

Sport Education Curriculum and Instruction Strategies

Sport Education is a curriculum and instruction model developed to allow students in physical education programs to have authentic, enjoyable learning experiences in sport, dance, and exercise activities. Sport Education is not business as usual; it differs in many ways from what students are typically expected to learn in physical education and how their teachers organize learning experiences. Most of all, the student roles in Sport Education are fundamentally different from the roles students play in traditional approaches to physical education. In this chapter we discuss the foundations of the Sport Education curriculum and describe instructional strategies.

SPORT EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION FOUNDATIONS

The curricular philosophy of Sport Education has two distinct features: deeper coverage of content and an expanded set of content goals. First, in Sport Education fewer activities are taught in a given school year, allowing students to learn each activity to a greater depth than is typical in multiactivity physical education programs. This less-is-more philosophy is consistent with current thinking in education reform. Most school curricula have been described as a mile wide and an inch deep, an appropriate description for the multiactivity curriculum in physical education, where units are often as short as four to five class sessions. Students in multiactivity physical education models often get a day of introduction, a day or two of basic skills, and then a day or two of doing the activity before they move on to a new unit. Sport Education uses seasons, which are much longer activity units. Seasons are designed to last long enough for students to learn and grow in the various outcomes and roles expected of them.

“ I was really shocked at how well they were able to articulate in their written responses [to an end-of-season survey] how the longer unit allowed them to really learn more compared to the one- to two-week units in a typical PE class. The best quote about why they enjoyed the length of the Sport Education season was “Because I could get really good at it, and in PE even if you can’t do it well yet, you move on.” ”

Elementary teacher, United States

The second curricular feature of this model is that longer seasons allow teachers time to plan, organize, and achieve an expanded set of content goals. The content of typical physical education units focuses primarily and often exclusively on techniques, rules, and perhaps small bits of tactics. In Sport Education, the content is not only strongly focused on techniques and tactics but also includes learning about and practicing other roles important to how the activity is pursued outside school. This would include roles such as coaching, refereeing, scorekeeping, compiling statistics, managing teams, publicizing results, and the like. Sport Education also takes seriously the need to help students understand and appreciate the rituals and conventions of various activities and to understand the differences between good and bad sport practices. There is more to teach than just a few individual techniques. The key is that teachers communicate these expected outcomes at the outset of each season.

The instructional philosophy of Sport Education centers on developing and sustaining small, heterogeneous learning groups (Cohen, 1994), or teams. Within teams, students have various roles and responsibilities, all of which contribute to the success of the team. None of this means that teachers can abdicate their responsibilities as instructional leaders. Rather, it means they should fulfill these responsibilities using strategies that more fully engage and utilize the talents of students. As a result, students will become more responsible for contributing to effective classes and for achieving seasonal outcomes.

Teams learn, practice, and compete together. Competition is fundamental to the success of Sport Education. It provides motivation and can enhance learning. Well-designed Sport Education seasons also ensure that the competitions are fair and even and that all students understand that winning the competition is just one of several important outcomes. That is why Sport Education can work effectively for activities as diverse as basketball, orienteering, aerobic dance, cross-country skiing, table tennis, and Frisbee golf.

HOW SPORT EDUCATION FITS WITH CURRENT EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT

Sport Education is wholly consistent with current trends in curriculum and instruction in schools. In Australia it has been hailed as a student-centered approach to physical education (Alexander, Taggart, & Luckman, 1998) because it places students at the center of the learning process and gives them real responsibilities. It also has been described as a good example of situated learning (Kirk & Kinchin, 2003; Kirk & MacDonald, 1998) because Sport Education learning experiences are highly contextual, which means that what students learn can be applied beyond the school experience.

In Sport Education, student performances and competitions are public, so authentic assessment is more easily available. Students play in basketball games where rebounds, shooting percentages, turnovers, and the like can be recorded. They do gymnastics routines that can be judged. They compete in archery where scores can be recorded.

Teams perform folk dances where judges give them scores based on set criteria. In education assessment these are called *exhibitions* (Wiggins, 1993); that is, they are public performances where the actual performance leads to an authentic assessment. The fact that students perform and records are kept provides an ongoing authentic assessment that can show progress toward desired outcomes (i.e., learning) as well as recognize final accomplishments.

The small-group learning that is central to Sport Education requires that team members cooperate on a number of tasks. Thus, the model is consistent with various forms of cooperative learning. And, as in successful cooperative learning models, although team performance is an important outcome, all team members are held accountable for their individual contributions.

Sport Education is also consistent with the current emphasis on project-based learning. When students have to plan team strategies for a season, and the season is of sufficient length, the goal for the team to be as successful as possible becomes a project. In a project-based environment, learning is concrete rather than abstract. And rather than learn in isolation, students in Sport Education work and communicate with teammates to have a successful season.

Finally, current education practice suggests that curriculum and instruction models should enable students to integrate knowledge and skills from various traditional school subjects. Integration is at the core of project-based learning. Sport Education offers many opportunities to integrate learning across subject areas, a goal that has become particularly important in middle school curricula. Chapter 12 includes extensive information and examples on how to integrate academic subjects into Sport Education seasons and vice versa.

ORGANIZING THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AROUND SPORT EDUCATION

The feature of Sport Education that most affects how a curriculum is organized is planning for seasons that are longer than typical physical education units. As we point out in several places, Sport Education emphasizes depth of coverage and sufficient time for students to improve during the season. The other important factor, of course, is the amount of curricular time assigned to physical education. Curricular time is determined both by the frequency of physical education classes—daily, once, twice, three, or four times per week—and the length of the class session, which might range from 30 minutes in a third-grade class to two hours in a high school that uses block scheduling. In chapter 5 and the online resource, you will find examples of block plans of actual seasons taught by physical educators. They also reflect the variety of school scheduling formats and demonstrate how both traditional sports and other activities such as weight training and dance can be incorporated. We have always advised Sport Education teachers to err in the direction of planning for more rather than less time. As teachers, we all tend to underestimate the time it takes students to master techniques and tactics and to learn to use them in well-played games. Following are two Sport Education curriculum design examples, one from the elementary school level and one from the high school level.

Elementary School Example

Darnell (1994) described an elementary curriculum in which the year started with a short fitness unit that was followed by five Sport Education seasons. The program operated on a four-day rotating schedule (i.e., every fourth day students participated in

physical education), and classes were 50 minutes long. The length of each season was typically 12 class sessions. This meant that each season had a maximum of 600 class minutes and occupied a little more than 9 weeks of the school schedule. The fitness unit served two purposes. First, it allowed the teacher to get to know her students and to see them in various fitness activities, providing her with evidence pertinent to placing students on teams that would be as evenly matched as possible. Second, of course, it allowed her to introduce principles of fitness and determine the various fitness levels of the students.

The Sport Education curriculum included soccer, basketball, volleyball, gymnastics, and track and field. All of these are important international sports, but they each have different characteristics that, taken together, make for a coherent, balanced Sport Education curriculum. This model has five Sport Education seasons per school year, each of which allows sufficient time for students to accomplish significant outcomes. In addition, the activities are repeated at subsequent grade levels, although not always in exactly the same form. Thus, the total amount of curricular time devoted to helping students become competent and confident in these activities is adequate to achieve the intended outcomes.

High School Example

Dugas (1994) described a high school physical education program where Sport Education was used as one element in the curriculum. Although physical education was required, in this model, students could choose their physical education classes. The school year was divided into four nine-week grading periods. The seasons were fall, early winter, late winter, and spring. Students could choose their activity from three categories: Sport Education, recreation, or fitness (see table 2.1). The activities in the

Table 2.1 Yearly Physical Education Activities in Three Areas

Sport Education		
Racket sports	Target sports	Team sports
Badminton	Archery	Volleyball
Racquetball	Bowling	Track and field
Table tennis	Golf	Baseball
Tennis	Fencing	Softball
	Riflery	Cross country
		Soccer
Fitness activities		
Weight training		
Aerobic dance		
Aerobic activities		
Recreational activities		
Swimming	Recreational activities	
Beginning swimming	Square and folk dancing	
Intermediate swimming	Backpacking and hiking	
Lifesaving	Recreational boating	

Adapted from Dugas 1994.

recreation and fitness offerings could easily be done using the Sport Education model, although they were not in this school.

Within the Sport Education category, students could choose between team and individual sports (see table 2.2). An effort was made to have activities in the Sport Education category correspond to the availability of similar activities in the larger local sport culture. That is, flag football and cross country are in the fall; volleyball and soccer in the early winter; basketball and swimming in the late winter; and softball, baseball, and track and field in the spring for the team sport offerings. Individual sport offerings included tennis, archery, fencing, badminton, golf, bowling, racquetball, riflery, and table tennis. The length of these seasons was sufficient for students to accomplish significant improvement in techniques and tactics and for teams to learn to work together to achieve team goals.

Determining Season Length

What is the appropriate length for a Sport Education season? In the national curriculum trial of Sport Education in Australian high schools, the recommended format was 20 class periods, with two sessions held per week for 10 weeks, resulting in four seasons each school year (SPARC, 1995). This format grew from the New Zealand national curriculum project in 10th-grade physical education (Grant, 1992), where schools had to commit to seasons lasting at least 20 class sessions to be involved in the trial. Thus, at the high school level, 20 class sessions have become the recommended norm (Mohr, Townsend, & Bulger, 2001).

