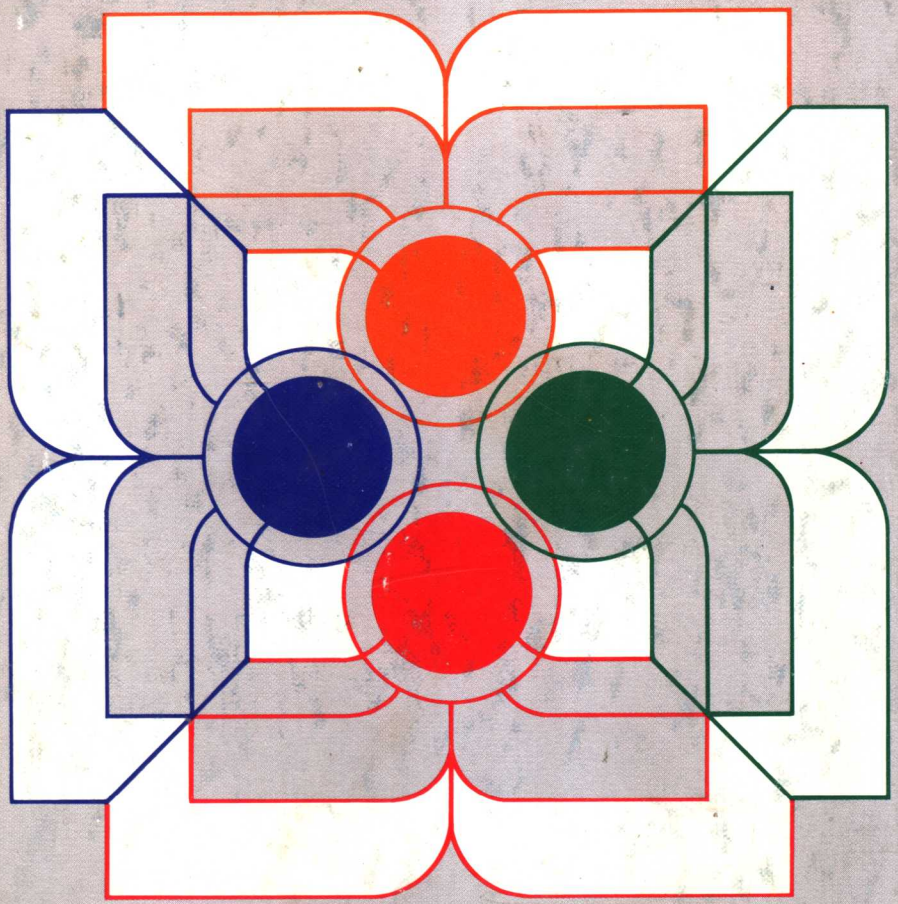
Teaching Physical Education for Learning



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Teaching Physical Education for Learning

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Foreword

In recent years, educators have become more systematic in their observations and understanding of the teaching-learning process. Such careful analysis and reflection on teaching has led to two major thrusts for the improvement of teaching and teacher education.

The first thrust and more widely touted is an emphasis on improving the efficiency of instruction. We have become painfully aware that students in physical education classes spend most of their time inactive with regard to the psychomotor goals of the lessons. Indeed, simple observation of individual learners reveals that they spend most of the class time waiting in line, listening to instructions, or in transition between movement activities. Dr. Rink addresses in a useful way the "management" skills that enable teachers to increase the number of learning opportunities for students.

The second major thrust is the improvement of the quality of teaching. A special contribution of *Teaching Physical Education for Learning* is the fact that Judy Rink goes beyond an emphasis on quantity to considerations involving the quality of teacher actions and resulting learning experiences. There is an implicit recognition that "more of the same," teacher behavior or learning experiences, will not necessarily lead to a substantial increase in the learning and development of students.

The title of this book reveals the author's commitment to producing a book promoting teaching practices that really make a difference in the learning of students. To do so required grappling with the complexities of teaching and learning. Dr. Rink has done an admirable job of compromising between the complexities that she knows to exist and the fact that a teacher can only deal with a few variables while teaching. Teacher educators who are new to the resulting concepts and terms will find that several underlying ideas have been extended and applied throughout the book to facilitate refinement of their students' understanding and their ability to use the ideas presented. *Teaching Physical Education for Learning* can be used by the preservice as well as the experienced teacher. The preservice teacher will benefit readily from the chapters on teaching functions. Lesson planning will be greatly assisted by the work on content development and planning. The experienced teacher will find this

material as well as the material in Part Two enlightening and useful in improving teaching skills.

