

Skill Themes

Developmentally Appropriate

- Children develop at different rates.
 - Age does not predict motor ability.
 - “Natural Athlete” is a myth
 - Girls and boys have the same potential.
- Children develop motor skills naturally through play.
- There are fundamental movements used in sport and activities.
- Developing a functional understanding of the concepts of space awareness, effort, and relationships is important.

Curricular Diamond

- Phase 1: Building the Foundation (K-5)
- Phase 2: Exploring Possibilities (6-8)
- Phase 3: Developing Expertise (9-12)

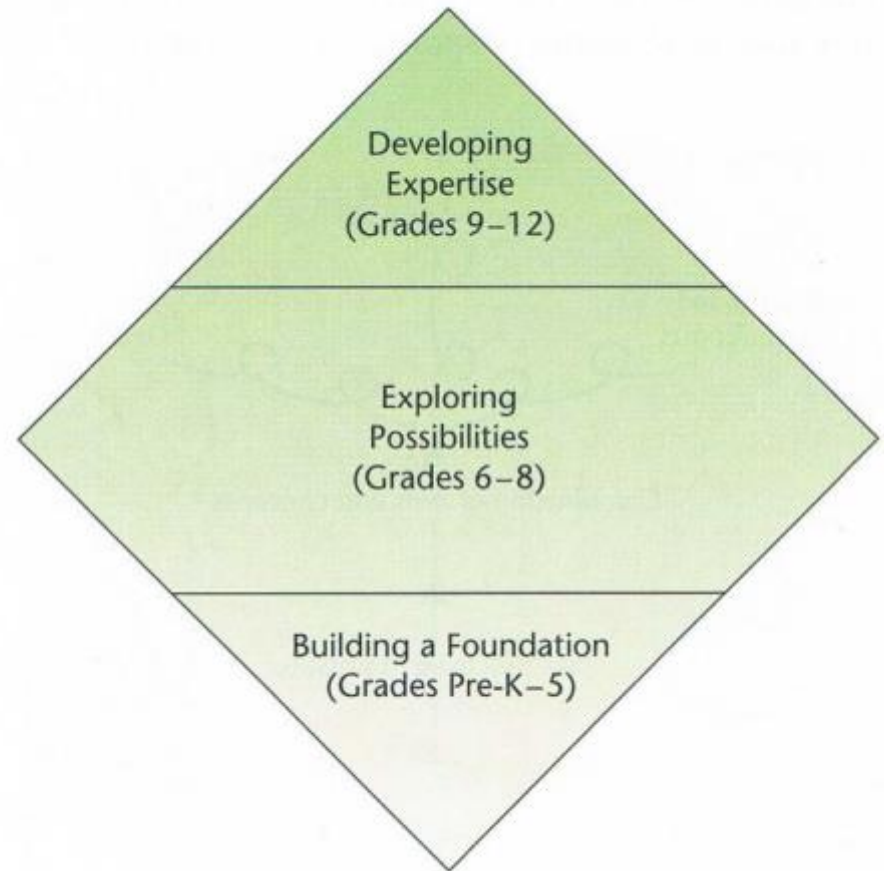


Figure 2.1 The Curriculum Diamond.

What are Skill Themes?

- Fundamental movements, later modified into more specialized patterns upon which more complex activities/sports are built
- Skill Theme Approach is a way of teaching physical education that:
 - Is organized around Skill Themes and Movement concepts
 - Describes both content (what is being taught) and pedagogy (how it is being taught)

Comparing the Skill Theme Approach with the Traditional Method of Teaching Physical Education

Skill Theme Approach

Traditional Method

Primary emphasis on fundamental motor skill acquisition & competency

Primary emphasis on teaching children games, dances, and gymnastics w/out regard to skill acquisition

Primary emphasis on providing learning experiences appropriate for the developmental level of the individual child

Primary emphasis on providing learning experiences based on the child's age or grade

Scope and sequence designed to reflect the needs and interests of students over period of years (i.e.,K-5)

Scope and sequence designed to teach skills in preset "units" of three weeks, six weeks, etc.

