



Active Insight: Evidence in Action

Tip #276



Fair and Fun Competition

Overview

Well-designed competition in Years 3–6 supports students to apply strategies while promoting fairness and enjoyment. Balanced approaches strengthen confidence, engagement, and wellbeing. Encouraging respectful participation helps students develop positive attitudes, teamwork, and understanding through inclusive physical activity experiences. Purposeful competition also supports resilience, communication, and decision-making, helping students experience challenge and success within safe and supportive movement environments.

Key Teaching Ideas

Design competitions focusing on fairness, effort, and enjoyment. Use balanced teams and rotate roles. Reinforce positive behaviours and reflection. Support inclusive participation, ensuring all students feel confident, respected, and engaged while developing movement skills. Encourage teamwork, communication, and supportive interactions to help students build positive relationships and experience success within inclusive and enjoyable physical activity environments.

Practical Application

- Rotate teams regularly ensuring balanced participation and fair competition experiences
- Use effort-based scoring recognising teamwork and improvement during activities
- Provide fair play awards reinforcing positive behaviours and respect values
- Create mixed ability teams supporting inclusion and shared learning opportunities
- Facilitate reflection discussions highlighting fairness and positive participation behaviours

Next Steps

Focus on fairness and enjoyment. [Game Sense](#) approaches support inclusive competition and help students develop positive attitudes toward teamwork and 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).

