

**Werner, P. (1989). Teaching games: A tactical perspective. JOPERD, 60(3), 97-101.**

**Issue/Focus** – Traditionally, games in physical education have been taught from a skill base or technical approach, with an emphasis on mechanical efficiency. When the students are given the opportunity to play the game after being taught the skills, the attempt is more often than not unsuccessful. Games have broken down because most students don't understand the nature of the game having only been taught mechanical skills out of a game situation. The result is general frustration and lost in interest.

**Purpose** – This article seeks to push forward the idea that combining teaching approaches is the best way to teach games. It encourages teachers to teach students the nature of complex games by first teaching them modified forms of the game that teach students simple tactics or strategies that will help them later to better understand the complex game and teach them to be able to make decisions while playing the complex game.

**Reasoning** – As a result of the unsuccessful teaching of games from a skill base or technical approach, several innovations have been developed to improve games teaching. Teaching games from a tactical perspective has proved to be the most successful innovation. Games are modified by modifying equipment, playing areas, rules, number of players, etc. Through these modified games, simple tactics and strategies of the complex game are taught, and students can learn the nature of the game. The basic skills and strategies are more easily understood through these modified games as students are able to play a real game at their level of competence. The official game is played by progressively changing the equipment, playing area, rules, and number of players to that of the official game. Generally, specific skill instruction will arise naturally out of a need to execute a skill properly.

**Assumptions** – This method of teaching assumes that all students learn better without a skill-based approach, and with little competition at the beginning. Although this may be true for many, some students are successful when taught from a skill-base, and competition is sometimes what drives some students to be successful. The article also assumes that teachers have the knowledge and ability to teach from a tactical perspective, and that students have the capacity to learn from this perspective.

**Conclusion** – The movement towards alternative ways to teach games has proved successful. Teaching from a tactical perspective has allowed for increased participation in games. Students will find games more enjoyable and beneficial and be more successful in executing the necessary skills when taught games through modified versions. Students can grasp the game's true nature as they learn the necessary skills and strategies through a progressive approach.

**Significant Information** – Teaching games from a skill base proves unsuccessful as students do not understand the nature of the game and lose interest as they continue to fail. When teaching games, there needs to be a healthy balance between cooperative games and competitive games, and too much of one can make teaching games unsuccessful. Games Making has many benefits but should not become the whole games curriculum.

Teaching games from a tactical perspective through modified games allows students to learn the basic skills and strategies needed to play a complex game.

By playing these modified games, students will understand the nature of the game, and be able to make better decisions when given the opportunity to play the complex game.

**Personal Comments** – For me this article really reinforces how important it is to take a different approach to teaching games other than the traditional skill based method.

Moving away from this method is one step further to removing the negative undertone that the word “PE” has for a lot of students.

The sentence “skill instruction on specific technique will arise out of a need to play or execute a specific skill” really sold me on the whole teaching from a tactical perspective. After students gain the tactical awareness necessary for the game, the only way for them to progress further is to be better at the skills involved in the game. Naturally, kids will want to get better, or win, and learning these skills will allow them to do so.