

Conclusion

The student findings are then compared with our most reliable historical information concerning Greek athletics.

Utilizing Community-University Resources in Teaching of the History of Physical Education

by
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As Robert Mager said, "If telling was the same as teaching we'd all be so smart we could hardly stand it". Teaching of history can so easily fall into the trap of "telling". It is difficult to structure active learning environments but most of us have at hand resources that greatly enrich our teaching and make it more experiential.

During the past few years while teaching at Iowa State University I have made use of university-community resources which have stimulated and developed student interest in history. History has come to have more relevance through these various resources.

Possibly the most successful of these has been the oral history projects wherein students would search out a senior citizen, someone beyond sixty-five years of age. Oftentimes, this is a relative, a neighbor, or a former teacher. The instructor also furnished a list of older people in the community for those who did not know any personally. A structured interview schedule was utilized so there were different specific things covered. This information was then compared with the textbook material over that particular period. As one student wrote in the class evaluation, "this was the best assignment we had". It deepened the students' awareness of personal roots, changes in attitudes toward work and play, diversity within our country, and the close relationship between sport/physical education and socio-economic-political-religious factors.

Our university archives where university catalogues, yearbooks, and student newspapers are housed has also been a source of information. To be able to show pictures of earlier university students participating in Swedish gymnastics in a gymnasium that looked very much like one in Sweden has very graphically illustrated the influence of Swedish gymnastics even in our own university. Many other things such as basketball on a three-court floor, formally posed pictures of students holding dumbbells, early track meets in voluminous bloomers make the discussion of physical education/sport of the late '90s and early 1900s more interesting and relevant.

Most communities have rich resources in the presence of retired administrators, coaches, and teachers and the local Senior Citizens Center and the Retired Teachers Association are usually cooperative in suggesting people with experience that could be

shared. Some of the more informative and fascinating classes have been when such a person came and told 'what it was like in the olden days.'

Some universities and communities have local groups that attempt to recreate the Middle Ages or some other period. These groups place emphasis on the physical activities of the knights during the age of chivalry. One such group greatly assisted the students' understanding of that period as they demonstrated the various fights, weapons used, dances, music, and showed the costumes of that period. This demonstration showed far better than a lecture from the instructor on the role of physical activities during the Middle Ages.

Many universities and colleges are fortunate to have a museum or art gallery. Often-times, the exhibits in these can be utilized for mini-field trips to learn first hand about such things as early toy forms, artifacts found in archeological digs that give clues to life during a particular period, specific exhibits featuring sculpture, arts and crafts, toys, and clothing. These are all useful accessories in the study of history. For instance, our university has an excellent permanent collection of dolls from various periods and countries. Traveling exhibits can also be utilized to learn about physical activities during a certain period.

Teaching Sport History at the Secondary Level

by

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Sport history by its very nature is a self-learning educational activity, and is a subject of much interest to people of all ages. The potential of such a high interest area as a way to help young people improve their learning skills was very apparent. A major problem at the secondary level of education has been the attitude of indifference of many students and their resistance to learning. There often is a wide range of ability and interest levels in the same classroom. It was felt that a class such as sport history might be a means of encouraging student learning. We deal daily with students who are literally non-readers, while at the same time we have college level readers in the same class. Young people from such extremes of academic ability as well as many average students have in common an avid interest in one or more aspects of the world of sport. It was thought that such a class could assist these students to learn and willingly apply the various skills of learning.

From the beginning, it was strongly felt that a class in sport history must be based on academic performance rather than be an easy, "fun and games" type of class where watching sports movies would be the highlight. In the past few years, a separate class, Sports Literature, within the English Department district-wide, has been developed and is very popular.

Because of the desire to encourage general study of the total scope of sport history, yet to allow flexibility for the student to do concentrated, in-depth study of the areas of sport of particular interest to the individual student, it was decided to establish the course around the teaching method of individualized instruction.