

# **Total Learning Introduction**

**Total Learning** is for all educators in the home and after-school settings, in both public and private schools.

**Total Learning** represents a powerful means of **preventing** learning problems in younger children, **correcting** thinking/motor problems in older children and adults, and **developing** balance, coordination and rhythm skills in adults of all ages.

**Total Learning** is a **different** approach to learning. It is **different** because learning is experienced through cognitive motor activities.

**Total Learning** teaches  
**self-observation,**  
**self-control and**  
**self-correction,**

because it is easier for the student to be aware of thinking flaws when thinking involves physical activities.

Mastery of these skills results in improved **sequential** and **analytical thinking**

**Total Learning** trains mental stamina, focus and attention.

**Total Learning** is **systematic**;  
it begins with easier skills and moves to more challenging and complex ones.

The **Total Learning** manual offers a step-by-step approach which requires no specific training on the part of the educator. It is best carried out one-on-one (educator to student) or in a small group.

**The educator's job is**

to give support to the student in accomplishing the activity and to determine when the skill has been **mastered**.

Once mastery is achieved, the student is prepared to go to the next level of challenge. Practice of an activity after mastery continues to be beneficial to wake up the brain and help it to focus.

The manual includes only the activities and how to teach them; if you are interested in the theory underlying the activities, please refer to the bibliography provided.

*Paula J. Perron*

As a Primary Inclusion teacher, K-3, I have one-sixth of my classroom space blocked off as “the Brainworkout Center” with a trampoline, balance board, walking beam, hanging ball, etc. Every student that I work with in those grades has been deficient in at least one of the areas of this program. Most are lacking in several areas.

Last year a little Kindergartener (with probable autism) began working with me. A year later this boy as a First Grader continued working on the Total Learning Program. He had a lot of trouble with the trampoline, especially on COUNT AND TURN, and it bothered him. His arms would flail and he’d panic as he’d lose his spatial orientation.

One day he came into the classroom and said, “Mrs. Sikes, I’ve figured it out...I think I can do it!” He got on the trampoline and did COUNT AND TURN to perfection with a huge smile on his face.

It’s funny how the next few days his teacher was in awe about what was taking place for him in the classroom:

He was able to do more than one thing at a time,

He could follow 2-3 step directions,

He was making sense of reading, and much more...

”Something has clicked!!!” she said.

Hmmmmmm! Thank you Perrons!!

Patti Sikes, teacher  
Bloomington, IN

As I finish previewing Paula Perron's *Total Learning Program*, the thought that keeps running through my mind is: "Oh, I wish I had had this program 7 years ago when I made the decision to home school my children!"

In spite of their many learning strengths, my children, ages 11 and 8, have each experienced certain difficulties and frustrations in the learning process itself. I believe that the time devoted to doing the exercises in this program would have made our earliest years of home schooling more profitable and pleasant and actually saved us time in the long run.

It is tempting to say, "But I don't have TIME to add anything else into our home-schooling schedule!" As a veteran home school mother, my advice is: schedule in an hour a day of the *Total Learning Program* when your children are very young and save yourself countless hours of frustration and remedial work down the road!

Kathy Spencer, home school mother  
Denver, CO

# Equipment and Supplies

There are three basic pieces of equipment that you will need to acquire or purchase:

1. A **mini-tramp** which is low to the floor and 4'-5' in diameter. This may be found in sporting goods stores for less than \$50.00. There are also well-built **rebounders** that can be ordered over the internet.

2. A **2"x4" redwood board that is 8 feet long**. This can be purchased for under \$10.00 at your local lumber yard. Redwood is important because it does not splinter and warps less than other kinds of wood. If Redwood is not available, ask for a beam that has similar properties.

3. A **balance board**. You may purchase this from Dr. Frank Belgau: [www.balameetrics.com](http://www.balameetrics.com). No substitutes are as effective.

Considering the value of having the equipment,  
the cost will be well worth it.

