

How do you know what to plan for your 2nd, 7th, or 10th grade students? Where do you begin? How do you select developmentally appropriate content for students in a specific grade level? This chapter provides information that will help you respond to these questions and ultimately be able to plan developmentally appropriate content for all students in physical education. Too many physical education teachers simply “roll out the ball.” Some teachers offer no instruction or content, play games only, play the infamous dodgeball, or provide instruction that is too challenging or too easy for most students in the class. By the end of this chapter, you will understand why dodgeball is not appropriate content to teach students and how you can identify developmentally appropriate content to teach at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. A one-size-fits-all approach doesn’t work, so this chapter provides information that will help guide your decision making as you plan equitable learning opportunities for all students in your classes.

TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE

Before learning about how to plan developmentally appropriate content for students, you will benefit from reviewing the various types of knowledge you will gain as a preservice or beginning teacher, focusing on three: content knowledge (CK), pedagogical knowledge (PK), and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), which are based on Shulman’s (1987) seven categories of knowledge base for teachers. Shulman (1987) developed these knowledge categories because he believed that content and pedagogy were being treated as mutually exclusive domains and that teacher education programs should combine the two knowledge bases to prepare teachers more effectively.

Content knowledge (CK) is the “what” of teaching, or the “knowledge about the subject matter to be taught” (Metzler, 2011, p. 46). Content knowledge in physical education can include knowledge about a variety of sports and games, fitness, outdoor pursuits, dance, gymnastics, locomotor movements, manipulative and nonmanipulative skills, track and field, aquatics, tactics and strategies, problem solving, creating, fair play and good sporting

behavior, among many others. As a student in a teacher licensure program, you are developing your content knowledge specific to a particular subject matter, physical education. Many of you will also have developed content knowledge as sport players, physical movers, and coaches. Content knowledge in physical education provides an academic language in the field, making a physical education program unique in schools. Teachers need to develop both breadth and depth of content knowledge so that they can proficiently plan, instruct, provide feedback, and assess student performance.

Pedagogical knowledge (PK) includes the “how” of teaching in general, or the “knowledge about teaching methods that pertain to all subjects and situations” (Metzler, 2011, p. 46). As you take methods or practicum courses, such as the one you might be in right now, have field experiences working with students, student teach, and, most important, when you obtain a teaching position, you will develop and increase your pedagogical knowledge. Across content areas, PK may include how to plan a unit and individual lessons, manage a class, provide quality instruction (much is included in delivering quality instruction alone!), and assess student learning. This list might appear short, but you learned from the previous chapter that a lot goes into planning a lesson (much of which is based on your content knowledge) and even more goes into giving quality instruction. Specific to physical education, pedagogical knowledge includes knowing how to transition students from one activity or task to the next, demonstrating a skill and practice task, providing feedback to students, grouping students, managing equipment, space, and people, and so on. Gaining this pedagogical knowledge will bring you closer to the goal of becoming an effective physical education teacher.

Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is the “how and what” of teaching, or the “knowledge about how to teach a subject or topic to specific groups of students in a specific context” (Metzler, 2011, p. 46). Gaining PCK takes time and experience. Methods students go into elementary, middle, and high schools for field experiences to develop their pedagogical knowledge and, in some instances, their content knowledge as well. But they do not develop much PCK because they do not know

the students or have a sound understanding of the school context. A teacher who has PCK can adjust content and pedagogy with a whole class, small groups, and individual students. For example, you may recognize a few students struggling with a particular task, so you develop a different practice task that you did not previously plan to help improve their per-

formance. You had to have the PK to recognize that students needed assistance beyond going over the critical elements with them, and you also had to have the content knowledge to be able to change the task on the spot. Ultimately, the blending of CK and PK creates the most optimal and developmentally appropriate learning experiences for all students.

KEY POINTS

- Content knowledge (CK) is the “what” of teaching, or the knowledge about the subject matter to be taught.
- Pedagogical knowledge (PK) includes the “how” of teaching in general, or the knowledge about teaching methods that pertain to all subjects and situations.
- Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is the “how and what” of teaching, or the knowledge about how to teach a subject or topic to specific groups of students in a specific context.

Social Justice Issues to Address

PLAN DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE CONTENT

What do you think about games and activities such as dodgeball, prison ball, climbing a rope, or elimination games (e.g., certain tag games)? Were you successful in such activities in your own physical education classes? Did you think they were fun? Why? Do you still think the same way? How do you think the other students in your class felt when doing the same activities? As you learn the standards, outcomes, and assessments, you will certainly notice that those activities do not belong in a standards-based, quality physical education program. Thus, they are not considered developmentally appropriate content in physical education. You might have been successful in such activities, but students who are not as skillful become immediate and easy targets and are often bullied, increasing the risk of their being embarrassed and disengaging from physical education. The goal is to provide positive and safe learning opportunities for all students. Offering the activities listed earlier, among many others, does not accomplish this important goal in physical education.

