at the pace of the slowest skaters in the group 	Train skating Double train skating Stuffy pass Touch two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Demonstrates group skating for at least 3 lap ✓ Avoids contact with other skaters by being predictable in their path and making controlled body movements ✓ Must be within arm's reach of at least one other skater ✓ Similar length of skating may be substituted on a long track or non-traditional ice surface 	Touch two
● Maneuvers around other skaters	Skaters safely maneuver around slower-moving skaters without causing contact.	Most speed skating practices feature skaters of varying speeds, levels and abilities. Being able to navigate around other skaters is critical for safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Set clear expectations within the group (e.g. faster skaters will pass slower skaters on the outside; slower skaters are expected to maintain their track) ✓ Make "shoulder checks" a standard practice in the group. Doing a shoulder check while maintaining a straight line of skating requires balance and coordination and should be practiced as an independent skill 	Clean sweep (on track) Skate your age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Moves around a skater without causing disruption (via direct contact or near-contact) to the flow of other skaters ✓ Uses peripheral vision and/or shoulder check to ensure safety of a lane change (using peripheral vision to make significant lane changes to intentionally block another skater is not acceptable) 	Skate your age

Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Partner relays with tag (2 lap exchange)	Skaters take turns in a tag relay race on the track, before safely tagging a teammate to hand off the relay.	Although speed skating is often considered an individual sport, team events (relays, team pursuit and team sprint) are official events at many speed skating competitions. It is important for skaters to learn teamwork and the skills required for team events early.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teach partner relays with a tag (instead of push) to decrease the number of falls related to poor push quality. All other aspects of a partner relay remain the same, including entering the track at the correct time to receive a tag and the correct skating pattern after giving the tag (straight down the ice with a shoulder check to cross to the inside of the track around the apex of the next corner) ✓ Use visual cues on the ice such as cones and marker/bingo dabber lines to teach patterns 	Pit stop (shoulder check) Skate-by relays (shoulder check) Big-little relays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Exchanges the primary skater at the exit to the corner every 2 lap via a tag with a partner ✓ Aware of skating pattern to use after tag; may have visual cues on the ice (lines, cones, etc.) ✓ Aware of the skating pattern to use when entering the track to receive a tag; may have visual cues on the ice (lines, cones, etc.) ✓ Similar activity may be substituted on a long track or non-traditional ice surface 	Observation
👤 Uses water bottle independently	Skaters manage their water needs and intake independently on the ice during a practice.	Adequate hydration is critical for overall health and safety during physical activity. Skaters learn this skill to build healthy habits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Build group habits early via modelling and parent education around expectations ✓ Create a designated spot for skaters to place their waterbottles. Consider infection control best practices such as avoiding sharing and avoiding contact between the mouth pieces of waterbottles 	Modelling Parent education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identifies their own waterbottle and uses their personal waterbottle exclusively ✓ Drinks at appropriate intervals to stay hydrated and avoid disrupting the flow of the practice ✓ Places their waterbottle in a location that does not interfere with the flow of skating 	Observation
Respectful interactions with fellow skaters	Skaters are consistently respectful in interactions with fellow skaters.	While many speed skating events are individual events, speed skaters typically train in groups. Building the skills for respectful interaction within the group fosters a positive sport environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Build group habits early via modelling, setting group routines (e.g. cheers, high fives) and parent education around expectations ✓ Set and enforce consequences for deviations from group expectations. Be consistent and fair ✓ Debrief on-ice incidents with skaters and parents together after practice so that the parents can follow up with their child after leaving the rink. Consider taking Bystander in Sport training or education to improve the coach's ability to react in these situation 	Modelling Parent education Group high fives Group cheers Kudos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Respects personal space of other skaters ✓ Uses appropriate language on- and off-ice ✓ Congratulates other skaters on achievements 	Observation
Puts on skates independently	Skaters put on their skates independently in preparation for an adult to assist with tying.	This skill fosters independence in skaters and expectations around taking responsibility for their own equipment. Putting skates on independently is a precursor to being able to get dressed independently for on-ice sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide education to skaters and parents about how speed skates and the components (correct use of laces- avoid wrapping around the ankle, buckles, straps, lace covers) ✓ It can be challenging to tell the right and left boots apart on some brands of skates. Provide education on how to use the direction of the cups and the direction of the buckles/straps to double-check skates are on the correct foot ✓ Encourage skaters to put on their own skates from an early stage of development to build independence and autonomy 	Modelling Blocked practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Prepares skate to go on the foot independently (e.g. opening buckles, loosening laces) ✓ Puts skate on the correct foot independently 	Observation
Level 7 **non-ST adaptations no longer included in the eval requirements; adaptations could be made if program logistics require**						
Moving 360 degree rotation	While maintaining movement along a trajectory, skaters lift their feet to turn their bodies around in a complete rotation and maintain a forward direction upon exit of the skill.	Skaters learn to control the balance on their blades as they shift their weight in a rotational direction. Having an understanding of balance points is important for maintaining upright positioning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters should focus on maintaining a square position with their shoulders and hip throughout the turn while maintaining a strong core. ✓ Encourage skaters to experiment with forward-backward weight transfer on their blade to find the optimal point to turn ("tallest" point of the blade) ✓ Practice turning both ways. Skaters will have a natural turning direction. Allow them to turn in whichever direction is most comfortable for them ✓ Skaters may choose to spin or step through this turn. Learning to spin increases the skater's coordination on skates 	Obstacle course with spins Red light/Green light (roundabout)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skater turns using a stepping or spinning action, while maintaining momentum in the initial forwards direction ✓ Must remain standing throughout ✓ Must be able to skate out of the rotation 	Obstacle course

Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Speed skating stop	Skaters demonstrate the ability to come to a stop from low speed using a manner that does not dull the blades.	Skaters must learn to stop without dulling their edges to maintain the sharpness of the blade and prolong the lifespan of the blade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skater point their blades inwards to achieve deceleration. This teaching point can be expanded upon to have skaters figure out which blade direction produces maintenance of speed (straight relative to the direction of travel) and which blade direction increases speed (open to the direction of travel) ✓ Skaters must be able to come to a complete stop using this method; this typically takes longer than a 2-foot wedge or hockey stop and therefore should not be the stopping method of choice in an emergency 	Blocked practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Alternates pressure on the right and left blades ✓ Blades must be pointed inwards relative to the direction of travel ✓ No sound should come from the blades during the motion 	Observation during mock or official races (coming to the line)
● Appropriate push direction relative to speed	While skating a short race, skaters adjust the angle of their push as their speed increases.	To accelerate or maintain speed efficiently, skaters must adjust the angle of their push. For example, pushing backwards once already moving does not generate speed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Most skaters intuitively will push backwards (herringbone run) to start a race ✓ Many skaters will continue to push backwards, especially on the corner, and will require teaching to push to the side during regular skating ✓ The most challenging push to the side is typically the left leg push on a crossover 	Shopping Cart Push and Chase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Demonstrates the change through a 2 lap race ✓ Pushes are to the back during start/acceleration ✓ Pushes are to the side as the skater transitions to regular skating 	Observation