An increase in the likelihood of student learning is fostered by the careful examination of task complexity and difficulty, learner readiness, and the appropriateness and relatedness of sequential learning experiences. Dr. Rink has translated her innovative "real-world" research on teaching progressions into recommendations for a more careful progression of learner experiences. If concerned teachers make ample use of her *extending* and *refining* tasks before applications in complex performance conditions (e.g., game play), then learners may have more opportunity for appropriate practice of skills. If the variables affecting task difficulty and complexity are also well accounted for, then individual differences in readiness and learning can be more carefully accommodated.

Related to the emphasis on psychomotor development is the author's clear synthesis and utilization of principles from research on motor learning. She has avoided the motor learner's penchant for focusing on skill learning in relatively "closed" situations. Her material on teaching for skillfulness in relatively "open" performance conditions is an important contribution to teaching for skill development consonant with the common purposes of physical education. She has made equally conscious and intelligent use of the implications for teaching that emanate from recent research on motor development.

Some educators may feel that the author has not devoted sufficient explicit attention to the learning environment and the so-called affective outcomes of physical education. I think that Dr. Rink shares my belief that all teachers have a responsibility to teach in a way that fosters the affective and social development of students. This book, however, reflects the current recognition that most students complete 6 to 12 years of physical education without developing sound movement patterns or the ability to use their existing patterns skillfully. The careful reader will find that considerations likely to enhance affective development are an integral part of this book. Indeed, the attention to developing individually appropriate learning experiences can lead to improved attitude, enjoyment, and feelings of confidence and worth in the learner.

Teaching Physical Education for Learning can prove useful for teachers of varying orientations, whether they are movement oriented or tradition oriented. It is my hope that more of us will take the risk and plunge in beneath the surface of teaching.

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Preface

One of the more recent changes in education is the evaluation of teacher performance using specific criteria that are performance based and grounded in teacher effectiveness research. Teachers are being evaluated in terms of what they actually do in the instructional process. Although the appropriateness of such a direction is widely debated both in and out of educational circles, the implications for teacher education are clear. Coursework that focuses on talking about teaching is being replaced with coursework that focuses on the development of observable and appropriate teaching skills.

The purpose of this text is to assist students in learning how to be teachers and to aid teachers desiring to improve their teaching skills to translate goals and objectives in the teaching-learning process into actual teaching behaviors. Teachers have particular functions to perform in a physical education setting such as organizing the learning environment, presenting progressive learning tasks to students, and providing learner feedback. These functions and the teaching skills that comprise them are the primary organizing framework for the text.

Although preactive planning and postactive evaluation components of instruction are included, the unique contribution of this text is the detailed treatment of both the content and managerial dimensions of the teaching process. To approach this level of specificity, a more precise language to describe what teachers actually do is introduced; it comes from descriptive analytic research into the teaching-learning process.

The language is expected to initially pose a problem for come college instructors more accustomed to more general treatments of teaching methods. The language is not a problem for students who do not have established ways of talking about teaching. It will provide you with a way to communicate with students at a more concrete level and will provide them with the necessary foundation to analyze and evaluate what they actually do in the instructional process.

The foundation for the analysis of the instructional process in the text is heavily based on research in both motor learning and teaching behavior. There has been a tendency for teacher educators to reject both of these bodies of knowledge on the basis that motor learning research is not based on real world settings and teaching research has not developed any principles on which teaching behavior can be based.

Both of these positions are considered overgeneralizations that result in a "throw out the baby with the bathwater" situation.

CONTENT FEATURES

The book is developed into two major parts. Part One identifies the major components of the instructional process. Chapter 1 examines teaching as a goal-oriented activity, which is often not an undergraduate perspective but is essential to understanding the teaching-learning process. The chapter also provides an orientation to the process of instruction and the relationship of teacher functions and skills to this process.

Chapter 2 condenses the motor learning literature and describes the implications of this knowledge for teaching physical education. For those programs that already have a strong motor learning course, this chapter may be skipped. However, instructors are encouraged to use it as a review.

Chapter 3 establishes teacher management skills as a necessary but not sufficient condition for effective teaching. This chapter is detailed in very practical terms to clearly define all aspects of management in a physical education setting.

Chapter 4 is the first of two chapters that specifically address the content of physical education. Content is usually neglected in methods texts but has been included here to help the student understand the strong relationship between what you choose to teach and how you teach it. Teachers cannot perform accurately or appropriately unless they know what they are teaching and the intent of that teaching. Chapter 4 specifically defines major content choices in physical education (fitness, motor skills, and movement concepts) and the implication of that content for process.