The Sport Education model needs no magic number of lessons to be applied; however, you need to consider a number of factors when planning the curriculum. You must of course have sufficient time in a season for students to learn the various roles, techniques, and tactics necessary for successful participation. Teams must have sufficient time to practice and compete. Calculate season length based on the number of minutes per class and the number of classes per week to determine how long (in weeks) the season will last. If physical education is only scheduled one day a week for 45 minutes, it makes sense to have a season last for a full semester. If physical education is scheduled every day for 50 minutes and the grading period is 9 or 10 weeks, then you could plan two seasons for each grading period using the 20-session model or one season lasting 40 sessions.

Table 2.2 Seasonal Sport Education Schedule

Season	Team sports	Individual sports
Autumn	Flag football Cross country	Tennis Archery Table tennis
Early winter	Volleyball Soccer	Fencing Bowling Badminton Racquetball
Late winter	Basketball Swimming	Fencing Bowling Racquetball Riflery
Spring	Baseball Softball Track and field	Badminton Golf Archery

The nature of the activity and the number of goals for student achievement can also help determine the length of a season. For example, if you want to do a Sport Education fitness season, you might choose to do it for an entire semester. Teams would work toward semester-long goals in cardiorespiratory fitness, strength, body composition, and flexibility. You would organize team competitions around reaching appropriate goals in each fitness category. You could attend to flexibility in each class session, with strength and aerobic goals the focus of alternating sessions. An 18- to 20-week semester season provides sufficient time to alter body composition, strength indexes, aerobic performance, and flexibility, each of which could be a separate team competition. On the other hand, a Sport Education Frisbee golf season might be considerably shorter because the techniques and tactics are fewer and can be learned with relative ease. The competition season of dual meets followed by a championship could be done in fewer class sessions.

Dance suggests other uses of time. Sport Education dance seasons can be of regular length or last an entire semester. Dance forms can be done well in a Sport Education format. If you focused on folk dance for a season, 20 to 23 class sessions would be adequate. If, however, you wanted to do more than one form of dance (e.g., folk, square, ballroom, stomp), it could easily take an entire semester with team champions in each of the dance forms and an overall semester champion. Richardson and Oslin (2003) described a series of three dance competitions within a nine-week season in which students met daily. The modern competition focused on solo performances within teams, the jazz competition focused on duets within teams, and the hip-hop competition focused on groups of four to six within teams.

When first learning about Sport Education, some physical education teachers believe that their students will become bored by the long seasons. However, the many evaluations of Sport Education completed worldwide provide no evidence that students become bored. To the contrary, their interest tends to grow as the season progresses, largely because the matches, games, and performances are more exciting and meaningful. Moreover, students who otherwise might have felt marginalized reported feeling more valued and were more actively engaged throughout the seasons.

DECIDING WHICH ACTIVITIES TO INCLUDE

Most U.S. school districts have a district course of study for each subject matter. This graded course of study typically includes objectives in several areas (e.g., knowledge, skill, personal development, fitness, and so on) followed by descriptions of the activities that can be taught in order to achieve those objectives. Deciding which of those activities to include in the physical education curriculum for a particular school level and school year depends on several factors, such as weather, facilities, and equipment. In larger school districts, teachers may be required to teach certain activities based on decisions made at the district level rather than at the school level. What follows are three examples of how programs at various school levels have built programs around Sport Education.

Elementary School Sport Education Curriculum

One can argue that at the elementary school level, children should experience a range of activities, each of which has a particular emphasis in terms of technical and tactical demands. Darnell (1994) described such a rationale for her elementary curriculum. As described earlier, the school year for third through fifth grades started with a fitness unit that was used to assess student skills and fitness and to establish expectations

for fitness that lasted throughout the school year. The bulk of the school year was composed of five Sport Education seasons: soccer, basketball, volleyball, track and field, and gymnastics.

Soccer was chosen because it emphasizes manipulating an object with the feet. It is a field invasion game (similar to field hockey, lacrosse, and speedball) that requires offensive and defensive tactics, with frequent unpredictable changes from offense to defense and vice versa. It is also a highly active game with a strong cardiorespiratory component, and it can be played indoors or outdoors with little equipment. It is an important international sport that is becoming more widely available in U.S. community and recreational sport for children, adolescents, and adults.

Basketball was chosen because it emphasizes manipulating an object with the hands. It is a court invasion game (similar to team handball) with techniques and tactics that are more patterned than soccer. It too has frequent offensive and defensive changes. It is played widely in youth and adult recreational settings, and it can be played indoors or outdoors with little equipment. It is an important international sport that was invented in the United States.

Volleyball was chosen because it is a game of striking skills using the hands and arms. It is a court-divided game (similar to tennis and badminton) with techniques and tactics that are more predictable than for invasion games. It is played widely in recreational settings and is increasingly available to young people and adults. It can be played indoors or outdoors with little equipment. Variations such as beach volleyball have become increasingly popular. It, too, was developed in the United States.

Track and field was chosen because it caters to a wide variety of skills and interests. Some track and field events require speed, others require endurance, and still others require strength. The primary techniques are running, jumping, and throwing, all of which can be used in a variety of sport activities. Track and field allows for competitions against standards and previous best performances as well as individual and team competitions. It can contribute to both cardiorespiratory and strength improvements. Furthermore, it is an important international sport.

Gymnastics was chosen because it emphasizes total-body assembly and inversion. Upper-body strength is required for several of the events. Gymnastics has a high aesthetic content and requires judging to determine performance outcomes. Events require strength, balance, flexibility, and sometimes creativity. In many events the performance is a routine created by the competitor. The creation of routines allows students the opportunity to plan and create their own variations.

In the third- through fifth-grade model, the sport was repeated for three grade levels, allowing students to make substantial progress toward competence in that sport. The yearly progression, however, does not always have to be conceptualized as a repeat of the same form of the sport in the same situation. For example, in gymnastics, students could learn rhythmic gymnastics in one year, acrosport (i.e., a form of gymnastics where teams create group-based poses that require balance, coordination, strength, and teamwork) in the second year, and Olympic gymnastics in the third year. In soccer, one year could be done indoors in small spaces, and another could be done outdoors in larger spaces.

This example shows a coherent logic for the selection of activities composing a third- through fifth-grade elementary Sport Education program. At other levels and in other situations, you would use a different logic to select sports and other activities. For example, for various reasons your Sport Education curriculum might include folk dance, aerobic dance, weightlifting, and orienteering. The point is that in Sport Education, you can develop a customized curriculum with a logical choice of activities for a year and for an entire school program.

Middle School Sport Education Curriculum

In the middle school, cross-curricular integration is often a significant element of how a curriculum is organized and taught. Sport Education offers tremendous opportunities for such curricular integration, which will be addressed in more detail in chapter 12. It can also help teachers increase the visibility of their program to others in the school building. One example of curricular integration would be an Olympics-themed Sport Education season (Siedentop, 1994), which is outlined in more detail in chapter 12. In this variation of Sport Education, students are members of teams that represent nations. This focus on global sport is enhanced if teams for a particular season represent nations from all the continents. Students remain on their teams for at least one semester, so several seasons can be completed in various Olympic sports. The range of Olympic sports allows teachers to choose activities for which their space and equipment are adequate. It should be easy to see how such a season would be especially meaningful during Olympic years.

Such an approach allows physical educators to work closely with teachers in other classroom subjects as well. Teams adopt their nation's colors, flag, and national anthem. Team members can study their nation's music, art, poetry, history, economic structure, political system, and literature as homework and as coordinated with their work in social studies classes. They can enter their reports and other artifacts in their team portfolio. An Olympic Committee can be chosen to govern the seasonal competitions within the semester. Representatives from each nation can form a committee to design and make Olympic awards as an art project. Students can study the sports of the nation they represent and learn about the nation's history of success in sport and its major sport heroes and heroines. They can also learn about the country's geography, food, music, and art. The opportunities for cross-curricular integration in the areas of social studies, literature, art, and music are substantial.

“ In health education, the outcome strands of human development and relationships worked in well with the team aspects of Sport Education. In art, students were designing posters, covers for their journals, and team sheets. In technology, on the computer, they were doing word processing linking to language, and much of the publicity was generated in this way, including writing information for the newsletter. ”

Teacher, Australia

To enhance the Olympic theme and add to cross-curricular integration, each team can be required to understand and make their nation's flag and learn their national anthem. One student can be chosen to take the athletes' pledge and another to take the officials' pledge. Students can create representations of gold, silver, and bronze medals, which can be awarded for individual and team performances depending on the sports competed. The entire experience can end with a festive closing ceremony.

High School Sport Education Curriculum

In an ideal situation, a particular school district would have articulation among the elementary, middle, and high school physical education programs. Thus, selection of activities at the high school level would be influenced by what students experienced at the earlier levels. High school physical education works best when students have options for choosing their activities. We do not suggest that physical education should

not be required but rather that students be able to select activities from among those offered to fulfill the graduation requirement.

As students grow older, differences in their sport skills and backgrounds tend to widen. If students do not have the opportunity to choose a particular activity, consider offering activities that are less familiar and thus reduce these entering differences. With coeducational classes, gender is also a factor. Substantial evidence shows that girls are often marginalized in coeducational classes. One way to remedy this problem is to form coed teams but have multiple competitions; that is, a girls' competition, a boys' competition, and a coed competition. In tennis, for example, you could have girls' singles and doubles, boys' singles and doubles, and mixed doubles. In flag football, you could have separate boys' and girls' round-robin league competitions followed by a coeducational league competition.