Moving basic position	Skaters maintain a stable and efficient representation of basic position while skating laps.	Being able to maintain basic position while skating increases aerodynamic efficiency and allows for a more powerful push.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters are developing the physical attributes (strength, coordination, balance) to maintain basic position while skating ✓ Quality alignment in basic position should be emphasized over the depth of the knee bend 	Pool noodle crunch Stuffy balance Plunger balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maintains basic position on the straights for 2 laps at moderate speed ✓ Nose, knee and toes are vertically aligned during skating strides ✓ Arms relaxed on a rounded back or swinging ✓ Looking through eyebrows to see ice ahead ✓ Knees are pushed forwards and bent close to 90 degrees, with shoulders as low as the hips (acceptable to have less knee bend in skating than the skater can demonstrate in static basic position) 	Observation
● 🏇 Crossovers	Skaters achieve counterclockwise crossovers while moving around a curve.	This skill is the entry-level benchmark skill to progress towards mature, at-speed crossovers. Skaters learn the fundamentals of crossovers before mastering the technique.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use a variety of activities to allow skaters to explore crossovers ✓ Crossing over represents a big achievement for skaters and may require significant practice and repetition to acquire ✓ Expect that skaters who can do crossovers during drills may not yet have the ability to do execute them skating at speed 	5 circles Loop'd'whirl Cat and mouse Chuckwagon races Candy cane races Boxing ring On-ice supported crossovers (cable, hand-held, cones)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Without external support, crosses the right leg over the left then uncrosses at least 5 times ✓ Crossovers do not need to be mature, i.e. slow speed of movement around the curve, a curve of varying radiuses, and incomplete left leg extension are all acceptable 	5 circles
Cadence acceleration	At a predetermined location, skaters increase their speed of skating towards full speed using high turnover of their foot speed.	Initially, skaters will generate speed by moving their feet faster. This skill requires skaters to adjust from a slower pace of skating to a faster pace, which is important during a race.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage skaters to move their feet quickly. This will be more challenging for skaters who are not transferring their weight well (i.e. centre of mass remains relatively central) ✓ Provide opportunities for skaters to achieve, and maintain, maximum speed. As core strength is still developing, skaters may be challenged to maintain max speed 	PB&J Red Light/Green Light Blocked practice (1 lap fliers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Safely enters the track at a moderately-slow pace ✓ At a predetermined location (e.g. the center line), increases the speed of skating via increasing foot speed (i.e. rolling start) ✓ Accelerates to full speed over the course of 1 lap ✓ Difference in speed must be obvious ✓ Must maintain control during the acceleration and when reaching full speed ✓ Returns to the center of the ice safely 	1 lap fliers

Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Safely rejoins race after fall	Skaters demonstrate the awareness and ability to safely rejoin a race after they have fallen.	Especially earlier in development, skaters frequently fall during a race or practice. Being able to rejoin the activity safely is crucial for safety to the fallen skater and other participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teach skaters early to get up quickly from a fall for safety reasons ✓ Instruct skaters to stay wide as they rebuild their speed, then do a shoulder check before re-entering the track ✓ Provide education about the callout, "Track!" during a race. Skaters should begin to understand what to do when they hear this direction. Note that at this developmental stage, skaters are not typically penalized for failing to give way to lapping skaters; however, building the habit early is important 	Mock races Clean Sweep on track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gets up quickly from a fall once the fall is controlled (attempting to get up before the fall is controlled, resulting in further loss of balance or fall, is not acceptable) ✓ Demonstrates positional awareness to get back in the race without impeding other skaters ✓ Demonstrates basic awareness of moving to the outside when being lapped 	Observation in mock or official race
Consistently follows basic track pattern marked on ice	Skaters follow a speed track when marked on the ice with visual cues.	Varying track patterns will be introduced over the course of a skater's career. This skill prepares skaters for the concept of following a specific track pattern.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The speed track allows skaters to generate and maintain speed. It should not be used when skaters are trying to maintain ("defend") their position ✓ Depending on the size of the skaters and their ability to crossover at speed, differing crossover patterns could be used (e.g. 2 in/2 out, meaning that two crossovers are completed before the apex of the turn and 2 are completed after the apex). Some skaters will not be able to crossover at speed and should be encouraged to use a right-leg push around the corner 	Blocked practice with visual cues Blocked practice removing visual cues Cat-mouse pursuits on various track sizes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Follows the visual cues to skate a speed track (wide-wide) over 2 laps ✓ Skates smoothly through the track pattern without having to make abrupt changes in trajectory to achieve the pattern 	Observation
Basic understanding of lap times	Skaters verbally explain the concept of "lap time", and are able to estimate if their own lap time is faster or slower than a recent previously-skated lap time.	Skaters begin to use intrinsic feedback to estimate the speed they are skating, as measured by time taken to complete a lap.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lap times should be "relative" at this stage of development. It is not necessary to call out lap times for each lap skated during a skating interval ✓ Allow the skater to guess first if the lap time was faster or slower to begin to develop intrinsic feedback skills. Provide the correct answer after to help the skater calibrate their feedback 	1 lap intervals at varying speeds ("x out of 10")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ When asked, verbally explains a lap time is the amount of time taken to skate one lap of the track ✓ After skating 2 sets of 1 lap (standing or flying start), guesses with reasonable accuracy if the second time was faster, slower or equal to the first (extremely incorrect guesses are not acceptable) 	Timed 1 lap intervals
Able to follow in a line	Skaters demonstrate the ability to follow in a line of skaters moving at moderate speed.	Skaters typically skate in a line in short track speed skating races, as well as during team events in long track speed skating. Being able to follow in a line increases the efficiency of skating.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use a more advanced skater to lead the line of skaters to ensure a consistent pace ✓ Encourage the skaters to be directly behind the skater in front, or slightly offset to the right 	Partner follow Train skating Keirin race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Follows the skater ahead (duplicates the track pattern) at a moderate speed over at least 4 laps ✓ Must be comfortable with or without a skater behind ✓ Abrupt changes in trajectory and disruptive changes in speed are not acceptable 	Train skating
Setting up a pass	Skaters demonstrate the fundamental elements of setting up a pass, including creating a gap to the skater ahead and accelerating into the gap.	This skill introduces skaters to the fundamental elements of setting up a pass, especially the concept of needing to be skating faster than the skater being overtaken.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teach skaters the concept of having enough speed to pass the skater in front. This requires creating a gap so that the passing skater can accelerate into the gap. The passing skater will not be able to generate enough speed to execute a pass if they closely follow the skater ahead (at the same speed) ✓ Drills may work well using big-littles so that a more experienced skater in the front keeps the speed consistent and allows the passing skater the experience of creating a gap, then closing it 	Partner follow Train skating Keirin race Drop and catch Big-littles Blocked practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ When skating behind a partner at moderate speed, adjusts speed to create a small gap to the skater ahead ✓ Accelerates to catch back up to the skater ahead (cadence or power acceleration is acceptable; most skaters will use a cadence acceleration) ✓ Skating must be fluid through the drill (disruptive changes in speed and allowing a large gap to open are not acceptable) 	Partner follow


Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Partner push relay	In partners, skaters take turns in a push relay on the track.	Push relays build upon the team skills developed earlier in the program and progresses towards a traditional short track relay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that skaters have mastered the separate skills of a) pattern of a partner relay (see partner tag relays in Level 6) and b) safely pushing a partner (see partner push in Level 5) before combining these skills Use 2 lap exchanges to allow enough time for the partners to reset their pattern between exchanges 	Pit stop (shoulder check) Skate-by relays (shoulder check) Push and Chase (push practice) Big-little relays Blocked practice with visual cues Blocked practice without visual cues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchanges the primary skater at the exit to the corner every 2 laps via a push with a partner Push must be straight and true Aware of skating pattern to use after push; may have visual cues on the ice (lines, cones, etc.) Aware of the skating pattern to use when entering the track to receive a tag; may have visual cues on the ice (lines, cones, etc.) 	Partner push relays
Generates outcome goals	Skaters identify a realistic and achievable goal in advance of a performance opportunity.	Skaters are encouraged to choose a goal to work towards as a method of tracking success in sport. Skaters begin with setting a concrete outcome goal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many skaters will default to setting outcome goals related to competition (placing in a race, time skated in a distance). Alternate outcome goals could include achieving a benchmark skill (e.g. crossovers, or partner relay) Depending on the age of the skaters, discussions around outcome goals may need to be facilitated. Consider using worksheets (available online by searching "setting goals in sport worksheet") 	Modelling Coach conversation (group or 1:1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generates an outcome goal that is realistic given the skater's abilities (extreme under- or over-shooting of the expected outcome is not acceptable) Performance opportunities (upon which goals are set) could include a competition (placing in a race, time skated in a distance), a skate-a-thon (number of laps completed), a skills challenge, etc. 	Conversation
Understands and celebrates PBs	Skaters explain the concept of a personal best (PB) and identify appropriate ways to celebrate a PB.	PBs are an important milestone marker in speed skating. Skaters will learn to strive for PBs and celebrate when a PB is set.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create group routines around PBs. Consider: which achievements are eligible, how PBs will be celebrated, what to do if a skater is not achieving PBs Consider designating a parent volunteer to manage/support the group routines around PBs 	Modelling Coach conversation (group or 1:1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a reasonable answer to the question, "What is a Personal Best or PB?" Provides reasonable answers to the questions, "How could you celebrate a new PB? How could you congratulate a teammate on a new PB?" Must answer the questions with minimal support (leading questions should not be used) 	Conversation
Chooses appropriate skate guards	Skaters choose and use their hard skate guards and soft skate guards without assistance from an adult.	Skaters continue to increase their independence in sport activities. Learning to manage their own skate guards improves the flow of practice and prepares skaters for managing their own guards in the heat box at competitions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build upon skills in earlier levels (putting on/taking off hard guards independently) Provide parent and skater education about skate guard use early in the session, then monitor frequently and correct errors to avoid bad habits forming 	Modelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently chooses hard skate guards to walk to and from the ice surface Consistently chooses soft skate guards to store skates Alerts an adult if there are equipment concerns with their skate guards 	Observation
Level 8 [breaks 1:00 in 400m race -- can be achieved at any Level but likely around Level 8]						
1-legged slalom <i>Left and Right</i>	Skaters turn around 6 slalom points (1m apart) on one foot, before repeating on the other foot.	Being comfortable on the inside and outside edges of a speed skating blade allows skaters to work towards correct execution of both straightaway and corner technical skills. This one-footed skill challenges balance and coordination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skates must move from the inside to the outside edge Practice upright and in basic position Start with slalom points further apart (less edge work required) and progress towards 1m apart 	Obstacle course Snakes and ladders Mario Kart 4-lane highway Cross-ice lines F1 Mini figure 8's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeps the non-skating leg off the ice the entire length of the course Achieves inner and outer edge of skate blades Must achieve on each foot 	Obstacle course
3 minute race	Skaters manage their pace adequately to finish a race (sanctioned or in practice) lasting approximately three minutes.	Skaters learn to manage their energy and pace to finish a race approximately the duration of the longest race completed at this stage of development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most skaters in this stage of development will complete 8-12 lap races in approximately 3 minutes Skaters will be using their aerobic system for this length of skating. Ensure they have adequate rest between trials (1:1 work:rest ratio) Encourage skaters to reflect if they finished at the same speed as they started. Use a simple rating scale such as, "What speed was I skating at on a scale of one to ten?" 	Skate your age (x2 if appropriate) Pyramids (timed or laps) Pit stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completes 3 minutes of racing without a rest break Manages pace adequately to finish at approximately the same speed as the start of the skate Maintains safety and general technique through the course of the race 	800-1500m mock or official races




Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Parallel or 1-foot stop Clockwise (Right) or Counter Clockwise (Left)	Skaters come to a complete stop from a moderate skating pace, facing sideways to the direction of body movement.	This stop is considered an emergency stop. Skaters should master this skill for safety on the ice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Practice/test at the end of practice to avoid skating afterwards on dull blades ✓ Explain to skaters that this type of stop is used in emergency situations and a speed skating stop is preferred to keep the blades sharp 	Shuttle sprints Blocked practice Curling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ After skating at a medium pace for 10m, stops completely on a target ✓ Body must be facing sideways to the direction of movement; either a parallel (2-foot) or 1-foot stop is acceptable ✓ Must be able to complete in both directions 	Obstacle course
● Full recovery strides ON and OFF ice	While skating on the straightaway, skaters demonstrate a complete recovery stride on each leg by bringing the pushing leg back under the centre of mass before executing the subsequent push. This skill is evaluated on and off the ice.	Bringing the centre of mass together before pushing increases the power and efficiency of the push. Skaters who do not achieve this skill must rely on joint extension to push, which is inefficient and will quickly tire the skater.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters should begin to learn technical skills off-ice to supplement their on-ice training. Consider adding a short warm-up/dryland session before going on-ice ✓ An inability to fully recover the leg is typically caused by instability in the gliding leg/lack of complete weight transfer. Skaters who are not balanced over their glide leg will be forced to return the recovery leg quickly (to put it down and balance). They may also incompletely lift the recovery leg off the ice (drag the toe) for balance 	4-lane highway Cross-ice lines Drill laps Dry skate Dryland side steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ On-ice: recovery leg returns fully to midline, allowing for the centre of mass to "collect" under the skater ✓ Off-ice: emerging ability to tuck the recovery leg forward/remain balanced before initiating the push ✓ Must achieve both on- and off-ice skills 	Drill laps AND dry skate
Agile backwards skate Clockwise and Counter clockwise	Skaters move backwards around the track with a group of skaters, avoiding contact.	Skaters develop their coordination and overall skating skills, allowing them to comfortably participate in skating pursuits outside of speed skating (e.g. public skating, leisure hockey, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters should be instructed to drop their centre of mass (bend their knees into athletic stance) and keep their gaze upwards (vs down at their toes) ✓ Ensure skaters can check over their shoulder for obstacles while maintaining a relatively straight direction of travel 	Individual backwards skate Group "public skate" backwards skate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skates 1 lap backwards with a group of skaters ✓ Checks over shoulder periodically (without losing balance) to avoid collisions ✓ Must complete clockwise and counterclockwise 	Group backwards skate
