2009

The Spectrum of Teaching Styles: Style E – The Inclusion Style

Robert S. Christenson

David C. Barney
david_barney@byu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/facpub
Part of the Health and Physical Education Commons

Original Publication Citation

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation
https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/facpub/1884

This Peer-Reviewed Article is brought to you for free and open access by BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.
The Spectrum of Teaching Styles
Style E – The Inclusion Style

Robert S. Christenson, Ed. D.
Assistant Professor
Health and Human Performance – Physical Education
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK
robert.christenson@okstate.edu

and

David Barney, Ed. D.
Assistant Professor
Health and Human Performance – Physical Education
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK
david.barney@okstate.edu

One of the greatest challenges physical educators face in the classroom is getting all students to be actively participating in an activity. In this continued series of Mosston’s “Spectrum of Teaching Styles,” the “Inclusion Style” (Style E) helps the teacher with the idea of getting and keeping all students actively involved (See Figure 2) as it offers the opportunity for each individual to choose their own challenge. The following example helps illustrate and introduce the “Inclusion Style” of teaching (See Figure 1). Hold a rope level at about one foot off the ground and ask your students to take a few steps and jump over it. Chances are that all of them will clear the rope. Raise the rope a couple of inches and ask the class to jump over it again. Chances are that all of them will clear the rope again. They are all successful because the height of the rope being jumped is not a challenge. As the height of the rope keeps increasing, a particular phenomenon occurs at each subsequent height, one, two, or more students will fail to clear the rope. These students could be excluded from the experience as a result of not having the ability to meet the challenge of clearing the rope. As you continue to raise the rope, eventually the number of successful participants will be one, or none! This very common gymnasium scenario eliminates the least able students first as a result of their inability. Those who need the skill practice and activity the most are observing instead of participating. As designed, this activity proceeds to challenge as well as reward with more activity those students with the most ability until there is only one. Mosston’s “Inclusion Style” in direct opposition to this, has at its very core the intent to give all students equal opportunity to participate while allowing decisions to be made that adjust the challenge by modifying the conditions.

This particular arrangement of the subject matter, in this case, jumping over the horizontal rope represents the single standard design of the task. All learners participating in this experience were asked to jump over the same height each time. The condition always induces the process of exclusion because of the different abilities of the individuals who are participating. If the objective of an episode is to exclude students from participating, this arrangement is appropriate and will accomplish the intended purpose. The objective of excluding participants will be accomplished every time irrespective of the activity. There are situations when this objective is acceptable and desirable, such as in the competitive high jump. In contrast, when the experience has been created as an instructional episode where the practice session is involvement of all participants, than how can the objective be reached? What adjustments or changes could be made to the design of the task to shift from exclusion to inclusion? Can you suggest an alternative? How would you provide each learner, based upon the match between their ability and the challenge, the opportunity for successful participation in the same task?

Indeed, several solutions are available. The most succinct one, and perhaps the most dramatic, is to slant the rope, by holding one end of the rope at floor level and the other at

Mosston’s Spectrum of Teaching Styles

[Diagram of Mosston’s Spectrum of Teaching Styles]
about your shoulder level. Now ask the learners to jump over the rope once more. Using no additional words, ask them to jump over the slanted rope. Invariably the class will spread the rope and people will jump over at varying heights. Everyone will be challenged at their level and realize a successful experience. Everyone is included! The intent and the action in this episode are congruent because the slanted rope arrangement accomplished the objective to create conditions of inclusion by choice, based on the degree of difficulty within the same task (Mosston & Ashworth, 1994).