The high school model described earlier (Dugas, 1994) is one attractive way to organize an elective curriculum, but others exist as well, such as the fitness example described earlier. Adventure activities lend themselves well to the small, heterogeneous learning groups of Sport Education. Differences in requirements between states and between districts within states tend to dictate the degrees of freedom that physical education teachers have to plan Sport Education curricula at the high school level. We reiterate, however, our profound belief that elective programs are likely to be much more successful than programs where students are simply assigned to a physical education class based on time available in their class schedule and with no knowledge about what activities will be available in that class.

SPORT EDUCATION AS SMALL-GROUP LEARNING

The distinctive pedagogical feature of Sport Education is the centrality of mixed-ability small learning groups, which we call *teams*. Teams are sufficiently small—typically comprising 6 to 10 students—so that all team members can participate in team tasks. This applies to traditional team sports such as basketball, individual sports such as tennis and badminton, and activities such as dance, orienteering, and weight training. Students are expected to carry out their team and class tasks without their teacher's direct supervision (Cohen, 1994).

Based on research on small learning groups, we are confident that the following benefits are more likely when this pedagogical model is used appropriately:

- Students have a stronger sense of control and ownership for their learning.
- Teachers are relieved of constant traffic-cop duties, thus opening up opportunities for content instruction.
- Time on task is increased, especially during dispersed team-based practice.
- Peer support and pressure within teams serves as an accountability function.
- Students who tend to disengage are not left alone.
- It becomes more difficult for students to shy away from participation.
- Students learn to give help and to accept it.
- All students contribute and no students dominate.

Group work within teams is an especially effective method for solving two problems that are common to teaching physical education: keeping all students engaged in their tasks and providing relevant instruction and practice for students with widely varying abilities (Cohen, 1994).

Younger children and even older students who are not accustomed to the responsibilities of group work (and who may be accustomed to being the passive recipients

of teacher-led management, instruction, and practice) will require a transition period to move to the small-group model. The initial tasks that teams are asked to perform should be small, and you should be prepared to assist students as they gain experience with this instructional approach. That is, when students are moved immediately to small learning groups after experiencing only teacher-led instruction, the transition period might be chaotic. Many teachers in both the New Zealand and Australian national high school trials chose to make this move immediately rather than gradually and reported that classes were soon chaotic. However, they also reported that within several class sessions, the chaos disappeared and students were managing the seasonal chores responsibly (i.e., chores such as coaching, managing equipment, scorekeeping, and refereeing; see chapter 8 for more detail about the responsibilities associated with the various nonplaying roles). Several teachers thought this change was nothing short of miraculous. We believe that little can be learned from chaos; thus, we support the strategy of making a gradual transition.

The small learning group is important for the students' personal and social development, which in turn contributes to the long-term goals of developing literate and enthusiastic sportspersons. Students first learn to become active citizens of their team. They have responsibilities, and performing their roles well is essential to team success. Thus, the citizenship they learn is not individualistic but rather related to the goals of the team. Students are required to plan and make decisions: Which team members will compete at the A-, B-, and C-levels for this competition? Who will be the fitness trainer for the season? Who will be the team publicist? What should the team publicist do? How can the team do better in the next competition? Who is having problems refereeing and how can everyone else help? To address these questions, students have to carry on an organized, focused discussion; they have to make decisions about their plans and then carry out those plans. These skills are essential for successful adults, but are too seldom practiced in school settings (Sharan & Sharan, 1992).

“ Sport Education is better than normal physical education because the teachers weren't telling you what to do . . . you weren't under any pressure, and this made you want to try your best. You really learned how to cooperate with other team members and it was really good sharing the responsibility with each other.

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Tenth-grade student, Australia

KEY INSTRUCTIONAL FEATURES OF SPORT EDUCATION

The shift toward a learner-centered approach to instruction is a learning process for both teachers and students. Teachers must actively guide this gradual shift toward more responsibility for and ownership of the Sport Education experience among students. Thus, do not assume that teachers do no teaching in Sport Education—they actually teach more! In Sport Education, when students take on the role of team coach, referee, or manager (i.e., a nonplaying role), they need to learn what the role entails and get opportunities to play the role. Teachers are responsible for creating an environment where students can learn to be a referee or team manager. Duty teams must be shown how to set up the appropriate fields or courts and equipment and must be given opportunities to practice. This all takes time.

The difference between Sport Education and traditional physical education is that teachers also act as educational engineers. By teaching students the appropriate class routines that ensure smooth management (see also chapter 3) and by helping students to be successful in small, mixed-ability learning groups, teachers are designing a class environment within which important outcomes are more likely to occur. These outcomes include acts of personal and social responsibility that would be unlikely to occur in a class framework dominated by teacher-led instruction and practice. Most important, these outcomes are more likely to occur with students who are often unsuccessful and marginalized in physical education.

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- Special needs students displayed unprecedented application to work within their roles in Sport Education.
 - Teachers suggested that the model favors lower-ability students and that they improved their motor skills significantly as a result of increased participation.
 - It appears that Sport Education is more gender inclusive than traditional approaches to physical education.

Evaluation of the Sport Education II Project, SPARC, Perth, Western Australia”

Teachers using Sport Education have frequently reported that they do more individual teaching than in a traditional model. With students responsible for more of the management and leadership of warm-ups and technique practice, teachers can move about the space and work with teams and individuals. However, this does not mean they never do whole-group, direct instruction.

Guided Practice

Whole-group direct instruction, or guided practice, is an appropriate teaching strategy in particular situations, such as during the early parts of a Sport Education season or when a new technique or tactic has to be introduced to a class (Siedentop & Tannehill, 2000). During the first lessons of the season, even when teams have been formed and team roles are assigned, as teacher, you should be in a position where the entire class can see you. You would introduce a practice task to the whole class so that teams can begin practicing the technique or tactic in their team practice space. In this format, you introduce a technique such as the drop shot in badminton. Teams then try to do the drop shot as you showed them (even if it is a shadow response without hitting the shuttlecock). Your goal in this situation is to see that all students understand the main technical features of the shot, or the critical elements. You point out common errors so students can learn to discriminate between the critical elements and common errors. As students practice, you reinforce good performance, correct major errors, and reteach the technique.

The same would be true for introducing a particular tactic, such as the backdoor cut in basketball. With students gathered centrally at one of the teams' practice sites, you would explain the context for and execution of the backdoor cut, giving students the opportunity to ask questions. You would then organize students so they could do a walk-through of the maneuver. The goal of guided practice is to get students to

the point where they can benefit from independent practice that will then be led by coaches. Though independent practice is crucial for technique development, guided practice is necessary to ensure that students will not make major technique or tactical errors once they disperse to their team practice sites.

Combinations of techniques can and should be practiced together. For example, when providing guided practice for free-throw shooting, you can also teach the techniques of boxing out and rebounding. Not only are more students actively engaged at the same time, but they are also practicing in a more authentic practice condition. The independent practice that follows can be a free-throw game in which points are scored both for making a free throw and boxing out and rebounding missed free throws. Again, this approach makes practices more gamelike.

Guided practice is also essential for teaching the duty-team roles of refereeing and scorekeeping. Teachers cannot assume that students will have developed the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in these critical roles. For example, while some teams scrimmage, other teams can practice their officiating and scorekeeping skills. As teacher, you would actively monitor the players, referees, and scorekeepers. Sport Education seasons, similar to those in high school or college sport, include a preseason phase during which participants learn techniques and tactics related to the sport plus the additional managerial, refereeing, and scorekeeping duties required for the Sport Education season to be successful. Building in sufficient learning time and opportunity to learn and practice these sport-related and managerial skills during the preseason will pay dividends as the season unfolds.

Independent Practice

In the latter part of the preseason and after the teams have conducted team practices following your lead, they must be given the opportunity to practice independently as a team. During independent practice, team coaches should lead their teams in practicing techniques and tactics in their home spaces. You should carefully explain the organization for practice before dispersing students. Posters showing the critical elements and common errors of the technique or tactic are helpful. It is during team practice that students learn to work together and to help one another. The team coach provides the primary leadership for practice sessions, but you must make it clear that students are meant to help each other. Students who understand and grasp the technique or tactic quickly should be directed to provide assistance to teammates who are having trouble. Emphasize teammates helping one another and then recognize and support this when you see it occurring. During team practices, you move about the class space and offer feedback, assistance, and support to all teams. You will find that as a season gets underway, you can be of great assistance to the team coaches and help them focus their team practices on aspects of game play that need more attention. Thus, teachers can actually individualize their instruction where necessary.

“During the practices I can work with kids who maybe need a little help to improve their ability level without interfering with the rest of the group. I can teach one kid while the others are developing their skills instead of teaching them skills they don't all need.”

Seventh-grade teacher, Australia

Supervising Independent Practice: Knowing What to Look For

Sport Education research provides convincing evidence that students like and appreciate the small-group learning model. However, at the outset, one of your primary instructional tasks is to closely supervise teams' independent practices to make sure they are practicing appropriately. As you watch the practices, ask yourself: Do the teams have a practice plan? Are they following that plan? Do they get started quickly? Are they actively engaged, or are just the higher-skilled team members involved? Are the team coaches providing the needed leadership? Do players take the lead from the team coach?