Crossovers on track	Skaters achieve counterclockwise crossovers while moving around the circumference of a short track speed skating track.	Crossing over while skating around the track is a milestone skill for speed skaters. This is a stepping-stone to progress towards more mature cornering skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Expect that skaters who can do crossovers on a turn with a smaller circumference may be challenged on a short track speed skating track. Practice with smaller tracks (60m, 85m) before progressing to the 100m track ✓ Ensure that skaters' blades are adequately bent to allow turning at lower speeds (and therefore less lean) ✓ Emphasize the direction of push in crossovers: to the side with a "hook" at the end to help steer around the corner ✓ Skaters may show compensations to steer around the corner, including rotating their shoulders in. Encourage skaters to keep their hips and shoulders square to the tangent of the curve, using age-appropriate language such as, "Which way are your 'headlights' pointing?" 	5 circles Loop'd'whirl Cat and mouse Chuckwagon races Reverse spirals Candy cane races Boxing ring Head pivot attempts Dryland cable crossovers On-ice cable crossovers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crosses the right leg over the left then uncrosses at least three times per corner, repeated over 4 corners (2 laps) ✓ Speed of movement around the curve does not need to be at skater's maximum ✓ Extension of left leg should be close to complete, with blades approximately parallel 	2 lap intervals
Effective reaction time and initial start steps	Skaters demonstrate a quick reaction and efficient initial starting strides when executing a speed skating start.	Starting a speed skating race efficiently sets a skater up for a good race, especially in sprint distances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Weight should be slightly more on the front leg than the back leg. If the front leg was "knocked out", the skater should fall forward ✓ Both a quick reaction time (time from cue to movement) and fast/efficient first steps are important. While skaters are striving for fast reaction times, do not allow false starts in training. Skaters must be stable and ready to react. 	Silly starts End to end starts Half lap starts Skeleton (mat game) Off-ice reaction time games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Begins movement quickly after "go" command is given (excessive lag time between command and initiation of forward movement is not acceptable) ✓ Initial steps are quickly placed with appropriate direction of push (herringbone run) ✓ Body is leaning forward, knees drive forward and legs reach full extension 	Half lap starts



Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Power acceleration on cue	At a predetermined location, skaters increase their speed of skating towards full speed, using powerful strides.	This skill requires skaters to adjust from a slower pace of skating to a faster pace, which is important during a race. Power accelerations are generally more efficient than cadence accelerations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Instruct skaters to increase their speed using "long, power" strides. Arm swing should be used to help generate speed ✓ Provide opportunities for skaters to achieve, and maintain, maximum speed. As core strength is still developing, skaters may be challenged to maintain max speed 	How far can you glide? Shopping cart Blocked practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Safely enters the track at a moderately-slow pace ✓ At a predetermined location (e.g. the center line), increases the speed of skating via increasing power in the pushes ✓ Accelerates to full speed over the course of 1 lap ✓ Difference in speed must be obvious ✓ Must maintain control during the acceleration and when reaching full speed ✓ Returns to the center of the ice safely 	1 lap power acceleration
Speed track	Skaters smoothly skate a speed track without external cueing.	Skaters begin to learn about using different track patterns for different purposes during a race. The speed track allows skaters to build and maintain speed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review the speed track (introduced in Level 7) with visual cues on the ice before removing the visual cues ✓ Depending on the size of the skaters and their ability to crossover at speed, differing crossover patterns could be used (e.g. 2 in/2 out, meaning that two crossovers are completed before the apex of the turn and 2 are completed after the apex) ✓ As skaters increase their competency in crossovers, they may be able to do more crossovers per corner. After reaching a certain speed (and skater size), the number of crossovers may decrease again 	Marked track patterns 2 lap pursuit Small track (continuous crossovers) Cat/Mouse catch the pack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Without visual cues, skates a speed track (wide-wide) over 2 lap ✓ Skates smoothly through the track pattern without having to make abrupt changes in trajectory to achieve the pattern 	2 lap pursuit
Exchange the lead while skating in a line	Skaters smoothly exchange the leader while skating in a line at a moderate speed.	Skaters typically skate in a line in short track speed skating races, as well as during team events in long track speed skating. Skaters must learn the skill of efficiently changing the lead skater to avoid excess energy output of the skater relenting the lead.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage the skaters to be directly behind the skater in front, or slightly offset to the right ✓ As the lead skater enters the corner, they should enter deep (not wide) into the corner. Use visual cues on the ice to show the skaters where to skate ✓ Instruct the lead skater to maintain their speed as they go deep. The skater will drop to the back because of the longer length of track skated. If they skate deep and drop their speed, a large gap will open 	Train skating Keirin race Pass the ring forwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lead skater enters deep into the corner (initial visual cues (e.g. lines, cones, etc.) on the ice are acceptable) to allow the line to pass, before rejoining at the end of the line ✓ The skater relenting the lead must not allow a significant gap to open to the back of the pack (requiring significant acceleration to "catch" the back of the line is not acceptable) 	Pass the ring forwards
Effective outside pass	Skaters use the fundamental elements of a pass to execute an outside pass on a partner.	Passing is a critical element to racing. Skaters must learn to intentionally execute passes, as compared to making opportunistic passes which often result in a penalty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review the fundamental elements of a pass (introduced in Level 7) ✓ Provide instruction on how to complete an outside pass. The passing skater's hips must be ahead of the other skater's shoulders before moving to the inside track to avoid a penalty ✓ Completing an outside pass can be very energy-consuming if the pass is not completed in a timely manner. Ensure the skaters carry their speed around the outside and tuck in efficiently 	Partner follow Partner follow and pass Blocked practice Pass the ring backwards Cat/Mouse catch the pack Fourt --> three Speed track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ When skating behind a partner at moderate-fast speed, adjusts speed to create a small gap to the skater head ✓ Accelerates to close the gap and carry speed around the outside of the skater ✓ Must complete the pass within 1 lap ✓ Must complete pass legally (lane change causing contact is not acceptable) 	Pass the ring backwards


Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
4-person relays	Skaters take turns in a 4-person push relay on the track.	Push relays build upon the team skills developed earlier in the program, moving towards a traditional short track relay. A 4-person relay further expands upon earlier skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Whenever possible, use skaters of similar speed for safety ✓ Ensure that skaters have mastered partner relays before moving to 4-person relays. Emphasize that skaters should always continue to move in a counterclockwise direction (in a partner relay this is more obvious because skaters have limited time to reset for their next exchange) ✓ As the relays become more complex with multiple skaters, re-emphasize safety points such as going straight down the ice after a push and doing a shoulder check before entering the centre 	Pit stop (shoulder check) Skate-by relays (shoulder check) Partner push relays Blocked practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Exchanges the primary skater at the exit to the corner every 1 lap via a push ✓ Push must be straight and true ✓ Aware of skating pattern to use after push; may have visual cues on the ice (lines, cones, etc.) ✓ Aware of the skating pattern to use when entering the track to receive a tag; may have visual cues on the ice (lines, cones, etc.) ✓ Advanced relay skills (e.g. coverage for a fall) are not required; however, skaters must maintain safety at all times (e.g. skating clockwise on the track for a tag is not acceptable) 	4-person 1 lap relay