As students have participated in this learning experience (slanted rope activity), some decision making was taking place that needs to be discussed. First, the learner looked at options of how high they wanted to jump along the rope. Second, the learner made a decision of where they wanted to jump over the rope. Third, the learner took a few steps to approach the rope and jump over the rope where they decided to jump based upon a match between their perceived ability and the height of the rope with an eye on being successful. Usually the height in which the learner jumped over is the spot that will ensure success. In many cases it will be a safe decision. Fourth, the learner knows that they were successful in their choice. Now the learner will have three choices to make regarding their next jump. They are: a) repeat the same height as their last successful jump, b) select a higher spot on the rope increasing the challenge, and c) select a lower spot on the rope as their last choice was too challenging. Now, whatever choice the learner makes it is acceptable because each individual has remained in the activity and is continuing to participate. The lesson performance objective is achieved as the learner continues activity and is making a decision about the challenge. Continuing on, fifth, the learner makes their decision, takes a few steps and jumps over the selected height. Sixth, the learner assesses their results of the jump and whether or not the jump was successful. Again, the learner has three choices to make, repeat the same height, select a higher spot or select a lower spot on the rope. And seventh, the process of jumping is repeated as the opportunity to learn and refine a skill is optimized through participation.

The "Inclusion Style" of teaching strives to include all learners and to have continued participation, to have learners enter an activity at their ability level, to participate in the activity, then step back and analyze their performance and then decide to proceed on their own terms. The possibilities for students to learn in this teaching style are very favorable.

Example of Implementation in the Inclusion Style

![Diagram](image-url)
Probably one of the best examples to help illustrate the "Inclusion Style" is to examine an episode that involves shooting a basketball. For this example, we are not playing a game of basketball, but utilizing the fundamental skill/activity of shooting the basketball. The following are the different ways a physical educator can implement the "Inclusion Style" of teaching in the activity of shooting the basketball. First, a clear direction to limit the distance from the basket will have an impact on the learner's capacity to find success. Here the teacher can have students shoot from 15 feet (foul shot), 10 feet, 5 feet or as close as they want to be from the basket.

One interesting thought the teacher may want to also consider when teaching the shot in basketball is the individual's strength. A second adjustment might be the height of the basket. When the ability level along with a decided lack of strength is evident, by moving the student closer to the basket the teacher is modifying the challenge within the "Inclusion style." When teaching the shot in basketball, students should work on the proper mechanics of shooting the basketball and this modification allows for practice without a learner having to compromise technique. If the teacher has students who are new or less skilled at shooting the basketball, it would be wise for the students to practice shooting from a closer distance. When less skilled students shot the ball from further distances, there is a good chance they will forsake proper mechanics for the simple success of putting the ball into the basket.

There are several additional adjustments that can make the task challenging without restricting the distance from the basket. Second, is the adjustment in the height of the basket to less than the standard ten foot will enable the lesser skilled learner to boost their success. In a standard elementary school gymnasium, this may be possible based on the equipment. Yet, if possible, having several different heights of the basket creates different degrees of difficulty for the student. Third, another modification would be the diameter of the hoop. In a gymnasium where the court is used for competitive games, this may not be possible for the main baskets in the gymnasium. Yet, varying the diameter of the hoop creates different conditions and challenges for the students and free-standing or wall-mounted backboards could provide this modification.

Fourth, a modification in the size of the ball to fit a smaller hand or simply offer more control. The teacher could possibly use three different sized balls. The teacher could provide the opportunity for the student to choose a regulation sized ball, or an intermediate sized ball, or a primary sized ball. Again, these three different sized balls also create different challenges for the learner. Fifth, the teacher or student can make an adjustment in the weight of the ball that is used during practice sessions. As discussed previously regarding the size of the ball, the three different sized balls are all different in weight and accommodates a learner's strength. Another alternative the teacher could use is a volleyball which modifies the size as well as the weight. The volleyball is smaller than an intermediate sized basketball and much lighter than any of the three basketballs.

The sixth adjustment is the angle of the shot in relation to the backboard. This last suggestion of teaching to shoot the basketball positions the learner around the basket from which the shot may be taken and offers different degrees of difficulty. The purpose of this example of shooting the basketball is to show that changes or adjustments in some fundamental factors when attempting a skill will provide greater variety for learners that could lead to greater success. This teaching-learning style, in an effort to reach every learner would make use of any, all or a variety of combination of adjustments in an effort to foster success.

