

## Activity 9.2 Academic learning time-physical education (ALT-PE)

Complete this sheet twice; once on an observation of your teaching completed by a teacher and once by you on an observation of a lesson taken by an experienced teacher. What differences are there in results? Reflect on what the data tells you about your teaching and pupils' learning, then identify how you can increase the time pupils spend actively engaged in learning.

### Purpose

This instrument is often used to judge teaching effectiveness in physical education. Specifically, its purpose is to describe the amount of time pupils are engaged in motor activity at an appropriate level of difficulty. This is based on the assumption that the longer pupils are engaged in motor activity at an appropriate level of difficulty, the more they learn.

### Definitions of categories

Four categories of activity are identified:

- *Motor appropriate (MA)* The pupil is engaged in a motor activity related to the subject matter in such a way as to produce a high degree of success.
- *Motor inappropriate (MI)* The pupil is engaged in a motor activity related to the subject matter, but the task or activity is either too difficult or too easy for the pupil's capabilities, therefore practising it does not contribute to the achievement of lesson objectives.
- *Motor supporting (MS)* The pupil is engaged in a motor activity related to the subject matter with the purpose of helping others to learn or perform the activity (for example sending balls to others or spotting the trampoline).
- *Not motor engaged (NM)* The pupil is not involved in a motor activity related to the subject matter.

### Recording procedures

There are four different methods of observation available to collect ALT-PE data about the categories above. These methods use:

- *Interval recording* This involves alternating observing and recording at short intervals. One pupil or an alternating sample of pupils is used. The observer watches one pupil during the *observing interval*. During the *recording interval*, the observer records the observation as *MA*, *MI*, *MS* or *NM*. Data can be presented as a percentage of each category. This is the most common observation method used.
- *Group time sampling* This involves the observer scanning the group for 15 seconds every 2 minutes, and counting the number of pupils engaged at an appropriate level of motor activity (*MA*). Data can be presented as an average for the class.
- *Duration recording* This involves the observer using a time line to categorise into one of the four categories (*MA*, *MI*, *MS* or *NM*), what one pupil is doing the entire period. Alternatively, the observer can measure *MA* time only. A



**Activity 9.2** *continued*

P _____	C	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
	L																											
	I																											

  

P _____	C	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
	L																											
	I																											

P = Pupil  
 C = Context of the interval  
 LI = Level of involvement of pupil

Context Level (C)		Learner involvement level (LI)		
<i>General content</i>	<i>Subject matter knowledge</i>	<i>Subject matter motor</i>	<i>Not motor engaged</i>	<i>Motor engaged</i>
Transition (T)	Technique (TN)	Skill practice (P)	Interim (I)	Motor appropriate (MA)
Management (M)	Strategy (ST)	Scrimmage/routine (S)	Waiting (W)	Motor inappropriate (MI)
Break (B)	Rules (R)	Game (G)	Off-task (OF)	Supporting (MS)
Warm-up (WU)	Social behaviour (SB)	Fitness (F)	On-task (ON)	
	Background (BK)		Cognitive (C)	

A larger version of this activity is available on the website <http://www.routledge.com/textbooks/o415361117>.

**ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

A positive lesson climate provides the most effective learning environment (Capel *et al.* 2004: 103). Many factors contribute to this climate. Interactions and relationships between teacher and pupils and between pupils are positive and effective. Pupils are placed at the centre of lesson planning and delivery. A positive teaching style is used in which feedback is given for appropriate work; this motivates pupils to learn and enhances their self-esteem. The lesson has a relaxed, but purposeful atmosphere. Pupils are expected to learn and to be on-task, supported by a committed and enthusiastic teacher who is confident, authoritative and clearly in control of the situation, but also caring, understanding and sensitive. The working space is clean and tidy and conveys care and attention to pupils and their learning (see *ibid.*: 102–19). Establishing an effective learning environment with a positive lesson climate is something that is within your control, so you must consider the factors that contribute to this as an explicit part of your lesson planning, (see Activity 9.3).

An effective learning environment with a positive lesson climate supports a ‘behaviour for learning’ approach, which is relevant to all pupils. Effective relationships are central to the ‘behaviour for learning’ approach. The approach emphasises teacher expectations and the value placed on behaving in ways which enable and maximise pupil learning. Targets are set that are reachable (Garner, 2005: 136–7). This approach contrasts with a reactive approach which focuses on behaviours that the teacher does not want and in which pupils are disciplined or punished for poor behaviour *after* it occurs. Indeed, a reactive approach can ‘worsen or even create the very problems it is intended to eradicate’ (Weare, 2004: 63).