Off-ice warm-up completed	Skaters engage in an off-ice warm up (including cardio, dynamic stretching, and activation) with instructions from a coach.	A proper warm up prepares the body to perform optimally and to avoid injury. Skaters learn this skill to build healthy habits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ At this stage of development, skaters should begin completing an off-ice warm up to prepare their body for practice (cardio, dynamic stretching, activation). Technical dryland work may be incorporated as appropriate ✓ Explain and model group expectations around dryland. Ensure parents are included in the education component 	Jogging Guided dynamic warm-up Skater's choice dynamic warm-up Hand slap (activation) Bottle grab (activation) Running sprints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consistently arrive on time for scheduled warm-up and/or alert the coach in advance if they will not be present ✓ Dress appropriately for the environment in which the warm-up is being conducted ✓ Exert an appropriate amount of effort (inadequate exertion that does not fully warm up the body and/or over exertion that leaves the skater fatigued before the session are not acceptable) 	Observation
Independent water bottle management	Skaters prepare and use their water bottle without assistance from an adult. Skaters can fill and clean their bottle when required.	Adequate hydration is critical for overall health and safety during sporting events. Skaters continue to increase their independence in sport activities by keeping their water bottle clean and ready to use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Explain and model group expectations around water bottle management. Ensure parents are included in the education component ✓ Skaters should know and execute practical tips: no metal bottles on the ice (creates a ring of melted ice), keep water bottle lids away from other bottles for sanitary purposes, store the water bottle in a safe place on the ice surface 	Modelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Brings a clean, full waterbottle to each session and/or independently fills their clean bottle at the rink ✓ Places their waterbottle in a location that does not interfere with the flow of skating ✓ Identifies their own waterbottle and uses their personal waterbottle exclusively 	Observation
Manages own safety equipment	Skaters put on their safety equipment independently.	This skill fosters independence in skaters and expectations around taking responsibility for their own equipment. This skill continues to progress the skater towards being able to get ready for going on ice completely independently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Explain and model group expectations around personal safety equipment. Skaters who participate in multiple disciplines (short track, long track, inline) should know the equipment required for each ✓ Make it part of the group routine to have skaters check for environmental safety before starting their warm-up. Skaters should be cued to look for potential safety hazards such as open gates, protective padding that is not attached together, frozen clumps of slush on the ice, holes in the ice, etc. 	Modelling Blocked practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Puts on all personal safety equipment as required by Red Book for the specific setting ✓ Alerts an adult if there are equipment concerns with personal safety equipment or environmental safety equipment (e.g. protective pads) 	Observation
Level 9 [🏆 breaks 0:55 in 400m race -- can be achieved at any Level but likely around Level 9]						
Bubbles with outside edges	Building on the bubble skill learned in Level 3, Skaters create the same bubble shapes with their skates while moving forwards, and hit their outside edges as they bring their feet together.	Being comfortable on the inside and outside edges of a speed skating blade allows skaters to work towards correct execution of both straightaway and corner technical skills. This skill particularly challenges a skater's balance on their outside edges. This skill also teaches skaters about the effect of the direction of push of their blade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage skaters to explore their edges when practicing bubbles. Skaters should be able to achieve their outside edges when their skates are close together under the skater's center of mass 	Bubble races Obstacle course Snakes and ladders (outside edge work) 1-legged races	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Must complete at least 5 consecutive bubbles down the length of the ice ✓ Skates must open to wider than hip width (onto inside edges), then narrow to nearly touching (onto outside edges; being unable to achieve outside edges is not acceptable) ✓ Rhythm must be smooth and controlled with no loss of balance as skaters maneuver between edges 	Obstacle course


Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
● Prepare for impact with mats	Skaters demonstrate safe falling technique when preparing for impact with the mats.	Falls happen during speed skating practice and racing. This is a harm-reduction skill to prepare skaters for impact with the mats and reduce the risk of injury.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Plan for safety if practicing falling: multiple layers of protective padding, moderate speed ✓ Skaters should attempt to contact the padding with a large amount of body surface area. Avoid having a single limb being the only point of contact with the protective padding/boards, as this transmits all the force of the fall to a targeted location and puts the limb at risk of injury 	Blocked practice Gymnastics training (trampoline, tumbling)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ When falling towards the mats, distribute body surface area (i.e. make contact with a large portion of their body) ✓ Effort is made to avoid contact with a single limb (i.e. avoid a leg or an arm being the contact point for injury risk mitigation) 	Observation during practice or races (intentional falls at speed should be avoided to minimize injury risk)
Full weight transfer in straights including basic shuffle step	While skating on the straightaway, skaters demonstrate a complete weight shift during a skating stride and shuffle step.	Bringing the centre of mass together before pushing increases the power and efficiency of the push. Skaters who do not achieve this skill must rely on joint extension to push, which is inefficient and will quickly tire the skater. This skill applies to both skating strides and a shuffle step.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lack of full weight transfer to the stance/gliding leg may be due to strength deficits, technical deficits or equipment issues. Assessing dry skating off ice may help to rule out equipment issues as a cause ✓ Completing a shuffle step is similar to a regular skating stride, in that the weight needs to be balanced over the stance/glide leg by the completion of the push. Skaters must fully transfer their weight sideways during a shuffle step 	Sticky skate races Drill laps Dryland side-to-sides, dry skate Off-ice cable side steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A) must be able to glide 10m with the weight completely on the stance leg (extended push leg held off the ice); repeat on both sides ✓ B) when travelling at a moderate speed around the track, demonstrates the ability to do a shuffle step on the straightaway, achieving the position described in A during the shuffle step ✓ Must achieve both A) and B) skills 	Drill laps AND 3 lap intervals
Backwards 1 foot glide Left and Right	Skaters glide backwards on 1 foot in a straight line.	Backwards and 1-footed skills challenge the overall athleticism of a skater, and help solidify how to adjust the weight balance (forward-backward) on a skate blade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage skaters to find a focal point to help with balance ✓ Skaters should assume an athletic stance when moving backwards: hips dropped with knees bent, upper body upright without significantly leaning forwards (away from the direction of movement) 	Blocked practice Board push-offs Yoga (balance and focus point) Tree pose challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skates backwards to build to a moderate speed, then glides on one foot in a straight line (significant deviations from straight are not acceptable) ✓ Glide must be held for 10m ✓ Must be completed on each leg 	Drill laps
Effective transition to skating (changing angle of blades, cadence)	While skating a short race, skaters adjust the angle of their push and the cadence of their skating as their speed increases.	To accelerate or maintain speed efficiently, skaters must adjust the angle of their push. Pushing backwards once already moving does not generate speed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure skaters have an understanding that an open push angle (relative to the trajectory of movement) creates acceleration. The slower the speed, the more open ("back") the push must be ✓ When accelerating, skaters should shorten their glide phase by having a faster recovery leg. This allows skaters to more quickly regroup their mass and begin the subsequent push 	Shopping cart 2 lap accelerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completes a 2 lap time trial from a standing start ✓ Pushes are to the back with high cadence during start/acceleration ✓ Pushes are to the side with an open angle relative to the trajectory of movement and moderate cadence as the skater transitions to regular skating in the second lap ✓ Lap time of the second lap must be faster than the first (i.e. continued acceleration) 	2 lap time trials
