

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT LESSONS

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Abstract

The study focuses on clarifying the terms and purposes of assessment for learning in Physical Education and Sport lessons and how we can use them to support the progress of our students, provides examples of different types of assessment for learning in physical education and explains why teachers should include them as part of their instruction.

This article describes the most used forms of assessment in physical education and emphasizes the importance of using them in both physical activity and physical fitness for promoting physical activity. Effective evaluation practices are needed to optimize the effectiveness of physical education programming. Assessment for learning is an essential part of education as it defines whether or not the objectives of teaching are being met, assessment affects decisions about grades and educational needs of students. Assessment for learning involves using it, as part of teaching and learning, in ways that will raise the student's achievement.

Assessments are the tool that physical educators use to measure the skills and fitness levels their students learn and achieve in the Physical Education class. They help to show yourself and others that your students are learning and becoming more physically fit as a result of being in your class. Assessment is very important in Physical Education as it provides information on strengths, weaknesses and educational requirements, it gives students the opportunity to demonstrate what they know and are capable to do, determines student progress and motivates them to improve their performance, informs future planning and teaching and judges which aspects of teaching have been effective or inefficient.

Student assessment is "the gathering of evidence about student achievement and making interferences about student progress based on the evidence". Physical Education teachers collect and track assessment data to make decisions about instruction and to measure student learning continually throughout the learning sequence (SHAPE America, 2014).

Keywords: assessment for learning, physical education and sport, student assessment

Introduction

Student assessment is essential to measure the progress and performance of individual students, plan further steps for the improvement of teaching and learning and share information with relevant stakeholders.

Student assessment refers to processes in which evidence of learning is collected in a planned and systematic way in order to make a judgement about student learning (OECD, 2013, p.140).

Objectives

The study focuses on clarifying the terms and purposes of assessment for learning in Physical Education and Sport lessons and how we can use them to support the progress of our students, provides examples of different types of assessment for learning in physical education and explains why teachers should include them as part of their instruction.

The approached issues

The physical education teacher use learning objectives and learning outcomes to communicate clear criteria to students and help them to achieve. His main role is to monitor and assess student's achievement. He needs to be aware of the progression made by all his students and it is responsible for reporting this progress twice annually to students as well as sharing important information with other staff.

Assessment for learning is "the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there" (Assessment Reform Group, 2002)

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Assessment is very important in Physical Education, as it provides information on strengths, weaknesses and educational requirements, determines student progress, informs future planning and teaching and judges which aspects of teaching have been effective or inefficient.

In Physical Education there are three types of assessment that can be used to assess student achievement: Preassessments to learn where students are in the beginning of a learning sequence, Formative Assessment that are ongoing during instruction to check for understanding, and Summative Assessment at the close of a unit or instructional sequence to provide a comprehensive summary of each student's progress (SHAPE America, 2014).

Preassessments or diagnostic assessment is the first type of assessment we do with our students as we prepare to learn a new skill. Diagnostic evaluation is a way in which the teacher can learn what skills the students already have and on which areas the teacher should focus. The results of this evaluation are not used for grades.

Table 1. *Difference between Formative and Summative Assessment*

Formative Assessment or Assessment of Learning	Summative Assessment or Assessment of Learning
Characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment for learning is an integral part of the learning process; • Aims to identify aspects of learning as it is developing in order to deepen and shape subsequent learning (OECD, 2013, p.140); • Information is shared with the student on the quality of learning; • The comparison between objectives and outcomes; • Feeding forward to the next stage of learning about how to improve. 	Characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment that happens after learning has taken place; • Aims to summarize learning that has taken place, in order to record, mark or certify achievements (OECD, 2013, p.140); • Information is gathered and recorded by the teacher is usually transformed into marks or grades; • Performance with others is often compared and it is reviewed in the context of the past learning.

Formative Assessment refers to a variety of assessment procedures that provides the required information to adjust teaching during the learning process. Summative Assessment is defined as a standard for evaluating learning of students.

Formative Assessment is diagnostic in nature while Summative Assessment is evaluative.

Formative Assessment is an assessment for learning, whereas Summative Assessment is an assessment of learning.

Formative Assessment occurs on an on-going basis, either monthly or quarterly. On the other hand, Summative Assessment occurs only at specific intervals which are normally end of the course.

Formative Assessment is conducted to enhance the learning of the students. Conversely, Summative Assessment is conducted to judge student's performance.

Formative Assessment is undertaken to monitor student's learning. As opposed to Summative Assessment, aims at evaluating student's learning.