Teaching a student to vertically jump over a rope or a basketball shot are but two skills where the modifications fit into the "Inclusion Style" of the spectrum of teaching styles. The list of skills that fit into the instructional toolkit is endless when the objective is to perfect technique through increasing the participation. In addition, there is a never-ending list of innovative equipment that has been designed to create challenges for learners within the designated activity that will provide the same skill-based opportunity for every student irrespective of their very different abilities.

Teachers Role in the Inclusion Style

As the teacher, your role in the "Inclusion Style" of teaching is to set up the activity, provide the instruction for the activity and engage the students in guided practice (Figure 3). A major part of explaining as well as demonstrating the activity will be helping the students understand the various levels of difficulty or challenges the students can choose to participate in. After the students are in skills, drills or activity, the teachers' role will be to circulate throughout the class and give feedback to students as they practice the given skill(s). Another aspect of circulating throughout the class will be to inquire among the students as to how their choices within the activity are leading to successful learning experiences. It may be stated as, "How are you doing in the choices you are making in this activity?" "Does this level of difficulty make the activity too challenging for you?" and/or "Don't be afraid to try a different level of difficulty that will correctly challenge your ability." Whatever the teacher interactions may be, the teacher needs to move around the class activity and be available to assist in any way.

Another role the teacher may have in the "Inclusion Style" is the preparation of a criteria or task sheet students can use while they are working on the technical aspects in the given skill. This is a decision the teacher can make for the learner as a result of knowing their students' abilities and how the activity they are participating in (Figure 4) will challenge their readiness for success.

Conclusion

The "Inclusion Style" of teaching on Mosston's Spectrum of Teaching Styles is a brilliant method of teaching with a large number of opportunities, if the teachers' goal is to have all students in activity. The "Inclusion Style" of teaching can be used in a multitude of elementary lead-up activities as well as many more advanced sports skills. In activities such as adventure, archery, badminton, bowling, dancing, field hockey, floor hockey, gymnastics/tumbling, football, golf, lacrosse, pickle-ball, soccer, softball, team handball, tennis, volleyball, track & field and a large number of fitness lessons, the "Inclusion Style" of teaching can be utilized to adjust the teaching-learning scenario in an effort to create an endless set of opportunities for the student to find success. With the old traditional style of teaching activities where students are eliminated from activities in class, there is a greater likelihood that students will lose interest, become management problems and clearly not learn the skills needed to be participate in the activity through-out their lifetime. The "Inclusion Style" of teaching offers every individual learner the opportunity to be challenged enough to stay on task and learn. The organizational structure of this style of teaching creates a series of learner-centered decisions that requires the individual to participate taking responsibility for the challenge-level of the tasks. This teaching-learning environment keeps the student focused on demonstrating that the skill/task has been learned as a result of being accountable for their own success in class. It is the student's ability to match their perceived skill level with a challenging task that will lead each individual learner to find success. The decisions that are factored into this style of teaching will maximize participation while also bringing a positive impact to each of the major factors that influence learning (readiness, motivation, individual difference and reinforcement). Finally, students learn to challenge and participate at an appropriate level for their ability, realize success by competing against themselves, not others and this is all accomplished by creating an environment that rewards participation.

References

1. The Axiom: Teaching behavior is a chain of decision making.

2. The Anatomy of any Style:
   - Preimpact
   - Impact
   - Postimpact
   Sets of decisions that must be made

3. The Decision Makers:
   - Teacher: Maximum - Minimum
   - Learner: Minimum - Maximum
   Who makes the decisions

4. The Spectrum:

5. The Clusters:

6. The Developmental Effects:
   - Physical Channel
   - Social Channel
   - Emotional Channel
   - Cognitive Channel
   - Moral Channel
   Minimum → Maximum

Diagram 1  The Structure of the Spectrum
Diagram 2  The Anatomy of Any Style of Teaching on the Spectrum