● Follows complex racing rules	Skaters explain the most common infractions in short track speed skating racing including the understanding of responsibility during a pass.	As skaters execute more mature passes at higher speeds, it is critical that they are aware of the racing rules for the safety of all skaters in the race.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ At this stage of development, skaters will begin to be more aware of the rationale and consequences for committing a skating infraction. Skaters may start to receive penalties (compared to warnings typically given to less experienced skaters) ✓ The lead skater in a duo of skaters is a skater who has their hips in front of (further along the track than) the shoulders of the other skater. If this positioning is not achieved, there is no lead nor trail skater and both skaters are responsible to ensure there is space for the other ✓ Lane changes (moving sideways in the straightaway relative to the direction of travel) must not cause contact 	Coach discussion Video review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Explains how the lead skater is determined ✓ Explains the concept of a lane change ✓ Identifies the most common area for lane changes causing contact to occur (i.e. at the end of the straight) 	Conversation

Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Defensive track	Skaters demonstrate the ability to skate tight to the blocks to protect their lead at race speed.	Skaters continue to learn about using different track patterns for different purposes during a race. The defensive track helps skaters to maintain their position in a race.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters will not be able to maintain a defensive track at full speed due to centrifugal force ✓ Provide instruction to avoid skating extremely close to the third block. This typically results in skaters being too tight for the apex (fourth) block, requiring an energy-consuming change of direction. Skaters should be just off the third block in order to stay tight from blocks four through six. 	Fight for 2nd Marked track patterns Partner follow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Without visual cues, skates block-to-block track pattern at moderate-fast speed for 2 laps (from a flying start) ✓ Must be able to skate the track pattern with another skater behind them 	Partner follow
Changes pace in race on a cue	Skaters understand and demonstrate the ability to change their pace during a race when cued by their coach.	As skaters begin to apply tactical skills to the race environment, being able to adjust their speed in a race on a coach's cue is important. This skill builds towards being able to adjust speed independently in a race.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Practice using different cues for the skaters to react to (e.g. a word, an expression or a sound). Consider skaters who may need adaptations (e.g. skaters with hearing impairment or skaters wearing filtered noise-reduction devices) ✓ Skaters must be ready to react immediately to the coach's cue to accelerate their pace 	3-3-3 skates Blocked practice Cat/Mouse catch the pack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Must complete a mock race of at least 8 laps ✓ Race should start at a moderate pace and skater must accelerate the pace to at least moderate-fast when cued by their coach (with approximately 2-3 laps remaining) ✓ Difference in pace must be obvious 	Mock races
 Effective inside pass	Skaters use the fundamental elements of a pass to execute an inside pass on a partner.	Passing is a critical element to racing. Skaters must learn to intentionally execute passes, as compared to making opportunistic passes which often result in a penalty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review the fundamental elements of a pass (introduced in Level 7) ✓ Provide instruction on how to complete an inside pass. Skaters should be familiar with creating a gap and accelerating into the gap. They must exit tightly from the corner to execute the pass as early as possible in the straightaway. Passes must not be initiated in the "end of straight" zone, which begins approximately 1m before the first block 	Partner follow Partner follow and pass Blocked practice Fight for second Four --> three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ When skating behind a partner at moderate-fast speed, adjusts speed to create a small gap to the skater head ✓ Accelerates to close the gap and carry speed up the inside of the lead skater at the exit to the corner ✓ Must complete the pass before the first block of the subsequent corner ✓ Must complete pass legally (lane change causing contact is not acceptable) 	Partner follow and pass
LT lane crossover	Skaters demonstrate a long track lane crossover on the back straight.	This skill is a fundamental skill for Olympic-style long track speed skating racing. Skaters will begin to be exposed to this style of long track racing at this stage of development and need to execute a lane crossover to successfully complete a race.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters without long track experience should be oriented to Olympic-style racing (inner and outer lanes). Video review may be a useful tool. Skaters should be taught key points (exchange on the back straight only, must be completed before the first puck of the corner) ✓ Depending on the group of skaters, more complex points may be introduced (skating coming from the outer lane has the right of way if skaters are equal, do not exchange on the first lap of a 1500m; note that most Level 9 skaters would not be skating a 1500m OS race) ✓ If long track ice is not available, a mock set-up can be built in a short track arena. For safety, the outer lane should be quite wide (i.e. the skaters are not forced to skate close to the boards in case of a fall). Skaters should practice on this set-up skating one at a time (do not have an inner and outer skater at the same time) 	500m mock races	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Demonstrate a lane change from outside to in and inside to out (may be during two different trials) ✓ Cueing, if any, from the coach must be done from the coaches box only ✓ May mock-up an Olympic style set-up on a short track to test this skill; note that only one skater should be skating at a time for safety considerations 	Mock races
 Team pursuit from rolling start	In groups of 3 or 4, skaters smoothly exchange the leader while skating in a line at a moderate speed for 1200m.	Rolling team pursuits build upon the team skills developed earlier in the program, moving towards a traditional long track team pursuit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Focus on pacing and the exchange. The start of a team pursuit is an advanced skill that can be added in later. Skaters should start this drill from a rolling start, with time to organize the group before the first exchange occurs 	Train skating Keirin race Blocked practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In groups of 3 or 4, complete a 1200m team pursuit at moderate speed ✓ May be completed on the LT (3 lap with skaters exchanging the lead each corner) or ST (12 lap with skaters exchanging the lead every 2 lap) ✓ Must not allow a significant gap to open (requiring significant acceleration to "catch" the back of the line is not acceptable) 	TP mock race

Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Emotional regulation with support	Skaters accurately identify emotions and choose age-appropriate strategies to manage their emotions.	As skaters progress through their skating career, they will experience a range of emotions. Having the skills to recognize and manage these emotions in a sport-specific environment and beyond sets a skater up for success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Children begin learning about emotional intelligence as early as pre-elementary school, using programs such as The Zones of Regulation. Ask skaters about the emotional regulation program(s) they have learned in school to build upon these skills in a sport environment ✓ As a coach you do not have to be an expert in this area; however, you do need to recognize positive and negative emotions in the practice and competition environment and how they affect the skater directly, in addition to others around them ✓ Skaters will need different strategies and interventions depending on the situation and their personalities 	Blocked practice Education sessions Modelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ When asked at an appropriate moment, names an emotion appropriately ✓ Selects an appropriate strategy to manage the emotion (strategies that cause harm to themselves or others are not acceptable; strategies requiring adult support are acceptable) 	Conversation
Participates effectively in race debrief	Skaters accurately identify a strength and challenge in their recent race performance.	Being able to reflect on performance is critical to making adjustments for the future. Skaters apply reflection skills in a competitive environment to improve their future performances in the competition and in future competitions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Timing is important: many skaters are not ready for a race debrief immediately after a race, especially during a competition with more races to prepare for. If race debrief will be after a pause, consider using video to remind the skater of the race 	Coach discussion Worksheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identifies at least one physical, technical or tactical strength in the race (extreme inaccuracy is not acceptable) ✓ Identifies at least one physical, technical or tactical challenge in the race (extreme inaccuracy is not acceptable) 	Conversation