Other materials needed:

1. Pendulum Ball
2. Felt squares
3. Beach or playground ball (10-12 inches in diameter)
4. Colored markers
5. Flashlight (optional)
6. Bean Bag
7. Balloon
8. String (4' long)
9. Masking tape, sidewalk chalk
10. Fixation cards with numbers, letters, pictures on them (see page 32)

You can make your own Pendulum Ball or Bean Bag or  
order them from [www.balameetrics.com](http://www.balameetrics.com).

For training of Visual and Auditory Perceptual skills, I recommend:

Rosner, Jerome, *Helping Children Overcome Learning Difficulties*, 1993.

For more intensive handwriting training, please order  
Template Training to Improve Handwriting, Perron, Brain Workout  
([www.brainworkoutcenter.com](http://www.brainworkoutcenter.com))

## Putting the **TOTAL LEARNING PROGRAM** to Use

Two ways to use the Total Learning Program:

### I. **Informally**      II. **Formally**

#### I. The **Informal** Approach:

Purpose: For the parent/educator to make sure the child can perform **ALL** the activities.

Time requirement: Minimal, non-structured.

Do the activities whenever time allows, **just for fun**.

In this case the parent/teacher may have the student begin anywhere in the hierarchy of skills. But if the one activity chosen proves to be fairly difficult, then you would return to a lower level in that **same category**, working on that skill until mastered and moving up to the next level when the student is ready. Make sure, however, that the student eventually works on all of the skills in each category.

**It is important to go from level 1 to 9 in the Ocular Motor category.**

#### II. The **Formal** Approach:

Pre-schools, kindergartens, primary grade school teachers, and home-school parents would probably choose this approach.

Purpose: to **build *thinking* through physical activities**.

Time requirement: varies per child and number of children in a small group.

In the home school setting this program can be counted as physical education, pre-math and reading.

Some activities will require a minimum number of practices to master, and others will need to be practiced several weeks until mastered. Use the Progress Charts on pages 6 and 7.

I highly recommend that previously mastered activities be reviewed and practiced once or twice a month.

## II. The **Formal** Approach (Continued):

Since the activities are listed in a graduated order or structure, this is the procedure to follow:

Begin with Level 1. Each day that you work on the activities, practice each skill in each category – A, B, C, D, and E . Even if a small group is involved, have each student attempt activity 1-A , mark whether it was practiced or if mastered (see pages 6 & 7) and go to 1-B, and so on.

You may proceed to level 2 in the areas (A-D) that have been mastered on the first level.

“Mastery” is described for each activity. This is not to say that your judgment should be ruled out; rather, we aim at giving you very precise guide lines. When an activity is performed with mastery, the student can do it automatically and without the effort of thinking: the student can carry on a conversation or recite a rhyme or answer questions while doing an activity that has been mastered (unless it requires specific verbalization, such as counting).

In a small group, while some students are still practicing the skills, other students may reinforce their mastery of a skill by adding more challenging ways to perform a skill. They can also model how the skill should be done. But for the sake of expediency, it may be necessary for the small group to move to the next level except just one student. That student should continue working in the category on level 2 that is not mastered but may move to level 3 in the other categories that have been mastered. This situation may require that the educator spend extra time with the one student to help h/her attain mastery in a skill so as to stay with the group.

Try to practice these activities at least 3 times a week, but it is preferable to do them every day.

Auditory and Visual Perceptual Skills on pages 64 & 65 can be practiced along with the Cognitive Motor Activities.