For example, teachers can review the teams' practice plans while the fitness trainers take their teammates through their conditioning routines. We know of several teachers who have taken to using a rubber stamp that says *Approved!* after they review the practice plans that are to be kept in the team binder or portfolio. This type of monitoring shows teams that planning for quality team practices is expected. As you will see later on in more detail, this is also part of how students learn about fair play and how fair play performance is a significant factor in determining the champion team of a season.

Supervising Independent Practice: Knowing When to Shift Focus

Since the team coaches now start leading the team practices, you can focus on teaching the activity by working with an individual team or individual players within that team. As team practices unfold, you can shift your monitoring to questions such as the following: What techniques are still lacking? What practice task might help a particular team? The more deliberate your monitoring is, the better position you are in to offer assistance to teams and individuals. As students gain more experience with Sport Education, they will be better able to work within it and profit from it. Thus, you should expect that across multiple seasons and years in Sport Education, students will become quite good at the give-and-take that characterizes small-group learning. As their capacity to work within the team concept improves, teams will become more self-directed and your supervision can shift to helping teams and individual students. You can spend more time providing teaching assistance during team practices. However, do not expect such skills to develop automatically. As a teacher, you must provide ample and appropriate opportunities for students to learn to become more self-directed.

For teachers who have thus far employed a more direct style of teaching where students are almost entirely dependent on teachers' directives and commands, this gradual handing over of the reins to students may be difficult at first. However, if planned well, you will find that many students will surprise you with their willingness to take on leadership roles. For example, students who volunteer for the role of fitness trainer most often will have little difficulty directing their team through a series of conditioning tasks. Similarly, if the teams' equipment managers are clear on what equipment is needed and where it needs to be located, they will have little difficulty performing such tasks. As with your efforts to hold team coaches accountable for their planning, be prepared to actively monitor the fitness trainers and equipment managers. The preseason lessons will offer students multiple chances to practice performing these duties. When they do so effectively, be sure to recognize their good performances.

HELPING STUDENTS DEVELOP GAME SENSE

Students enjoy games and activities to the extent that they feel comfortable in the natural flow of play. Soccer games where students swarm to the ball are not enjoyable

except perhaps for the most skilled students. Basketball games where the flow of play is helter-skelter and the skilled players dominate play are not fun for most participants. Volleyball games where 90 percent of the points are scored on serves that cannot be returned are not fun for anybody. As we have noted, traditional physical education instruction has a strong focus on developing isolated skills (what we call *techniques*) and not nearly as much emphasis on learning game tactics. In Sport Education, the primary focus is on developing game sense (Lauder, 2001). Game sense is understanding in action. Its simplest meaning is that "players get into the best possible position at the right time and make sensible decisions about what to do next" (Lauder, 2001, p. 36). We are grateful for the rich and creative work done by Alan Lauder that he described at length in his book, *Play Practice: The Games Approach to Teaching and Coaching Sports*. The material in this section draws heavily on his work, and we strongly recommend it to all teachers who want to develop Sport Education programs.

Developing game sense requires learning to combine appropriate techniques with applying the tactics of the game and understanding its rules. We agree with Lauder (2001) that when learners accomplish this, they are considered skillful; thus, the skillful player is one who understands the flow of a game, knows the tactics the team is trying to execute, gets in the right position, makes good decisions, and has the needed techniques to execute the decisions. We use the term *techniques* to describe what are traditionally referred to as *skills*; that is, dribbling, backhand striking, jump shooting, heading, digging, and so on.

In North America, advocacy for games-based approaches to teaching sport games within physical education has flourished in recent years. This has prompted some of the following questions about what is needed to get a good game going: Which is more important, techniques or tactics? Of those two aspects of game play, which should be learned first? Although both are essential, it seems clear that techniques should be taught first, then put into practice while learning tactics.

As shown in figure 2.1, the balance of class time devoted to practicing techniques or tactics depends on the sport or activity. This is based in part on the relative contribution that technical and tactical dimensions of play make to successful game play. For example, for the balance beam or parallel bars in gymnastics, technique practice will dominate class time spent in practice. Tactics (e.g., making decisions) will come into play when students are asked to plan their own routines for competition. For example, when designing a tumbling routine, students can learn to decide what tumbling techniques to include, what transitions to use, and in what sequence to perform them, all while trying to balance the difficulty level with ensuring successful execution.

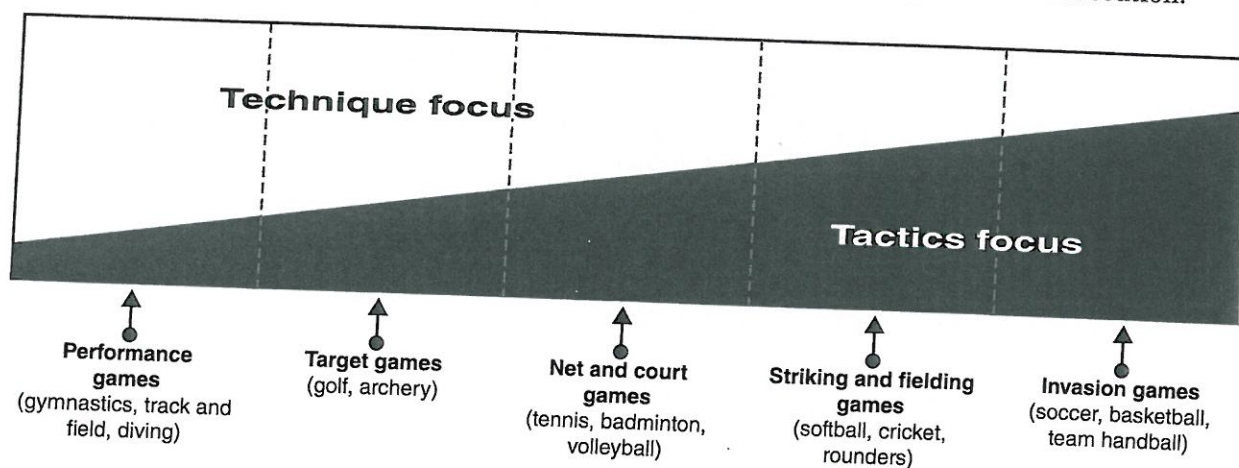


Figure 2.1 Balance between techniques and tactics across games.

However, in court-divided net games (e.g., volleyball, tennis, badminton), time allocated to techniques and tactics needs to be more evenly balanced because the tactical dimensions of play are more prominent. Learning to control and direct the ball is essential to successful play, and returning to a more central court position between the sidelines following each stroke is equally important. Good stroke technique is of little use to students if they fail to return to the center following each stroke because they will provide the opponent with ample court space to hit a winner. Unless students are introduced to this aspect of game play, they are unlikely to experience much success in learning to play. Conversely, maintaining good court coverage is of little use if the student is unable to execute the techniques effectively.

Invasion games, such as basketball, the various hockey codes, and the various football codes, are probably the most complex from a tactical perspective. Therefore, learning the tactical dimensions becomes even more important. For example, in most invasion games, the actions of players off the ball are critical to the success of the team. These actions require an understanding of the flow of the game and a mastery of the team's tactical goals. Being at the right place at the right time is essential both for defending and attacking. Thus, the development of game sense in invasion games requires an even greater emphasis on tactics.

Sport Education allows for class time to be devoted to practice of both techniques and tactics. This has important implications for teachers in choosing appropriate instructional formats. Teachers must attend to both in order to get all students to the point where they can get a good game going (Bunker & Thorpe, 2008).

Technique Practice

You should organize practice for technique mastery in ways that are as close to the context of performance as possible. Practicing techniques with isolated drills makes the transfer of the technique to the competitive situation more difficult, especially for activities where tactics become more important. For example, techniques in tennis, volleyball, and hockey all require using the techniques in fluid game situations where flexible responses are required for success. Isolated drills tend to produce stereotyped responses and are less useful. Therefore, practice tasks should be as gamelike as possible.

The key to improvement in practicing techniques is successful repetitions. Organize and manage your class in a way that allows optimum time for practice. Students need to understand how a technique fits into the overall pattern of the activity. You should organize them into the smallest group that is consistent with achieving the objectives of the practice task. With a team size of 6 to 10 students, this usually means that you can organize two to five practice groups within each team. Practice tasks should always have a goal that provides a challenge, and students should be able to see and judge the results of their efforts. Moreover, the tasks should have sufficient variation around a technical theme (e.g., passing and setting in volleyball) and should follow an obvious progression.

Technique practice is enhanced when sufficient space, equipment, and time are available. You should modify tasks so that the techniques being practiced are those that approximate the mature technique played in a regular game. This is difficult to do if the equipment is not also modified. For example, when children learn to shoot in basketball, you might follow all advice for technical instruction, but if the ball is regulation size and the basket is at adult height, little appropriate technical development will occur. Indeed, students will most likely resort to using inappropriate shooting techniques, and if practiced long enough they will become habitual.

In activities where tactics are more prominent, technique practice should incorporate the appropriate tactical emphasis to provide the richest context for practice.

Tactics often involve using techniques in chains (sequences of maneuvers that are linked together to achieve a goal). For example, the fast break in basketball requires rebounding, passing, dribbling, more passing, and then shooting; off-the-ball players' movement is particularly important. In volleyball, the sequence of passing, setting, and spiking can be practiced as students' performance levels increase. In many cases, practicing these chains of techniques and tactics by gradually moving from back to front rather than vice versa provides great benefit. Fast-break practice can start with the layup and then proceed backward to add passing, dribbling, passing, and rebounding along with off-the-ball movement. The benefit of this "backward chaining" strategy is that the intended outcome (the successful shot in basketball or spike in volleyball) gets the most practice attempts. This approach also provides the most fun for the players, because they achieve the successful culmination of the sequence more frequently.