Maintains focus through practice/ positive influence on group dynamics	Skaters expect and model positive group culture.	While many speed skating events are individual events, speed skaters typically train in groups. Positive and focused interactions within the group are important to the success of both the group and individual skaters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Have an intentional conversation with skaters and parents about group culture. Topics could include: how we want to feel, ways to show respect, how we will handle difficult situations. Be creative in how this session is run and the outcome materials from this session (e.g. team banner, group cheer, etc.) 	Modelling Team building activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maintains focus through the session with minimal cueing only ✓ Contributes positively to the culture of the skating group (e.g. models good behaviour, supports teammates) ✓ Reports concerns with group dynamics to a trusted adult 	Observation
 Dries own skates	Skaters effectively dry their own skates after practice without assistance from an adult.	This skill fosters independence in skaters and expectations around taking responsibility for their own equipment. This skill continues to progress the skater towards total independence in managing their equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Model this skill regularly for skaters. Ensure they all have a towel and can practice on their own skates ✓ To maintain the quality of the skate blade, make it part of group expectations that parents double-check skaters' blades before they are put away 	Modelling Blocked practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consistently dries skates well before putting soft skate guards on 	Observation
Level 10 [ breaks 0:50 in 400m race -- can be achieved at any Level but likely around Level 10]						
Maneuvers around obstacles on 1 leg <i>Left and Right</i>	Skaters move confidently around randomly-spaced objects one 1 leg.	Being comfortable on the inside and outside edges of a speed skating blade allows skaters to work towards correct execution of both straightaway and corner technical skills. This one-footed skill challenges balance, coordination, and agility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure skaters use both feet, going in both directions. Consider using markers or Bingo daubers on the ice to show direction ✓ Vary the radius and approach angles into the turns 	Mario Kart Snakes and ladders Obstacle course F1 1-legged races Tree pose challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pivots around randomly-spaced objects with 1 leg fully off the ice ✓ Use inside and outside edges on each leg ✓ Must stay within 1m of the object when turning 	Mario Kart
 Tolerates 60 minute session	Skaters participate in a 60 minute session without requiring off-ice breaks.	Skaters continue to increase their tolerance for structured physical activity. This skill prepares skaters to enter more formal training opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue to build healthy habits: schedule rest breaks (with appropriate amount of rest based on the intensity and duration of the previous activity), model active rest, schedule water breaks, etc. ✓ Allow off-ice trips for emergency situations only 	Modelling (appropriate rests)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No off-ice breaks needed. Uses active rest (no sitting/lying on the ice) 	Observation

Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Knee to wall (off-ice)	With their toes 10cm from the wall, skaters are able to drop their knees forward to touch the wall without their heels lifting off the ground.	Achieving a good ankle angle is critical for positioning in speed skating. Skaters work on flexibility before entering their growth spurt.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Prior to peak height velocity, increasing muscle length is easier than once the growth spurt has begun. Identify flexibility concerns, including plantar flexor/heel cord length (as tested in this benchmark skill), early to optimize corrective effects ✓ Static stretching is required to increase muscle length. Static stretching should be done with warm muscles (e.g. after a workout). Static stretches should be held for 30 seconds and repeated 3 times 	Dynamic stretching (pre) Static stretching (post)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Must achieve the movement smoothly (undue strain to the point of potential injury to achieve the position should be avoided) 	Off-ice functional test
 Skate with arms on back	Skaters skate comfortably with both arms on their back.	Skating with arms on their back requires core strength and coordination. Skaters will use this skill as they continue to develop to conserve energy when skating.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters may struggle to maintain upper body control when skating with their arms on their back due to a lack of core strength ✓ Asking skaters to gently lift their hands off their back produces a gentle muscular contraction that may allow skaters to stabilize without significant twisting through the shoulders 	Pool noodle hold Dryland dynamic core exercises Arm float	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Demonstrates 3 lap of skating with arms on their back ✓ Core activation should be demonstrated (excessive twisting through the shoulders is not acceptable) 	3 lap intervals
Low basic position while moving	Skaters maintain a stable and efficient representation of basic position while skating laps.	Being able to maintain basic position while skating increases aerodynamic efficiency and allows for a more powerful push.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A low basic position increases aerodynamic efficiency and allows for a more powerful push due to increased extension (straightening) of the hip and knee joints during a push. However, maintaining a low basic position is also energy-consuming. Skaters should be able to skate in a low basic position but would not typically skate this low for longer intervals 	Limbo Gorilla skate Knees to ankles Place the puck (low to ice = more accuracy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maintains basic position on the straights for 2 lap at moderate speed ✓ Back rounded (shoulders at hip level) ✓ Looking through eyebrows to see ahead ✓ Knees are forward and bent to allow thighs to be approximately parallel to the ground 	2 lap intervals
 Fully-extended crossovers on track at speed	Skaters achieve full extension during counterclockwise crossovers while moving at speed around the circumference of a short track speed skating track.	This skills represents a mature cornering movement pattern, setting the skater up for more advanced training and racing opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In a mature crossover, skaters must complete each push with the blades parallel to each other. During the push, the blade will be open relative to the trajectory of movement (to build speed). At the end of the push, skaters must "hook" the front of the blade around towards parallel in order to steer around the corner ✓ Practice activities that require cornering around a turn tighter than a traditional track will force skaters to turn more with their skates 	5 circles Loop'd'whirl Cat and mouse Chuckwagon races Reverse spirals Candy cane races Boxing ring Head pivot attempts Dryland cable crossovers On-ice cable crossovers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crosses the right leg over the left then uncrosses at least three times per corner, repeated over 4 corners (2 lap) ✓ Speed of movement around the curve should be near skater's maximum ✓ Extension of left leg should be complete ✓ Blades should be parallel to each other at the completion of the push 	3 lap intervals
Race finish with extended leg	Skaters demonstrate a safe and legal finish at the finish line.	As skaters participate in more competitive racing experiences, a strong finish can mean the difference between gaining or losing a finishing position.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ At this stage of development, skaters may be racing in more competitive races, and may be advancing through rounds of racing. A strong finish may be the difference in position at the end of a race ✓ Skaters should be educated to avoid lunging for the finish (back blade drags on the toe) and to avoid kicking out at the finish (front blade leaves the ice surface). Alternate, legal finishes include skating hard across the line or shooting the front blade (on the ice) 	Racing games with intentional finish 1/2 lap or 1 lap starts with finish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skates with strong finish step across the line OR demonstrates two-foot finish (kicking the front foot across the line and/or dragging the back foot across the line are not acceptable) ✓ Must maintain balance and control after finish line 	Observation during mock or official races