# A B C D E

LEVEL	Rhythm/ Coordination	Coordination/ Balance	Balance/ Coordination	Body in Space Eye Hand	Ocular Motor
1	Bounce and Count <b>mini-tramp</b> (page 10)	Climb the Ladder <b>floor</b> (page 11)	Toe-Heel Rock <b>floor</b> (page 12)	1-2-3-4 Pat <b>floor</b> (page 13)	Follow the Moving Target <b>floor</b> (page 14)
2	Stop Game <b>mini-tramp</b> (page 16)	Blast Off <b>floor</b> (page 17)	Crane Balance <b>floor</b> (page 18)	1-2-3-4 Clap <b>floor</b> (page 19)	Colored Markers <b>floor</b> (page 20)
3	1-2-3-4 In and Out <b>mini-tramp</b> (page 22)	Walk Beam Basic <b>beam</b> (page 23)	Stand Still and Level <b>balance board</b> (page 24)	Pat the Balloon <b>floor</b> (page 25)	Eyes to Thumb <b>balance board</b> (page 26)
4	Count and Turn <b>mini-tramp</b> (page 28)	Beam Challenge <b>beam</b> (page 29)	Stand Level Move Head <b>balance board</b> (page 30)	Echo Game <b>balance board</b> (page 31)	Picture/Letter Fixations <b>balance board</b> (page 32)

# A B C D E

LEVEL	Rhythm/ Coordination	Coordination/ Balance	Balance/ Coordination	Body in Space Eye Hand	Ocular Motor
5	Jumping Jacks <b>mini-tramp</b> (page 34)	Imitate the Leader <b>balance board</b> (page 35)	Two-hand Carry <b>balance board</b> (page 36)	Hopping <b>floor</b> (page 37)	Catch/Release the Ball <b>balance board</b> (page 38)
6	Hopping Game <b>mini-tramp</b> (page 40)	Criss-Cross the Beam <b>floor/beam</b> (page 41)	One-hand Toss <b>balance board</b> (page 42)	Skipping <b>floor</b> (page 43)	Aiming the Eyes <b>balance board</b> (page 44)
7	‘Do’ Right/Left <b>mini-tramp</b> (page 46)	Wooden Soldier Bounce and Count <b>mini-tramp</b> (page 47)	Move Head <b>balance board</b> (page 48)	Locomotor Sequences <b>floor</b> (page 49)	Target Practice Near – Far <b>balance board</b> (page 50)
8	One-Right Sequence <b>mini-tramp</b> (page 52)	Quarter Turns <b>mini-tramp</b> (page 53)	Around the World <b>balance board</b> (page 54)	Bunt the Ball <b>balance board</b> (page 55)	Fuse the Picture <b>sitting</b> (page 56)
9	Cadence Game <b>mini-tramp</b> (page 58)	1-2-3-4 Pattern <b>mini-tramp/floor</b> (page 59)	Rainbow Toss <b>balance board</b> (page 60)	Finger-tap the Ball <b>balance board</b> (page 61)	Scan the Figures <b>sitting</b> (page 62)

# Level 3

## Coordination/Balance B

**Equipment/supplies:** 2”x 4” beam 8 feet long

**Walk Beam:** the student walks on an 8’ long 2”x4” beam forward and backward 4 times each way without touching the floor (losing balance). Make sure the heel touches the toe going forward and the toe touches the heel going backward. Walking is slow, not fast. The student’s eyes are looking straight ahead at a target and not down. Movement may be noted in the knees but not in the arms or upper body.

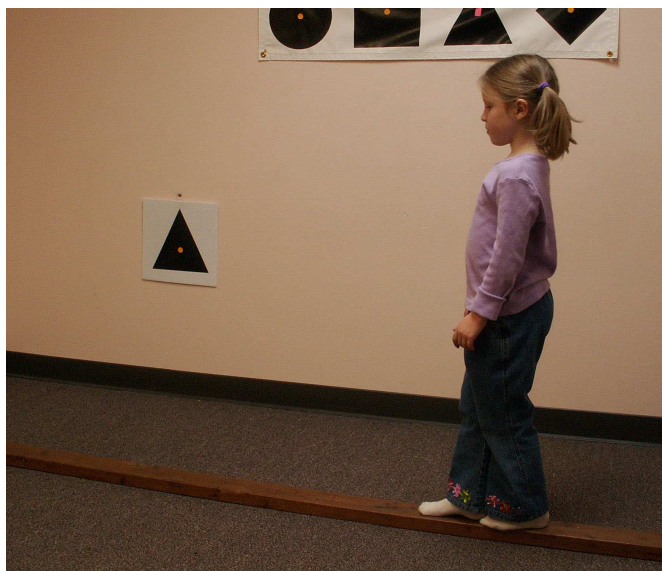
**If this is difficult:** practice will be results. Student should be encouraged not to look at h/her feet but rather to develop the sense of feeling where the beam is. If balance becomes wobbly, it is best to bend the knees rather than to move and wave arms.

