

Level 4 Health and Physical Education - Skill Development in P.E.

PEEL in Practice: 1300 ideas for quality teaching

Heather Bishop, Valkstone Primary School

What initially began as an idea to develop or identify leadership qualities in the students had a two fold benefit. I was delighted that I discovered how refreshing it was to take a risk and to let go of my traditional teaching styles. What I thought was a risk became a positive outcome for all.

I was tired of being the one designing all lessons to develop the same skills within my P.E program. I also wanted the children to see the connection between what I was teaching on a weekly basis and how these skills transferred to their everyday life. The overriding aim was to pursue the idea of leadership in the children and for them to gain an understanding of the requirements of developing a satisfactory P.E lesson.

Much of my time during P.E is spent on fundamental motor skills and the format of the lessons usually follows the same procedure. Most of the time students are engaged, but I was concerned that the high achievers (physically) were losing interest and not being adequately challenged.

I explained to the groups of grade five and six children that I was going to assess some of the year's work on them organising and completing a lesson for the grade. The children divided themselves into groups of three to six students and proceeded to talk only about the 'game' they were going to play. After closely examining the procedures required to develop an effective lesson, the groups set to work using a lesson plan proforma that I had designed for them. They were required to fill in all sections of the proforma, gain approval from me and then set a date for their lesson.

Each lesson plan needed to include the students names, equipment required, a warm up, skill development session, game and cool down. Basic time allocation for each part of the lesson was suggested and the students had to work together on how the lesson would proceed and the responsibility each member of the team was given.

The initial reaction was positive, with all students keen to run their own lesson. I think they were mainly keen about the power they could wield with the whistle! The outcome of this new teaching strategy was mixed, but on the whole very rewarding. Although at first annoying, it was positive to see students chasing me around the school before the start of the day to discuss planning and the availability of equipment. All students at least had a go at their lesson, with varying degree of success.

All groups were encouraged to provide feedback on the lesson.

- *'That was a fun lesson'*
- *'The group tried really hard'*
- *'I think they were really well organised'*
- *'I like the way they sorted out the groups'*
- *'We all worked hard during the lesson'*

At the end of the lesson I gave feedback and in every case my written comments mirrored those oral comments of their peers.

In every case, it was interesting to hear the presenters comment on how difficult it was to give instructions when the students were talking or not paying attention; enlightening.

'When they didn't listen it became really annoying and difficult'

My greatest success was with a group of four capable boys. I imagined they would come to the lesson under prepared and over confident. I was completely wrong. These boys had organised their lesson down to the last detail and had the grade engaged and fully active. I was so impressed I asked the group to present their lesson to another grade later in the day. The second take of the lesson was further improved on the original.

The students learned some valuable skills and I realised how powerful a change of teaching strategy and acceptance of student's input and abilities can be. Letting go of my traditional methods enabled the students to operate on a different level and enabled me to see the options available to improve outcomes for students using a variety of teaching strategies.