Skill Themes vs. Movement Concepts

- Skill Themes
 - Fundamental movements that apply to many different sports and physical activities
 - **“verbs”** or **“action words”** (walking, throwing, etc.)
- Movement Concepts
 - The **“ideas”** or **“modifiers”** that enrich the range and effectiveness of a movement (time, levels, directions, etc.)
 - Relate to the **quality** of the movement, describing **how** the skill is to be performed
 - **“Adverbs”** which modify the **“verb”**

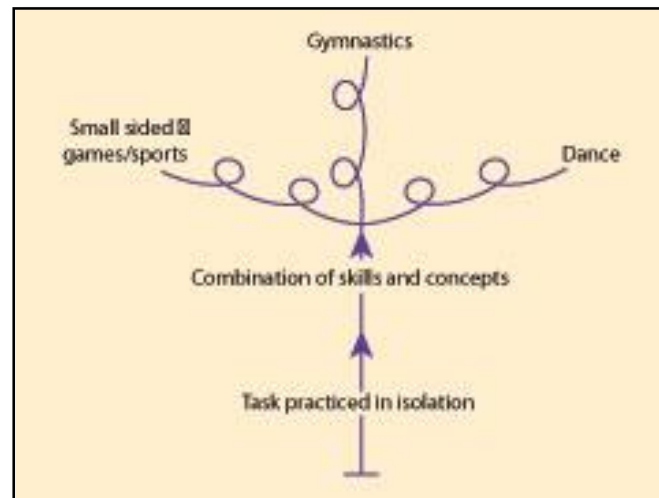
Movement Concepts

Table 3.2 Movement Concepts*

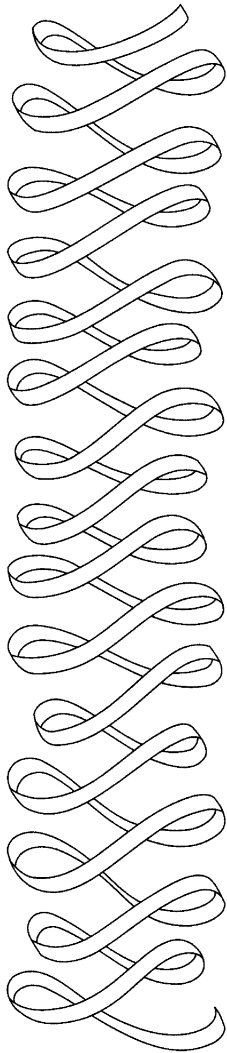
Space Awareness (where the body moves)		Effort (how the body moves)		Relationships
Location:	Self-space and general space	Time:	Fast/slow Sudden/sustained	Of body parts: Round (curved), narrow, wide, twisted, symmetrical/nonsymmetrical
Directions:	Up/down Forward/backward Right/left Clockwise/counterclockwise	Force:	Strong/light	With objects and/or people: Over/under, on/off, near/far, in front/behind, along/through, meeting/parting, surrounding, around, alongside
Levels:	Low/middle/high	Flow:	Bound/free	With people: Leading/following, mirroring/matching, unison/contrast, alone in a mass, solo, partners, groups, between groups
Pathways:	Straight/curved Zigzag			
Extensions:	Large/small Far/near			

Characteristic 1 - Skill Theme Approach

- Competence in performing variety of locomotor, non-manipulative, and manipulative motor skills is a major purpose
 - Skill themes practiced initially in isolation, then in combination with other skills and concepts



Progression Spiral



Proficiency Level

- Playing Punt-Over
- Punting while traveling
- Receiving and punting against opponents

Utilization Level

- Playing rush the circle
- Punting within a limited time
- Receiving a pass, then punting
- Punting to a partner
- Punting at angles

Control Level

- Punting for height
- Punting for accuracy
- Using punting zones
- Punting for distance
- Punting different types of balls
- Punting with an approach
- Punting over low ropes
- Punting for consistency

Precontrol Level

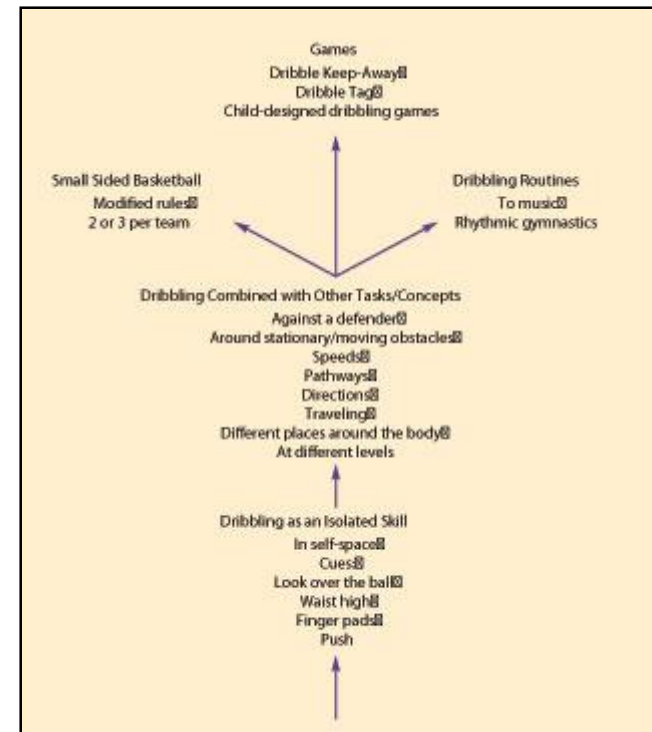
- Dropping and punting
- Dropping, bouncing, and kicking lightweight balls