Technique and Tactics Practice for Target Games

In target games such as golf, archery, and bowling, technique practice will dominate. However, decision making (a key tactical dimension of game play) becomes more important to success. For example, golfers must learn to consider many environmental variables in deciding what club to use and how to execute the shot (e.g., slope, lie, distance to green, barriers such as traps, trees, and water). Physical educators who teach golf effectively have found creative ways to build these obstacles into their makeshift courses, thus allowing students to decide how to adjust their play.

In archery, practicing the technical execution of a shot is still of primary importance (especially when shooting outdoors). However, students must also learn how to adjust to varying distances and winds. After students have had ample opportunity to practice shooting with a focus on technical execution, they need to be introduced to tactical aspects of archery, especially decision making. For example, learning to read the general grouping of arrows in the target is a key part of becoming a more knowledgeable archer, and thus becomes important in making adjustments. Knowing how to adjust to a headwind versus a side wind allows the student to practice making such adjustments. Unless teachers address these tactics directly, students likely will not experience gradual improvement.

Technique and Tactics Practice for Striking and Fielding Games

In striking and fielding games, such as softball or cricket, techniques remain crucial to success, but tactics become somewhat more important. For example, outfielders must not only learn how to catch and throw the ball hit to them, they also must learn to throw to the correct base and where and how to back up a throw to a base. Becoming a good base runner requires more than just being able to run fast; base runners must also learn to decide whether to take the extra base. This requires them to account for the batted ball's trajectory and know where the fielders were positioned, how well those fielders handle the batted ball, and the specific situation in the game (e.g., the score, number of outs, and so on).

A related example in softball would be the stage where tagging runners to make an out is introduced. Now fielders need to learn to decide whether to chase the runner and apply the tag or throw to a teammate who is covering the base. Again, teachers can help students develop game sense in softball by employing deliberate modifications to how games are played. In such modified games, students are not just practicing their throwing, fielding, and catching; they are also developing their tactical moves in more authentic contexts. Additional details and examples about possible modification strategies are provided in chapter 6.

Technique and Tactics Practice for Court-Divided Games

Techniques and tactics are more balanced in their importance in court-divided games, such as volleyball, tennis, badminton, and table tennis. As argued by Rink (2008), unless students can learn to control and direct the object (e.g., ball, shuttle), they will never learn how to move their opponents out of position and create a scoring opportunity. Furthermore, tactical aspects of game play in court-divided games are more programmed than in invasion games where the flow of play is less predictable. We will use volleyball as our example. Volleyball is a hit game, not a catch-and-throw game. The key techniques are the forearm pass, overhead pass, serve, dig, spike, and block. The excitement of volleyball is heightened when players keep the ball in play through rallies of retrieving and returning. This makes controlling the ball by way of setting and forearm passing the most important techniques, not blocking and spiking. As students improve their capacity to control the ball, they can begin to focus on the positioning of opponents so as to direct the ball to opponents' weaknesses.

Techniques in volleyball are typically sequential—pass, set, spike. However, students' practice of techniques should be as gamelike as possible. It is a game of angles and redirection, so you should create practice drills that replicate what will be used in the game setting, usually involving three players, with one teammate as a retriever and one player as a feeder. The tactics and techniques that are most important are as follows:

Setting up to attack—on-the-ball techniques

- Serve
- Forearm pass
- Set

Setting up to attack—off-the-ball play

- Open up (move to unobstructed space)
- Spike
- Transition to new position
- Back up teammates (support)

Defending—on-the-ball techniques

- Dig
- Block

Defending—off-the-ball play

- Base position
- Pursuit
- Open up
- Transition

Volleyball practice is best done in triads; a 3v3 competition is often the best organization to ensure optimum opportunity and excitement. USA Volleyball uses the term *try-angles* as a teaching tool to promote this understanding. A commonality among all court-divided games is that you typically do not send the ball back in the direction it came from; instead, you try to change angles.

Game sense is more easily developed when the court dimensions, rules, and equipment are modified. (See chapter 6 for a full discussion of game modifications.) Remember to choose such modifications with a specific purpose in mind. For example, a key element to early practice and competition is starting with a free ball rather than with a serve. A free ball is an underhand pass (or even a two-handed toss) over the net to start the action. It should be used until the technique of receiving a serve (i.e., passing) is fairly well developed. If the passing technique is not developed sufficiently, rallies will never emerge, and the game will consist of an endless series of serve attempts.

Another example of modifying volleyball game conditions is to slow down the action of the ball. This can be accomplished in several ways: raising the net, using a lighter ball that floats longer, using a reduced court area, and using a softer ball. Many students have difficulty passing and setting the ball because they are not in the correct position to execute the technique. Slowing the ball gives students more time to react to the ball's speed and trajectory and decide how and where to direct the ball. Early scrimmages and practice games should focus on keeping the ball in play through cooperative scoring, where the two teams try to keep the ball going over the net as many times as possible. As players improve in their techniques, improve in moving to the ball, and show evidence of developing game sense, you can introduce a scoring game as an initial competition with a free ball and a net height that is set at about the average height that players can reach standing on the tips of their toes (Lauder, 2001). The technique of spiking should be introduced later (i.e., only after students have learned to effectively and consistently direct the ball with forearm passes and sets).

Technique and Tactics Practice for Invasion Games

In invasion games, the understanding and practice of tactics becomes crucial to developing game sense. In these games, one player controls the ball while teammates move into position to execute a tactical move. For all players, the time spent on the ball makes up only a small fraction compared to their time off the ball, especially in games where the player-ball ratio is high, such as in the various forms of football (i.e., soccer, rugby, American football). Tactical moves in invasion games are those through which "attackers combine with teammates to keep possession of the ball and try to score, as well as the way in which defenders maneuver to regain the ball" (Lauder, 2001, p. 37).

Tactics for attacking in invasion games are designed to create situations where offensive players outnumber defensive players at the right time and the right place. These tactics involve the following principles:

- Players create space by moving into good positions at the right time.
- This action creates time because defenders must take time to close the distance.
- Attackers use this space and time to be skillful (make decisions and execute techniques).
- Receivers should indicate where the ball is to be delivered and scan play as the ball is received.
- Attackers then decide what to do next—shoot, pass, or run (dribble).
- In continued passing, the passer must select the best possible receiver.
- The pass should be delivered to the right spot at the right speed for the receiver.
- At all times, attackers should maintain floor or field balance.

Defensive tactics are designed to prevent scoring, regain possession of the ball, and make the transition to effective attacking play. These tactics involve the following principles:

- Respond immediately to change of possession from attack to defend.
- Always keep pressure on the ball.
- Provide coverage for the defender who is pressuring the ball.
- Closely guard attackers who occupy important spaces.
- Try to deny off-the-ball attackers from moving into advantageous positions.

Setting Up Team Practices That Address Both Techniques and Tactics

When learning to play a sport, practices should mirror the conditions of the game as much as possible (e.g., either a modified form of the game or the parent game depending on the previous experiences of the students) and provide students with maximum opportunities to actively engage in the activity (Lauder, 2001). Team coaches can direct team members to warm up by practicing the individual techniques of shooting, passing, trapping, serving, and so on.

The focus of the team practice then shifts to developing both technique and tactics by having teams engage in small-sided scrimmages. For example, you can set up practice tasks such that students can develop tactical awareness by having games with uneven sides (e.g., 3v1, 3v2, 4v3). Those same games can be used to focus on teams learning to maintain possession (possession games) or scoring (go-for-goal games) (Lauder, 2001). You can organize these so that they flow continuously rather than experience the multiple stop-starts so typical of drill-based technique practice, thus optimizing the time spent in actual practice.

Whenever possible, the practice tasks in the guided-practice format should be designed such that they can be used later on at the team level once teams conduct their own team practices. You can help team coaches develop more focused team practices by providing them with team practice cards. They can then use these cards to organize their team practices. As shown in figure 2.2, team practice cards provide the necessary information for team coaches to organize a modified game, including game rules, suggested variations, scoring rules, and possible questions that they (or you) could ask team members during short breaks in the action.

The practice cards are based in part on the Lauder's (2001) concept of shaping play. Teachers can shape game play by arranging game conditions so that they encourage students to use certain techniques and tactics. For example, in pickleball or tennis, students could play a cross-court versus down-the-line game. One player would earn a bonus point when a winner was scored using a cross-court shot, while the opposing player would earn the bonus point if a shot down the line was used. Thus, game play skills are developed by deliberately modifying any combination of game rules. By using this game-oriented approach to practice, students practice not only the various strokes, but they also decide when the particular shot is best used. Team practice cards should be supplied to teams in their team binders at the outset of the season. You will find several examples of such practice cards in the online resource. As you gain more experience with using a game-based approach to teaching games, you will be able to develop your own practice games.

The free throwers vs. rebounders game example in basketball (see figure 2.3) shows how players are encouraged to practice multiple techniques and tactical moves. Such games provide an excellent opportunity for you to assist team coaches in getting their players to consider how and where they move to create the advantage over the opposing team as well as how and where to pass. Obviously the defense gets ample chances to hone guarding and communication skills.