**Mastery:** the student can slowly walk the balance beam forward and backward 4 times each way, touching heel to toe and toe to heel without losing balance (touching the floor). The student’s eyes are **focused straight ahead** and not down.

### For challenge after mastery:

1.) As student places h/her right foot on the beam she says, “Right” and “Left” when the left foot touches the beam.

2.) Place Letters/Numbers Chart, page 67, on the wall at eye level in front and ask student to read the chart first horizontally, then vertically, and, last, diagonally while walking forward and backward slowly, touching toe to heel, heel to toe. Read one or two letters/numbers for each step.



# Level 3

## Ocular Motor E

**Equipment/supplies:** balance board.

**Eyes to Thumb:** this is the same activity as 2-E, except that this time the student is **standing on the level balance board** (having been introduced to the balance board in 3-C). The student extends both arms, slightly bent, out front, shoulder height and shoulder width apart. Educator stands or sits in front of student to watch eye movements, to give commands, and to give feedback. Student makes a fist with thumbs pointing upwards. Student will be looking at each thumb nail. This time the change in focus is every 1-2 seconds, and the student aims h/her eyes at one thumb and the other, following the educator's commands. Initially it may be a touch of the arm from the educator. Later an "x" or "o" sticker can be placed on the thumb nail. The educator directs the movement of the student's eyes by saying, "x" or "o" every 1 or 2 seconds, making sure that the student does not move the eyes until the direction is given. Head is not tilted or turned in the least bit; head does not move.

**If this is difficult:** Arms of the student may get tired. Educator may need to support them. Student needs to practice wall push-ups, 10 at a time, to build muscle strength, and then see if student can hold arms out independently. Give praise for arm strength and eye-movement accuracy. Encourage student not to tense up in the arms and shoulders while practicing. If one eye seems to be lagging or weaker, cover stronger eye and practice 30 seconds with weaker eye; then both eyes.

**Mastery:** the student stands on a level balance board and follows the directives, moving h/her eyes smoothly to the target thumb consistently for 60 seconds. Older students: practice for two minutes.



# Level 5

## Coordination/Balance B

**Equipment/supplies:** balance board

**Imitate the Leader:** while the student **stands on the balance board**, keeping it as level as possible, or readjusting it to maintain level, the educator moves h/her arms to a position; the student is to imitate. The educator makes sure that the student is in the proper arm position before moving to another position. The student's responses are to be prompt, precise, definite, and consistent. Make sure that the hands are strong with fingers together.

**If this is difficult:** the student may **begin this activity standing on the floor** until s/he accurately imitates the arm positions. Then practice on the balance board. If the student fails to imitate the position taken, the educator should start again in the previous position. The educator may give verbal feedback ("That's exactly the way I have my arms. I can't tell if you mean to have your arm straight up by your ear or out to the side; I am holding my arm straight up.") to assist the student in being aware of h/her arm positions. It is important that the student consistently **mirrors** the educator (educator's left arm is horizontal while the student's right arm is horizontal).

**Mastery:** while **standing on the balance board**, the student imitates the arm positions of the educator promptly, precisely and consistently with 10 different arm positions.

**For challenge after mastery:** educator demonstrates a series of arm positions for the student to imitate in the **correct series**, starting with two in a series and adding one more until the number in the series equals the student's age.



Suggested Arm Positions