Characteristic 2 - Skill Theme Approach

- Designed to provide experiences appropriate to a child's developmental level, as opposed to age or grade
- Tasks selected based on children's abilities, not a predetermined calendar

Characteristic 3 - Skill Theme Approach

- Scope and sequence designed to reflect the varying needs and interests of students over a period of years
- Rather than focusing on a skill theme for several weeks, a skill theme is practiced for brief periods and then revisited



Characteristic 4 - Skill Theme Approach

- Emphasizes instructional alignment
 - Teacher decides what students can learn in a lesson (objectives)
 - Develops a series of tasks to assist children to accomplish those objectives
 - Assesses to determine if the lesson objectives have been accomplished

1st grade: *Strike a slow moving object to self with different body parts.*

I	Volley a balloon upward with your hand.
E	See if you can make it go up, but not forward or back.
R	Repeat the same task but this time I want you to see how flat you can keep your hand (flat as a pancake).
E	Volley it as hard as you can upward using strong force.
E	Keeping your hand flat, see if you can volley the balloon upward but only hard enough that it comes up to your eyes each time. So now you are using light force.
A	Can you keep it going? Let's try 15 seconds and the balloon does not leave your self space.
I	Now, we are going to try striking the balloon with a paddle. Drop it from a high level and then strike it once at a medium level. After you hit it, try to catch it.
R	Did you have to move more than one step to catch it? If so, use less force. Try again.
E	Now we are going to work a little more on keeping a flat paddle. See if you can walk around the room balancing a beanbag on your paddle.
E	Let's see if we can balance a balloon on a flat paddle as we walk in general space.
R	Remember to keep your wrist firm or strong so it does not bend.

I – Informing: Introduction of skill.

R – Refinement: Introducing a new cue to improve the quality of the skill.

E – Extension: Changing the task to make it more complex.

A – Application: A task that incorporates the skill into a game-like activity.

Summary of Extension: Common Methods of Extending the Movement Task

Breaking down a skill into parts

Example:

- Practice the takeoff and placement of the ball in the layup shot in basketball.
- Practice dropping the ball for a courtesy serve in tennis or racket skills.

Modifying equipment

Example:

- Begin with a light ball and increase the weight of the ball in volleyball.
- Reduce the size of rackets initially and then increase the size and weight of the rackets for racket sports.

Making the space larger or smaller

Example:

- In a chasing game, decrease the space to make it easier for the tagger.
- In two-on-one soccer, increase the space to make it easier for the offense.
- Increase the force requirements for a throwing or striking skill by increasing the distance.

Changing the goal (intent) of practice

Example:

- Practice the tennis serve to get a feel for the rhythm and then practice to get the ball in the court.
- Practice batting to get a hit and then practice to place the ball in different locations.

Adding or decreasing the number of people

Example:

- Practice dance steps first by yourself and then with a partner.

- Practice two-on-one in soccer and then two-on-two. (Note two offense vs. one defense is usually easier than two-on-two.)

Changing the conditions of performance

Example:

- The defender is trying to stay with the offensive player—you are not yet trying to get the ball away.
- If you are having trouble getting the ball over the net, take a few steps in front of the service line.
- Practice playing basketball without the dribble.

Changing the rules

Example:

- You can use as many hits as you need to get the ball over the net.
- We are not going to call the traveling rule today very strictly.

Combining two skills

Example:

- Practice shooting in basketball and then practice dribbling and shooting.
- Practice a forward roll and then practice a forward roll into a headstand.

Expanding the number of different examples of a concept

Example:

- From task of “Show me what a balance is” to “Show me three different ways to balance.”
- Design three exercises to improve back flexibility.