Changes corner entry gate on cue	Skaters understand and demonstrate the ability to change their corner entry when cued by their coach.	Skaters continue to learn about using different track patterns for different purposes during a race. Different corner entry patterns set skaters up optimally for their next tactical skill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ As skaters continue to develop their passing and defending skills, they will need to change the entry pattern into the corner (tight, medium, wide or deep) ✓ Skaters should be able to smoothly complete a corner regardless of the corner entry gate used ✓ Skaters must be able to adjust the corner entry gate on a cue, with an emerging ability to adjust the corner entry gate based on race situation 	Blocked practice Three doors: follow the leader Three doors: deviate the leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Must complete at least 4 laps at moderate pace with a cued corner entry once per lap ✓ Coach cues the skater at centre ice to adjust their corner entry (tight, medium, wide) ✓ Skater must accurately complete four consecutive corner entries ✓ Skating must be smooth (significant alterations/disruptions in skating to achieve the desired entry gate are not acceptable) 	4 lap intervals

Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Changes pace in race based on situation	Skaters understand and demonstrate the ability to change their pace during a race based on the pace of the race.	As skaters continue to use apply tactical skills to the race environment, they will require the ability to adjust their speed independently in a race as dictated by the pace of the pack around them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters will begin to develop an understanding of when to increase the pace of a medium-long distance race. Skaters must be able to listen, see, and "sense" the movement of skaters around them ✓ While skaters must react quickly to a change in pace in the pack, they should be taught to react in a way that is legal (i.e. no lane changes causing contact) and in a way that minimizes unnecessary energy consumption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mock races (organic) Mock races (scripted) Cat/Mouse catch the pack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Must complete a mock race of at least 8 laps ✓ Race should start at a moderate pace and skater must accelerate the pace to at least moderate-fast as other skaters accelerate (with approximately 2-3 laps remaining); significantly delayed reaction to the pace change is not acceptable ✓ Difference in pace must be obvious 	Mock races
Repositions within pack	Skaters execute appropriate tactical skills from their existing repertoire to reposition within a pack.	This skills is the culmination of tactical skills from earlier in the program. Speed skaters need to be able to move efficiently and legally within a pack for short track racing and some long track racing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create opportunities for skaters to practice tactical skills. This may require having a designated skater pace the front of the group to keep the pack together ✓ Use creative games to encourage movement in the pack. To promote a degree of autonomy, ask skaters to define the rules of the game to be contested over a given number of laps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mock races (organic) Mock races (scripted) Touch two Snake through 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Coach provides a basic strategy for a race (e.g. place in the top 2 to advance to the next round) ✓ Chooses and executes tactical skills (pacing, positioning, track pattern, passing) during a moderately-paced mock race (6-8 laps) ✓ Execution must be clean (committing an infraction/penalty is not acceptable) and efficient (excessive energy demand to execute skills is not acceptable) 	Mock races
 4-person 2000m relay	Skaters take turns in a 4-person 2000m relay on the track.	This relay represents one of the relays contested at youth competitive racing opportunities. Skaters build skills towards being able to execute this relay in a competitive environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Whenever possible, use skaters of similar speed on each team to maximize the team's success ✓ Enforce relay safety rules over perfect execution of the relay (e.g. it is more important to avoid skating backwards on the track for a tag, than it is to make the tag at all costs) ✓ Begin to introduce the concept of coverage during a 4-person relay (1 covers 3, 2 covers 4). Re-enact the relay off the ice use running or using game pieces on a board to reinforce where each skater should be at various points during the relay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Off-ice run through Blocked practice (with laps counted) Ring drop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Exchange pattern as determined with the coach during a prebrief ✓ Exchanges are legal and effectively transfer speed ✓ Execution must be clean (committing any skating or relay infractions is not acceptable) 	4-person 2000m relay
Uses strategies to manage activation levels during competition	Skaters explain basic sport performance strategies to manage activation levels during a competition.	Skaters are introduced to basic sport performance strategies as they progress in their competitive careers. Being able to get into the correct mindset and nervous system activation level is crucial for successful racing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Expand upon the general emotional regulation skills introduced in Level 9 to situation-specific instances during competition ✓ Practice activation management strategies before each skating session as a routine component in the warm-up. To promote autonomy, provide time for "skater's choice" in choosing and practicing an activation management strategy based on their activation level before the practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blocked practice Education sessions Modelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Explains how to increase energy if feeling "low" during a competition (sample answers: jump up and down, go for a run, listen to motivating music) ✓ Explains how to decrease energy if feeling "overstimulated" during a competition (sample answers: deep breathing, quiet time, listening to calming music) 	Conversation
Basic knowledge of sport performance nutrition	Skaters explain basic nutrition concepts for sport performance.	Adequate nutrition is critical for overall health and safety during sporting events. Skaters begin to participate in nutrition choices related to sport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Expect that skaters are not typically responsible for food choices in the home. Include parents in education and discussion wherever possible ✓ Allow for variations in answers based on cultural background ✓ Avoid significant emphasis on anthropometrics at this stage of development. Focus instead on healthy eating habits. Refer significant concerns to a health care professional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education sessions Group grocery store tour Group meal prep Modelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provides a reasonable answer to the question, "What are some good food choices to consider before a practice?" (sample answers: whole foods, foods I am familiar with, avoid highly-processed foods) ✓ Provides a reasonable answer to the question, "What are some good food choices during a competition?" (sample answers: foods I am familiar with, foods that are easy to digest) ✓ Provides a reasonable answer to the question, "What are some good food choices after a practice or competition?" (sample answers: foods that will help my body recover, occasional treats are acceptable) ✓ Must answer the questions with minimal support (leading questions should not be used) 	Conversation

Benchmark Skill	Skill Description	Rationale for Development	Key Teaching Points	Practice Activities to Develop	Eval Requirements	Possible Eval Methods
Participates effectively in race planning	Skaters choose appropriate tactical skills from their existing repertoire to execute a race strategy that has been pre-determined by their coach.	Skaters develop their autonomy in choosing tactical skills to execute a race strategy. This skill builds upon the tactical skills introduced earlier in the program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Practice this skill outside of the competitive environment to build competence and confidence. Mock races in practice are a good opportunity for skaters to plan (and execute) new race strategies ✓ Skaters will require knowledge of their competitors to choose optimal tactical skills to use. To support skaters in learning this skill, consider using questions such as, "What do you think xxxxx's strengths are? Do you think it's realistic to pass xxxxxxxx? Who in the race has a fast start?" 	Coach discussion Video review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Coach provides a basic strategy for a race (e.g. place in the top 2 to advance to the next round) ✓ Explains which of their existing tactical skills (pacing, positioning, track pattern, passing) could be used to execute this strategy 	Conversation
 Ties own skates	Skaters tie their own skates tightly enough for safe skating.	This skill fosters independence in skaters and expectations around taking responsibility for their own equipment. This skill is the culminating skill for skaters to be able to completely manage their own equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skaters should be competent tying their shoes by this stage of development. Tying skates requires increased hand strength to tighten the laces appropriately ✓ Enforce safety considerations such as tucking extra laces into the lace cover 	Modelling Blocked practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tightens and ties the laces adequately for safe skating ✓ Closes any buckles/straps independently ✓ Alerts an adult if there are equipment concerns 	Observation

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