



# Active Insight: Evidence in Action

## Tip #274



## Balancing Competition

### Overview

Balancing competition in Years 3–6 supports students to apply skills in cooperative and competitive contexts. This builds understanding, confidence, and wellbeing. Providing varied experiences promotes fair play and engagement, ensuring students develop skills while enjoying meaningful participation across different physical activity environments. Emphasising teamwork, respect, and positive participation also helps students build resilience, strengthen relationships, and experience success within supportive and inclusive movement settings.

### Key Teaching Ideas

Select competitive or cooperative approaches based on learning goals. Introduce competition gradually and emphasise effort. Encourage reflection and fair play. Support inclusive participation, ensuring students experience success and enjoyment across varied learning contexts. Use flexible groupings, clear expectations, and positive feedback to help students build confidence, develop social skills, and participate respectfully within movement activities.

### Practical Application

- Use cooperative games to build teamwork and shared learning experiences
- Introduce modified competitions supporting inclusive and balanced participation opportunities
- Design team challenges encouraging collaboration and skill development effectively
- Implement skill-based contests focusing on improvement and effort outcomes
- Set group goals promoting shared success and positive learning experiences

### Next Steps

Balance competition intentionally. [Game Sense](#) approaches support inclusive engagement, helping students develop skills, understanding, and positive attitudes toward participation.

*The Game Sense model is informed by [Teaching Games for Understanding](#) (Bunker & Thorpe, 1982), the [Game Sense approach](#) (Light, 2013), and contemporary skill acquisition research including ecological dynamics (Davids & Renshaw).*