Chapter 2 Team Practice Cards

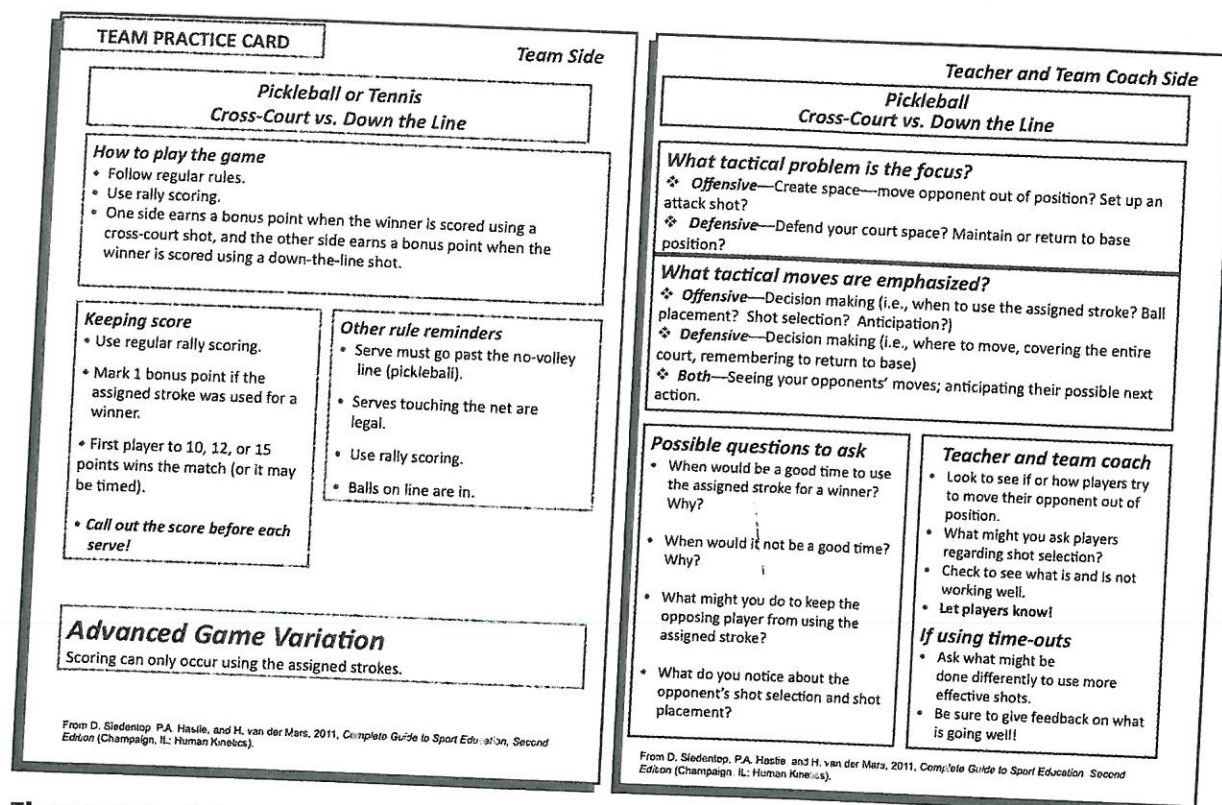


Figure 2.2 A team practice card, such as this one for pickleball, provides the necessary information for team coaches to organize a modified game.

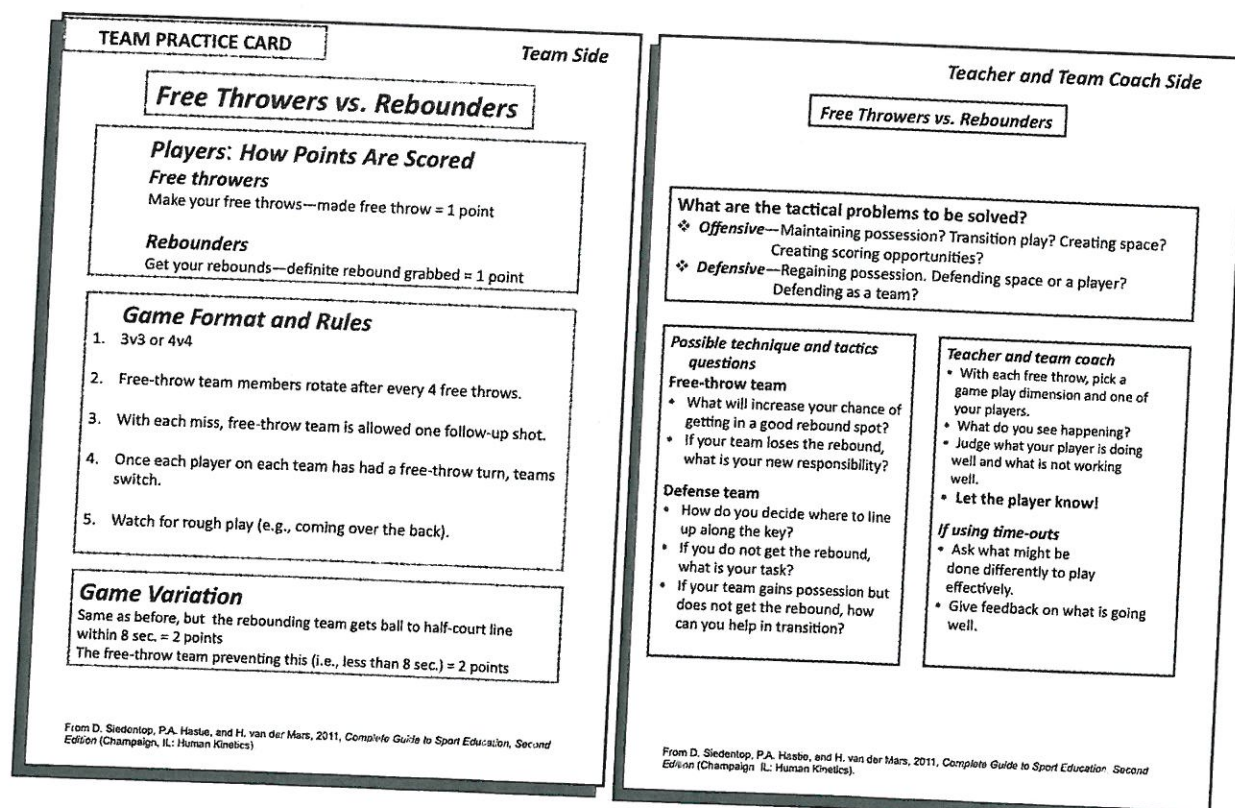


Figure 2.3 This team practice card for basketball encourages off-the-ball movement and passing.

A variation of the team practice card that could be used with students who have more experience or are more advanced is the use of **action fantasy games** (see figure 2.4). Launder (2001) introduced the concept of using action fantasy games to enhance play. Using the names of real athletes and teams, you create actual game scenarios that students enact. For example, in a basketball season, you might provide an NBA finals game 7 scenario in which the Los Angeles Lakers are down by four points against the Cleveland Cavaliers with 1:30 left on the clock. A team splits up into two subteams that represent the Lakers and the Cavaliers. The team coach presents the scenario (with any additional rules) to both teams. Each team gets 30 seconds to determine how to approach this game situation, and then the scenario is played out. The scenario could be repeated following another brief time-out during which each team discusses any possible adjustments.

With a little creativity, you can create an endless array of game scenarios that give students the opportunity to come up with their own way of solving the problem presented. For example, in a court game such as tennis or pickleball, you could have Venus and Serena Williams face Kim Clijsters and Ana Ivanovic in a doubles match. Depending on which duo is ahead in the scenario, each needs to approach the game's situation differently. Notice again how this affords increased involvement by students in how they learn to play the game—within this games-based context, both technical and tactical moves are practiced. Not only do students practice their dribbling, shooting, passing, rebounding, and catching, but they also practice defending, moving off the ball, supporting the ball handler, and making decisions on whether to shoot, drive to the basket, or focus on maintaining possession.

This games-based approach to practicing techniques and tactics has important benefits. First, it affords students the opportunity to engage in game play more often, which generally is more motivating to students. Second, students likely will reach

Chapter 2 Action Fantasy Game Cards

Players' Side	Teacher and Team Coach Side		
Action Fantasy Game—Tennis Women's Singles Australian Open Final Serena Williams (USA) vs. Maria Sharapova (Russia) <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Player Picture Here</td> <td>Player Picture Here</td> </tr> </table> Rules: Basic tennis rules in effect Best of 3 sets Modified rally scoring (i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 . . .) Sets go to 12 (no need for 2-point difference to win). Match Status Match is tied one set all. Set 3 score: Williams: 3, Sharapova: 4 Williams has the serve. <i>If time permits, play out the scenario three times (best of three).</i> From D. Siedentop, P.A. Hassie, and H. van der Mars, 2011, <i>Complete Guide to Sport Education</i>, Second Edition (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics).	Player Picture Here	Player Picture Here	Action Fantasy Game Singles Play Questions to Consider What is our team's overall game plan (i.e., strategy)? ♦ <i>If ahead</i>—More or less aggressive attack? Take more or fewer risks? ♦ <i>If behind</i>—More or less aggressive attack? Go for more riskier shots? What tactical moves might be critical? ♦ <i>Offensive</i>—Decision making (i.e., when to go for the winner? What shot to use? Shuttle placement? Remember to return to base?) ♦ <i>Defensive</i>—Decision making (i.e., where to move, covering the entire court). Maintaining or returning to base position? ♦ <i>Both</i>—Seeing your opponent's moves; recognizing the opponent's strengths and weaknesses; anticipating the opponent's possible next actions. Ask yourselves • What will the opponent's game plan most likely be? • What should you focus on? • What seem to be the opponent's stronger areas of play? • Which shots seem to cause more difficulty for the opponent? From D. Siedentop, P.A. Hassie, and H. van der Mars, 2011, <i>Complete Guide to Sport Education</i>, Second Edition (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics).
Player Picture Here	Player Picture Here		

Figure 2.4 Action fantasy cards, such as this one for tennis, are meant for students who have more experience and give them the opportunity to solve real game problems.

higher levels of physical activity compared with the more static drill-based practice of isolated techniques that is so pervasive in most physical education lessons. And third, the intensity of the physical activity is likely higher during modified games. Especially given students' natural physical activity patterns, they will welcome brief time-outs during which their team coach (or you) can address aspects of game play by way of a short question-answer discussion.

DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGEABLE GAME PLAYERS

Game sense is the crucial element in developing knowledgeable game players. When students begin to feel comfortable in the game setting, when they start anticipating the action, and when they have sufficient command of the techniques to use in each situation, the game becomes both more fun and more challenging. As we have noted in the previous examples, when you want students to truly develop as players, you must create opportunities for them to develop those decision-making skills and learn to read the game. Getting them to think for themselves about what to do, when to move, where to move, whether to shoot or dribble, and so on is central to students becoming true players.

In addition, as students in Sport Education grow toward those goals, they also need the opportunity to think for themselves about various aspects of team practice and competition. For example, having each player on each team create a drill for a particular technique or combination of technique and tactic will get students to think about the game and how practice can improve performance. Requiring teams in a 3v3 basketball competition to choose between a person-to-person defense and a zone defense and then work together to develop an offense based on the defensive choices teams have made creates the context for teams to think about, discuss, and choose a particular team strategy. It also will create a sense of ownership among teammates for the team's decisions and performance. And, these students will be more likely to become knowledgeable basketball players.

“ You have to organize it yourself. . . . We (team) were sort of independent from the rest of the class . . . I have played team sports before, but now I feel more confident about learning a sport. ”

High school student, New Zealand

Knowledgeable game players are unlikely to develop if all students do is practice techniques (e.g., passing, catching, serving, shooting) within rote drills that lack a game context and they remain wholly dependent on following your directions. Creating more authentic contextual situations in which students have to think about and weigh options for defending and attacking will greatly help them in becoming more knowledgeable (i.e., understanding the *what*, *how*, and *when* of techniques and tactics in game play). Creating situations in which teams design their own practices based on team goals will surely increase students' involvement in and ownership of their team's performance.

A key point is to remember that these are not instructional strategies to use the first time you try Sport Education or with students who have little background with a particular sport or activity. They are, however, useful strategies to employ as students grow more experienced with Sport Education and with the chosen sport or activity.

SPORT EDUCATION AND NATIONAL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GOALS

The significant rise in the number of overweight and obese children is part of the reason for the multiple efforts at all levels of government as well as professional and scientific organizations to increase students' total daily physical activity levels (e.g., NASPE, 2004; Pate et al., 2006; USDHHS, 2008a, 2008b). For example, the third U.S. national content standard for physical education (NASPE, 2004) states that students will participate regularly in physical activity with an emphasis on the need to be physically active beyond physical education classes. There are national health objectives presented in Healthy People 2020—the U.S. government guide to health goals for the American population—that are specific to school physical education programs (USDHHS, 2008b).

In 2008, new physical activity guidelines for the U.S. population were published that included the following physical activity recommendations for children and adolescents:

1. Children and adolescents should do 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of physical activity daily.

Aerobic: Most of the 60 or more minutes a day should be either moderate- or vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity and should include vigorous-intensity physical activity at least three days a week.

Muscle strengthening: As part of their 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity, children and adolescents should include muscle-strengthening physical activity on at least three days of the week.

Bone strengthening: As part of their 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity, children and adolescents should include bone-strengthening physical activity on at least three days of the week.

2. It is important to encourage young people to participate in physical activities that are appropriate for their age, that are enjoyable, and that offer variety (USDHHS, 2008a).

And finally, in the spring of 2010, the National Physical Activity Plan was unveiled. It brings together eight sectors in American society (e.g., education, parks, recreation, fitness and sports, health care, mass media, public health, transportation, land use, community design, and volunteer and nonprofit) that seek to coordinate efforts to get the entire population working toward increasing physical activity levels (www.physicalactivityplan.org). The plan includes strategies aimed at increasing opportunities for and access to physical activity programs in preschool through grade 12 delivered by qualified personnel throughout the entire school day as well as increased linkages with physical activity opportunities in the surrounding community. All this would be coordinated through the physical education program.

This intense focus on promoting physical activity has resulted in an explosion of research related to typical physical activity levels of children and adolescents within and beyond physical education lessons as well as the efficacy of strategies to increase their physical activity levels. Based on a careful review of this research, school physical education programs have been found to be one of the most important venues to promote physical activity in children and adolescents (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2001).

However, access to school physical education lessons alone is insufficient for reaching the recommended daily totals of physical activity. For example, Tudor-Locke, Lee,

Morgan, Beighle, and Pangrazi (2006) showed that in elementary schools, the amount of physical activity accumulated during physical education makes up only 8 to 11 percent of the daily total.

This should give all current and future physical educators pause in terms of the need to promote physical activity beyond physical education lessons. When at school, students can be physically active before school, during recess and lunch, and during after-school activities. There also may be opportunities for activity at home and on weekends. This promotion can be accomplished effectively within Sport Education seasons. Teams can also be encouraged to work as a group during recess and lunch. The following sections include specific strategies for increasing students' out-of-class physical activity.

Increasing Physical Activity Beyond Physical Education Lessons

Physical education teachers who use Sport Education can make enormous contributions to ensuring that students make use of such opportunities. They can encourage out-of-class physical activity in various ways. Out-of-class (and thus independent) physical activity opportunities can be made available on school grounds before school, during recess and lunch, and possibly after school. Beyond the school grounds, opportunities are possible at home, in structured sport programs, in parks, at community centers, and so on. We offer the following strategies: structuring the season competition, giving prompts and encouragement, providing support, and self-monitoring by students.

Structuring the Season Competition

Given its strong emphasis on teams learning to work together, the team competition within a Sport Education season is likely the strongest incentive for students to seek out physical activity beyond the regular class sessions. Thus, out-of-class physical activity can be built directly into the season competition. In addition to the points earned as a result of games played, duty-team points, and fair play points, teams are awarded physical activity points (PA points) for engaging in physical activity outside of regular class sessions. They count directly toward the teams' standing in the season competition. It is important to clearly explain this dimension of the competition in the first class sessions of the new season. For example, students will need to learn where they can get equipment, where it needs to be stored afterward, how they can earn PA points, and how they should report their out-of-class activities.

As for how such points can be earned, we suggest that you set the point value based on the number of minutes that the team practiced during recess or lunch. For example, teams could earn a PA point for every five minutes of time spent in team practice. You will be the best judge of the physical activity minutes-to-points ratio. Another possible factor that could earn a team more PA points would be the number of team members that participated; that is, a team that has all of its members present and participating can be awarded additional points.

Giving Prompts and Encouragement

In essence, prompts serve as reminders for people to do certain things (in this case for students to be physically active on their own). For some students, that may be all that is needed! For example, once teams are formed, you can prompt, encourage, and reinforce students for practicing outside of class (e.g., during recess and lunch

periods). During most lesson closures (especially early in the season), you can remind students that they can practice outside of class by joining together as a team before school, during recess, and during lunch.

Prompts also come in visual forms. The options for visual forms are many. They can be placed in your gymnasium, hallways, locker rooms, the school newsletter, and the school or physical education program Web site. The key is to locate prompts so that it is almost impossible for students to miss them. For example, with the advances in digital photo technology, you can create simple but attractive prompts in the form of photos that show your own students engaged in physical activity on the school grounds. Imagine the power of a photo of a student in your school practicing dribbling, shooting, or curl-ups for all to see.

You will want to change out these visual prompts regularly, because they do tend to lose their power of attraction and students will no longer attend to them. Changing out the visuals will help keep your students in tune with the overall message of your program. During recess and lunch, you can spot-check the areas where students are engaging independently in the season's activity, which you can then reinforce through social reinforcement or the use of PA points that count toward the season championship.

Increasing physical activity beyond the school setting is more complex but certainly not impossible. Factors such as proximity to physical activity venues and transportation may be barriers that are difficult for students to overcome. Even if students live close to each other and close to a setting where they can all gather to practice, other factors (e.g., parental concerns about safety) may still prevent this from happening. However, more than likely, your students can still be physically active on their own or with siblings, parents, or neighborhood friends. Physical education teachers need to be knowledgeable about the possibilities and constraints for physical activity in the neighborhoods in which their students live. Teachers can then provide suggestions for discretionary physical activity that are realistic and possible within those neighborhoods.