Characteristics of Assessment for learning are as follow:

- a) sharing learning objectives with learners;
- b) helping learners to know and recognize the standards they are aiming for;
- c) involving learners in peer and self-assessment;
- d) providing feedback that leads learners to recognize their next steps and how to take them;
- e) promoting confidence that every learner can improve and
- f) involving both teacher and learner in reviewing and reflecting on assessment information (Assessment

Reform Group, 1999).

According to Black and William (1998), the big idea of Assessment for learning is to adapt the teaching and learning to the needs of the students. This can be achieved by means of five key strategies: (1) clarifying and sharing learning intentions with the students; (2) engineering effective classroom discussions, tasks and activities that elicit evidence of learning; (3) providing feedback that moves the learner forward; (4) activating students as learning resources for one another and (5) activating students as owners of their own learning.

Assessment for learning is a significant way to raise a student's academic achievement and is centered on the belief that in order for students to progress they must understand the purpose of their learning (What are they trying to achieve?), where they are in relation to this purpose and how they can progress (How can they take steps toward good?) and achieve their goals (What are the key teaching points to achieve a good performance of the desired activity or task?). We can help students to do that through a combination of: teacher demonstration, student demonstration, written and verbal explanation, videos, pictures, diagrams and illustrations.

Anybody in a learning situation need information about how we start and some support about where we might progress to next and how to get there. As such feedback must be clear and constructive and opportunities must be provided to improve. A lesson that is structured so that: a skill is progressed, eventually applied in a performance then individuals, groups or whole class evaluate the applied skill performance (be it game or composition) and then the lesson draws to a close – doesn't allow opportunity for students to improve – especially if a new skill is introduced the following lesson.

Assessment will help students to reflect on their own development, which in turn will help them to recognize and appreciate their own strengths as well as developing an insight into themselves as students. We can build confidence and motivate our students by giving them the opportunity to discuss their learning either with a teacher or with one of their peers that will lead to a deeper understanding of their learning. Individual's self-esteem and confidence can be increase by giving them the responsibility of learning. Engaging with the learner in their preferred learning style can also promote confidence. This involves assessing the learning style and then creating environments to support a range of styles. Visual, auditory and kinesthetic (VAK), multiple intelligences and thinking style (abstract sequential, abstract random, concrete sequential and concrete random) form the major considerations that need to be made here. If students are reaching a stage where they are reflecting on performance, they are becoming independent in their learning and allow them to take control of their own learning.

Effective assessment will identify individual educational needs of all students as well as informing them about their specific performances and achievement. This will then allow teachers to use approaches that are personalized to the needs of a student.

Assessment can be used not only to measure learning but also to promote learning by teaching students how to ask questions as well answering them, by emphasizing to a student that it is acceptable to "have a go" and that by giving the wrong answer is still an opportunity to learn.

Any assessment information collected by the teacher during lessons and over the course of a unit should be used to further support of challenge students. For example, if an objective of attacking with width and depth hasn't been met in games then further tasks to enable this can be planned for the next lesson. Assessment for learning allows the teacher to make informed and appropriate decisions about where to progress next in their learning.

Strategies such as focused observation or effective questioning can help by giving the teacher information about students current understanding of a performance.

Conclusions

The most used method of assessment in Physical Education and Sport lessons is the testing of motor skills using fitness tests which provides quantitative results that can be used to determine a student's fitness level, comparing the results with a set of rules and then evaluating them. If the fitness test is given at the end of a unit, you should be able to compare the results of the student's pre and post fitness test to determine if an improvement has been made. It is very important that in the evaluation process to consider the progress made by the student

throughout the learning unit and his degree of active and conscious involvement during the Physical Education and Sports hours.

More complex activities and movements never done before by students may require much more time for learning. Using the traditional assessment methods may show that students are not improving, as they may not be able to complete the activity. If we evaluate the quality of each part of the movement/activity, not just the final result, we will find that student actually improves, even if he cannot finish the activity, which means that learning occurs.

In the assessment for learning in Physical Education and Sport lessons we must take into account the following criteria: the ability of the subject to apply the acquired elements in practice, the ability to practice independent exercise by the subject, the capacity of the subject of restructuring, assembly, etc., of the acquired elements, the level of theoretical knowledge, acquired by the subject, regarding the practice of physical exercises, attitude of the subject towards physical education and sport, materialized by attending lectures, participating in competitions, how to perform organizational tasks, etc. and the level of physical development of the subject.

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