Chapter 5 looks at the way content is developed in an actual lesson through teacher-progressive moves. Content development is seen as a progressive process in which the teacher provides three distinct opportunities for students: (1) to reduce or increase the difficulty and/or complexity of an experience, (2) to refine the quality of performance, and (3) to apply skills. The chapter begins with a planning orientation to these processes, in which the student is asked to do a developmental analysis of the content to be taught. Guidelines are then provided for developing different kinds of content.

Chapter 6 is a fairly traditional approach to planning and evaluating physical education. Since undergraduate programs usually include coursework in both curriculum and evaluation, the major emphasis in the chapter is planning objectives and lessons. Behaviorally stated objectives and detailed planning are emphasized for the beginning teacher.

Chapter 7 details the design of the learning experience and the movement task. It is at the level of the learning experience and the movement task that students actually experience the curriculum, since it is at this level that the teacher translates goals into what the student will actually experience. The chapter presents criteria that are value orientations for the design of a learning experience and should help sort out those experiences which have value from those which do not. The chapter then proceeds to discuss the design of learning experiences and movement tasks for different types of learning objectives.

Chapter 8 discusses teaching strategies. Although Mosston's styles are included, I have chosen to separate cognitive processes and the questions of student decision making from teaching strategies. Decisions as to cognitive processes and student decision making are made continuously and more appropriately at a more specific level of instruction than the teaching strategy. Teaching strategies are presented as organizational frameworks for instruction. Four teaching strategies are presented: (1) interactive teaching, (2) station (or task) teaching, (3) peer teaching, and (4) self-instructional strategies.

Chapter 9 is devoted to the specific consideration teachers must give to presenting movement tasks to learners. The chapter has a strong information-processing orientation. It deals specifically with the importance of getting the attention of the learner, choosing a way to communicate, and selecting and arranging cues for different content and learners with different characteristics. The chapter concludes with a discussion of task clarity and phrasing.

Chapter 10 is a very practical treatment of the functions teachers perform during the time students are active. What teachers do is divided by the potential of the behavior to contribute to teacher objectives. Teacher feedback and observation are treated in detail as critical teacher functions during activity time.

Growth as a teacher depends on the ability of the teacher to analyze what is done in the instructional process in relation to student learning outcomes. Part Two of this text is designed to be a resource section to help the growing teacher collect accurate information on the teaching process and interpret that information in a useful way.

Chapter 11 reviews the research on teaching from a historical perspective and briefly summarizes major findings from classroom research as well as research on teaching in physical education. Teachers should be familiar with the major constructs of this research and the implications of this body of knowledge for what they do.

Chapter 12 presents the idea of systematic observation and analysis of instruction as a way to help teachers grow in their personal teaching skills. Systematic observation and analysis of instruction should be an integrated part of methods courses that use this text. At some point students should be prepared to use and develop instrumentation as a skill required for continuous growth as a teacher. The material in this chapter is designed to help the teacher, as a personal researcher, develop these skills.

Chapter 13 provides a resource on observation tools useful to the preservice and practicing teacher. Tools have been selected to include a variety of important instructional variables identified in the text. They have also been selected for their practicality.

PEDAGOGICAL FEATURES

To facilitate its use by instructors and students, this text uses the following aids:

Overview. A brief introduction at the beginning of each chapter describes the major issues that will be examined.

Concepts. A convenient outline of the topics to be covered is provided in each chapter.

Figures and tables. Strong visual materials are used throughout each chapter to illustrate important points.

Summaries. Each chapter ends with a brief review of the major issues covered.

Checking Your Understanding. Review questions are presented that encourage students to seek the meaning of each chapter and to facilitate dialogue among students.

References. Each chapter provides the most complete and up-to-date references available to allow the reader to gain further information.

Selected Readings. Additional resources from the current literature have been selected to add more perspective to the book's coverage.

Glossary. A glossary is located at the end of the text for convenient access and to provide an additional method of review.

None of these aids attempts to replace the need for the student to experience teaching, both vicariously and through direct experience. The goal of this text is not that students know about the instructional process but that they be able to use appropriate instructional behavior to accomplish clearly defined goals.

ANCILLARY MATERIAL

A manual is available for instructors that provides recommendations on how to use the text and the manual most effectively and successfully.

Each chapter in Part One includes an overview, chapter objectives, short essay and objective test questions, and suggested class activities.

Although there is no best way to sequence material for learners, Part Two suggests a two-stage sequential progression. It references appropriate chapters from the text and provides sample plans and evaluations.

Additionally, an appendix that suggests sequential progression for the in-service teacher is also provided.

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Contents

PART TWO Describing, Analyzing, and Interpreting the Instructional Process

Understanding the Instructional Process