Physical activity during discretionary time outside of school can be integrated into the seasonal competition in physical education or as a separate competition by teams. Physical activity outside of school in discretionary time can be measured either by using pedometers or by having students keep an activity log that provides a record of the nature of the activity and the amount of time involved. Parents could be recruited to verify the students' daily activity records. In fact, you could award bonus points when parents join in on the practice. This team competition approach encourages students to work on either fitness- or technique- related activities in discretionary time outside of school. In order for this strategy to succeed, it is imperative that teachers explain to students what kinds of activities count toward daily and weekly accumulation of moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Providing Support

Merely telling students to go out and be active on their own may not be enough; supporting students in their out-of-class physical activity is essential as well. You can provide support in a variety of ways that address three key facilitators: access, equipment, and supervision. First, you can create access by designating the gym or parts of the outdoor activity venues as areas for independent team practices. Second, you can make season-specific equipment available by preparing a cart or bin with equipment that is placed in the same spot every day near the designated activity area. The teams' equipment managers can be given the responsibility for dispersing any needed equipment and returning it at the end of the practice. Team coaches can be taught to report on what did or did not work well.

Third, you can recruit assistance from other adults (e.g., playground monitors, classroom teachers) who have lunch duty by making them aware of your goal of encouraging physical activity and seeking their assistance in this process. They are a built-in support system! As will be discussed next, they can serve as the adults who sign the team-based physical activity log. A willingness on your part to communicate with the other staff members and teachers on campus coupled with a little training (perhaps at staff meetings) can go a long way toward creating and supporting students' physical activity opportunities throughout the school day.

Fourth, lunch periods in elementary and middle schools provide enough time for team coaches to organize one good activity that can help the team prepare for the season or the next game. Such practices should consist of informal games that are typical of the natural play patterns when small groups of children gather to play a game. We agree with Launder (2001), who argued persuasively that it is within these pickup games that children learn to become players through experimentation. You can encourage team coaches to use the aforementioned team practice cards and action fantasy game cards. When teams have used them during class sessions, they can use them on their own time as well. In elementary schools, recesses are generally too short to set up games, yet they still lend themselves for some technique and conditioning practice.

When teams play and practice by themselves, they invariably have to work through problems that may emerge between team members. A central characteristic of fair play is that all team members show up for such independent team practices. Thus, if a player misses multiple practice sessions, the team has to decide how to address this problem.

Self-Monitoring by Students

In order to award the aforementioned PA points in a fair manner (something that students take seriously), you will need to instruct teams that earning such points is contingent on them logging their out-of-class team practice time and obtaining a signature from one of the adult supervisors that verifies their physical activity engagement. The online resource supporting chapter 11 includes several examples of team-based and individual out-of-class physical activity logs.

Physical activity logs can track either what the team did as a group (e.g., during on-campus times) or what individual team members did on their own time away from school. Either way, it is essential to plan this aspect of the season competition with care because fairness in the awarding of PA points is central. Nothing turns students off from competition more than if they believe that it lacks fairness. Figure 2.5 shows an example of a team-based physical activity log.

Students could also be asked to keep a personal or team physical activity log as a form of self-monitoring (see the chapter 11 online resource). Self-monitoring is an effective strategy to assist a person in maintaining a physically active lifestyle. Figure 2.6 shows one example of a simple log sheet. In this example, the student is asked to track personal activity, when the activity took place, what it consisted of, and how long it lasted. Note that you would not ask students to record how many shots were made or how many curl-ups were performed. Rather, the goal is to develop the habit of building in time every day to do something physically active, be it related specifically to the sport of the current season or something unrelated, such as going for a bike ride. The key messages to send to students are that they can choose their own activity, and any physical activity is good activity.

Whether the out-of-class physical activity is team based or individual, students should be asked to have an adult (e.g., playground supervisor, parent or guardian) provide a signature for each reported session of independent

Chapter 11 Out-of-Class Team Practice Physical Activity Logs

Chapter 11 Out-of-Class Individual Physical Activity Logs

Out-of-Class Basketball Team Practice Log

Team Name _____

Directions

Choose at least three days this week where you come together to practice as a team. Practice can focus on physical conditioning or improving your techniques and tactics. Set realistic goals and plan your activities. Be sure to record what you did during the practice and place this completed log in your team binder.

Day/date	Activity planned	Objective of session (technique/tactics/conditioning)	Time spent (minutes)	Team members present
Tuesday / Nov. 5	3v3	To shoot, dribble, or pass	18	Kevin, Misty, Eduardo, Mark, Jessica

Figure 2.5 Students earn physical activity points by holding team practices outside of class. Besides earning points, the log also encourages students to get physically active outside of class.

physical activity. This signature requirement provides an inexpensive way of demonstrating to significant adults (especially parents) what you are trying to accomplish in your program.

As with everything done well, getting this out-of-class physical activity promotion effort going requires planning and preparation. For example, you will need to prepare the activity logs, plan how to present this process to students and their parents, decide how much weight to give to out-of-school physical activity, and build time in the lessons to spot-check the team portfolios to see how well students are logging their physical activity. As with everything, making this process a regular part of how you do physical education may take a few seasons to develop.

By incorporating out-of-school physical activity promotion into your physical education program, you not only make enormous contributions to your students' lives, you also are an active partner in helping meet national health objectives. The key is to make use of the available resources that help promote your program's physical activity agenda beyond your classes.

CUSTOMIZING SPORT EDUCATION TO FIT BROADER SCHOOL GOALS

You can adapt Sport Education to meet particular teacher or curriculum goals. A good example of this type of adaptation is the work done over a five-year period at the Columbus School for Girls (CSG). In the middle school physical education curriculum, students are gradually introduced to a variety of roles (see table 2.3 for a sequence of how roles develop throughout the curriculum) and what it means to be part of a team and have responsibilities that help the team and season to be successful. In the 9th

Weekly Sport and Physical Activity Self-Report Log

Directions

Track the amount of time that you spend in physical activity during the week outside of school. You are encouraged to practice with your team whenever possible, but you can also count all other physical activities such as ones listed in the left-hand column. This would include activities such as walking, in-line skating, biking, skateboarding, playing basketball, and so on.

The goal is for you to reach 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA). The difference between moderate and vigorous levels of physical activity is determined by the intensity with which you participate in them.

Amount of time in minutes

Activities	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Total time
Team practice								
Individual practice								
Practice with a teammate								
Individual practice								
Walking								
Jogging								
In-line skating								
Bicycling								
Working out at a health club								
Swimming								
Playing golf								
Tennis								
Other_____								
Other_____								
Other_____								

Figure 2.6 Having students complete a physical activity log for activities outside of class is an effective strategy for maintaining a physically active lifestyle.

and 10th grades, the entire physical education curriculum uses the Sport Education model. Each season lasts seven to eight double periods, and students are on teams for the duration of each season. The roles of coach, referee, trainer, publicist, manager, captain, statistician, and scorekeeper are used for each season. Each of the 9th- and 10th-grade years has six activities. The 9th-grade activities are sport oriented (such as field hockey, lacrosse, and basketball), and the 10th-grade activities move toward a lifetime activity focus (such as volleyball, dance, weightlifting, and table tennis).

So far that description sounds fairly typical of a Sport Education model used extensively by all teachers in a physical education program. But CSG additionally believes that girls should develop into strong, independent leaders who learn to make reasoned decisions and work together for a common good. This is a goal throughout the CSG curriculum as a whole, not only in physical education. For example, in the coach role,

Table 2.3 Development of Roles Throughout the Curriculum

Team role	6th-7th grades	8th grade	9th-10th grades
Coach	Lead team and give pep talks. Ensure that all team members play.	Lead team and give pep talks. Ensure that all team members play. Design tournament.	Lead team and give pep talks. Ensure that all team members play. Design tournament. Teach skills and drills. Teach positions. Organize players for teams.
Captain	Lead on field and motivate. Set good example.	Lead on field and motivate. Set good example.	Lead on field and motivate. Set good example. Organize team for games. Settle disputes.
Manager	Set up equipment. Clean up equipment.	Set up equipment. Clean up equipment.	Set up equipment. Clean up equipment. List equipment needed.
Trainer	Lead fitness sessions.	Lead fitness sessions.	Lead fitness sessions. Teach injury prevention. Treat injuries. Provide water. Take care of medical kit.
Publicist	Announce contests. Advertise game results. Post sport-related news.	Announce contests. Advertise game results. Post sport-related news.	Announce contests. Advertise game results. Post sport-related news. Make seasonal awards.
Statistician	Keep stats during games.	Keep stats during games.	Keep stats during games. Make up stat sheet. Provide stats to coach. Give results to publicist.
Scorekeeper	Keep score during games. Keep time.	Keep score during games. Keep time.	Keep score during games. Keep time. Track substitutions. Know the rules. Manage all aspects of games.
Referee	Referee games.	Referee games.	Referee games. Teach rules. Modify rules to fit games.

students in 6th and 7th grades learn to lead the team, give pep talks, and arrange for all girls to play equal time. In the 8th grade, they do all those things, plus they have a role in designing the competition for the season. In the 9th and 10th grades, the coaches from each of the teams work together to create and design the competition for the season, teach skills, organize and lead drills, and make decisions (with team input) on how the team will organize the various levels of competition in a season. Indeed, each of the roles in the 9th and 10th grades is filled with important responsibilities. For example, the student referees decide what the rules will be and what the penalties will be for rule violations.

This chapter has shown that the Sport Education model has implications for both the planning of curricula and the variety of teaching and learning experiences used in classes, as well as how this model can be used to address the national health objectives set forth for children and young people. The evidence is persuasive that students respond well to both the curricular features of Sport Education and the kinds of learning experiences they have in their small learning groups, or teams.