You have to be thoughtful in the content you select to teach your students and the way that you go about delivering that content. As you develop unit and lesson plans, ask yourself these questions: Have I developed any games or tasks that could eliminate any students? Use students as physical targets? Put students on public display? Expose or emphasize body size or physical limitations? How would someone who is overweight or obese feel about engaging in such and such activity? Will students for whom English is their second language (ESL) be able to understand and be involved? Have I made any gender or race biases in the content I selected (e.g., girls participate in dance or fitness while boys play football)? Ultimately, is my content not only developmentally appropriate but also equitable for all students in my physical education class? If the answer to any of these questions is no, then you must make changes to your planning before you teach such content to provide equitable learning opportunities for all students in your class. Considering all students’ needs and making modifications for a variety of groups of students or individual students might seem like a daunting task, and getting to know your students and gain experience will certainly take time. But this is the commitment you make when you obtain a teaching license and step into the position of a physical education teacher.

STANDARDS, OUTCOMES, AND ASSESSMENTS

This text has consistently stated that unit and lesson planning must be driven by the National Standards and Grade-Level Outcomes (SHAPE America, 2014) and, for some, by national (i.e., National Association for Sport and Physical Education, 2010, 2011; SHAPE America, forthcoming) and state (e.g., Ohio, South Carolina) assessments. If you have not purchased *National Standards & Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education* (SHAPE America, 2014), you should. The National Standards text, as outlined in part II, contains specific and clear Grade-Level Outcomes that students should know and be able to do by the end of that grade level for each standard. If you are in a field experience or are a beginning teacher at the elementary level, you will want to know how to differentiate content in Standard 1 for every outcome for each grade. For example, one of the Standard 1 outcomes is for students to learn how to jog and run. Do

you think that the expectations are the same for students in kindergarten and fifth grade? What about kindergarteners and second graders? The simple answer to both questions is no, because students should progress year after year with their motor skills and movement patterns. The same is true for middle school students' cognitive knowledge about how to create space with offensive tactics in invasion games; the expectation for sixth graders will be different from that for eighth graders. Ideally, students will gain new knowledge year after year that they can apply to various practice and game contexts.

LEARNING DOMAINS

In the two examples in the previous section, the elementary example was based on Standard 1 and the middle school example was focused on Standard 2. Although physical education focuses on the physical, the National Standards are developed across three learning domains: psychomotor, cognitive, and affective (see table 10.1). The **psychomotor domain** is



Providing modifications to meet the needs of all students should be included in the planning and instruction of physical education. Teachers need to be sure to meet the needs of students' IEPs and 504 plans.

TABLE 10.1 Primary Learning Domains Aligned With Each Standard

LEARNING DOMAIN	STANDARD 1	STANDARD 2	STANDARD 3	STANDARD 4	STANDARD 5
Psychomotor	X		X		
Cognitive		X	X		
Affective				X	X

about doing; it is the physical aspect of what students should be able to perform in physical education, and it aligns specifically with Standard 1 and aspects of Standard 3. Examples include students' ability to perform an overhand throw, a jump shot in basketball, and a yoga or dance routine. These examples are a small sampling, of course, of what students may be asked to develop in regard to their psychomotor performance.

The **cognitive domain** centers on thinking, or knowledge and understanding of a variety of concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics related to movement and performance (SHAPE America, 2014), which aligns with Standard 2 as well as some outcomes in Standard 3. Students may be able to perform a bounce pass in basketball but not know when to use a bounce pass versus a chest pass or how to move to open space to receive a pass so that the defense cannot deflect or intercept it. In this basketball example, students need to understand how to perform several critical elements to produce a successful bounce pass as well as know how to create space to elude a defender. These two distinct cognitive examples are both important for students to learn in physical education. Because all the fitness and physical activity content is in Standard 3 (meaning that the cognitive content for fitness and physical activity is in Standard 3, not in Standard 2), students need to understand a variety of cognitive concepts in relation to fitness and physical activity, such as various training principles (e.g., FITT, overload, progression), and know how to perform a squat or chest press or how to develop a personal exercise plan.

The **affective domain**, the third learning domain, centers on feelings, emotions, and behavior. The affective domain relates directly to Standard 4, which is about personal and social behavior, as well as Standard 5 in regard to valuing physical activity. The affective domain is sometimes overlooked in a physical education curriculum, but if students do not

have appropriate behavior, respect themselves and others, and follow the rules, learning in the psychomotor and cognitive domains will be difficult. As discussed in chapters 7 and 8, it is important to create explicit learning opportunities to teach students how to be respectful of all people, how to navigate conflict, and how to be open and accepting of one another's differences.

STUDENTS' PRIOR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCES

The section about unit planning in chapter 9 suggested that you conduct a needs assessment to find out and explain why it is important to teach a particular unit focus or content to students. A major factor in implementing a needs assessment is to learn about the students' prior knowledge and experiences with that content, whether it occurred in physical education class, on a sport team, or in the community. When determining developmentally appropriate content to teach students at a specific grade level, you need to know what they have already learned across all three learning domains and the five National Standards. Finding out this information before you plan your unit of instruction is critical, because you do not want to reteach the same thing year after year, which would deprive students of additional learning opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills or cause them to become bored. On the flip side, you do not want to teach content that is too difficult, which would cause many students to fail. Conducting a preassessment, talking with students, talking with cooperating teachers or your coworkers (if you are a beginning teacher), looking at the entire physical education curriculum for the school district, and researching sport and physical activity opportunities in the community will provide you with valuable information about what students have experienced in relation to physical education content.