

MOVEMENT in the Primary Grades

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11 Confidence and Motivation Components of Physical Literacy

The Competence – Confidence Cycle

The power of physical literacy comes from thinking about it as a process or journey rather than a state or destination. Physical literacy is about learning, and it leverages the competence-confidence cycle.

When students acquire a new skill or activity, they experience a sense of competence. There is a confidence that comes from having conquered a task that was previously beyond their reach. That sense of “I can do this” provides a powerful psychological lift and associates physical competence with positive feelings and confidence.

These feelings make them more likely to try to learn new skills. In other words, the learning that takes place generalizes to other activities and domains of learning. They are motivated to try new things or use their new skill in more challenging ways.

This cycle of competence and confidence creates many physical and psychological benefits including resiliency, as well as physical and mental well-being.

Keep it Fun and Increase Motivation

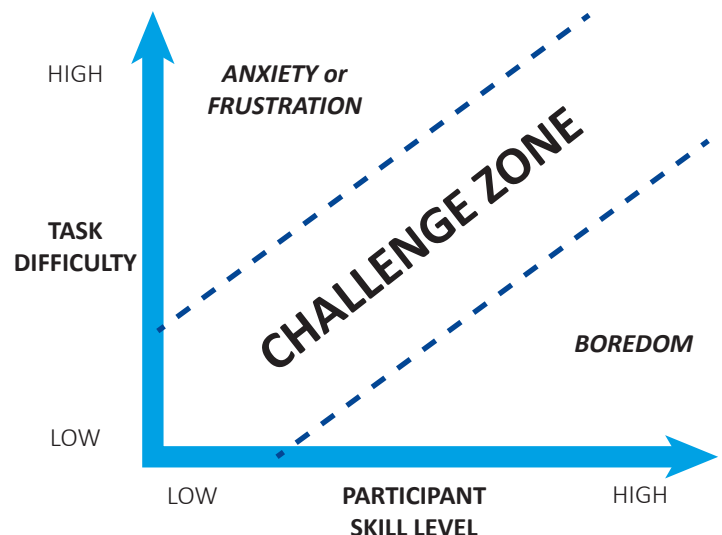
Students love participating in activities that provide fun and friendship and these should always be prioritized when planning movement opportunities.

Social elements of physical activity have an impact on the motivation component of physical literacy. Educators, coaches, parents and peers all play a vital role in the physical literacy process. Sometimes, students will not want to do an activity or skill because they are not developmentally ready, either

physically or cognitively. Try not to force a student to do something they seem to be resisting. By choosing activities that the students like and involving them in some of these choices, educators help associate fun with physical activity.

Students thrive in environments where there is lots of support and encouragement. They typically prefer personal development and improvement over competition.

Stay in the Challenge Zone



Students have the most fun when the activity is in their challenge zone. If the task is not difficult enough for their skill level, they become bored. If the activity involves a task that is too difficult for their skills, then they often find it frustrating. Modify the rules or equipment to keep the activity challenging enough so that they can master it 60-70 percent of the time.