

The Use of Laboratories, Role Playing and Simulation

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There are many methods used in teaching with no one technique necessarily being superior to another. As we search for ideas that may enhance student interest and learning, we sometimes discover unique approaches that work. Some of the techniques I have found to work are the use of laboratories, role playing and simulation. Laboratories may be used in different ways and for varying purposes. Two uses I have made of laboratories are (1) as a research assignment choice for students, and (2) as an optional appendage to the required course in the history of sport and physical education. In the first use of laboratories the student doing the research is not the only one benefiting from his/her findings since one of the requirements is to involve the class in as authentic a replication of the past as possible. The second use of laboratories is to have a scheduled time that students may attend for indepth discussion, guidance in research techniques and/or for enrichment experiences. These laboratories may be opened to all students interested in the study of sport and physical education history, and they provide time for class members in activities that regular class time does not permit. Role playing and simulation is another way of analyzing and synthesizing historical information in a nontraditional way. By having students “become” the characters being studied, they gain a deeper understanding of the lives and influence of those individuals, and this insight is shared with all class members during role play. The use of games in class serves to stimulate interest and appears to aid retention of material. A primary reason for this approach is to help create interest in the teaching of sport history in the public schools by demonstrating methods that would be appropriate for younger students. The classes are a great deal of work for the instructor but result in a very stimulating and rewarding experience for teacher and students.



Conference Manager A.B. Culver occasionally enjoyed a moment of relaxation.