

Mitchell, S., & Griffin, L. (1994). Tactical awareness as a developmentally appropriate focus for the teaching of games in elementary. *Physical Educator*, 51(1), p. 8-29.

Summary by Stacey Van de Water

Issue:

This article discusses methods of teaching games to elementary and secondary physical education students through focusing on developmentally appropriate tactical awareness. It is intended to encourage teachers to adjust lesson plans to suit the needs of individual students, identify problems during game situations, and then create appropriate solutions.

Reasoning:

Mitchell and Griffin explain that when these tactics are carried out effectively, students should portray a heightened sense of interest and understanding in the game, maximized skill levels, and a motive to learn and acquire more complex skills. The authors use facts, diagrams and tables in order to support their argument. They also briefly discuss the Game Performance Assessment Instrument, which provide teachers with a method of assessing the skills of students.

Assumptions:

The authors assume that unless they are enjoying themselves while playing games, students will not benefit from physical education. They explain that as students learn skill execution, they will improve their game, thus leading to increased enjoyment, interest, and perceived competence.

Conclusion:

This article has taught me that observation is the most critical component to teaching games. Through observation, a teacher is enabled to adjust the complexity of the game in accordance with students' understanding. As students begin to understand game play, they should begin developing solutions when being presented with various solutions, thus introducing them to tactical awareness.

Significant Information:

It is important to remember to allow students the opportunity to practice skills after watching them in game form. Also, it is crucial for teachers to remember not to associate levels of development with specific ages, as this could lead to teaching inappropriate tactical and technical content.

Personal Comments:

I feel that this article should act as a guideline for teaching games. Should teachers force students to learn a skill prior to understanding the game, students will feel confused and will most likely find that they are not enjoying the physical activity. Seeing how the purpose to being a physical educator is to promote lifelong physical activity, I agree with the authors in saying that students must enjoy "playing the game".