

## A Spectrum of Teaching Styles - As proposed by E. Mosston & S. Ashworth

**As a teacher teaching Physical Education (PE) it is extremely beneficial to have a strong understanding of different teaching styles. 'Teaching Styles' are defined by Ofsted in its guidance to Inspectors as 'Planned interactions between teacher and pupils that result in the accomplishment of a set of specific outcomes. Teaching styles are to do with the 'how' and 'why' of delivering content. Mosston and Ashworth (1986) suggested a spectrum of teaching styles based on who makes the decision about the learning environment and the actions that occur within it. Teachers are required to have a working knowledge of how different teaching styles are required depending on content choices and pupils' needs.'**

An understanding of differing teaching styles can help you to:

- cater for the different ways pupils learn;
- allows students to learn all the concepts, processes, and skills inherent to physical education;
- eliminates monotony in the delivery of PE lessons;
- are useful for planning how students will achieve a given learning objective

The spectrum of teaching styles was first designed by Mosston and Ashworth as they designed a cohesive framework to serve as a guide for physical education teachers. It consists of 11 different teaching styles, five teacher-centred and six student-centred. Together, they allow for range of approaches to teaching and learning such as behaviourist, cognitive, social constructivist, peer teaching, peer assessment, and self-assessment. In the table below all eleven teaching styles are categorized and described.

It is important to highlight that there is not a singular, preferred teaching style, nor are lessons taught entirely with one teaching style. Rather, it is encouraged that teachers use a range of approaches in their lesson and unit plans, as one style may best suit a particular task(s) e.g. a **command style** may be deemed safest and best practice for teaching pupils how to throw a javelin; but a **guided discovery** approach may be more advantageous if the learning objective is to develop understanding of throwing techniques.

It has been suggested that pupil-centred approaches are more beneficial as they require pupils to be more independent and involved in the decision-making process. However, if pupils haven't developed independent learning skills previously in PE lessons it would be beneficial to lead them through the spectrum of teaching styles, starting with the teacher-centred approaches and then progressing on to the pupil-centred styles. This supports progression and works alongside the three pillars of progression as suggested by Ofsted.

The table below illustrates the styles proposed by Mosston and Ashworth, which is specifically mentioned by Ofsted in its guidance to inspectors. Teachers should have an understanding of pedagogical approaches to help with implementing the lesson's intent.

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## The Command Style (A)

Teacher makes all the decisions before, during, and after the lesson. All activities are performed after a stimulus such as a whistle, or teacher say so. *This style is best used when safety is paramount or time is of the essence, and when fast responses and replication of skills is required. For example, a synchronized warm-up where the pupils follow the teacher.*

## The Practice Style (B)

Teacher shows the task & gives room for pupils to practice at their own pace. Teacher follows and gives feedback. *For example, teacher demonstrates how to perform a jump-shot in basketball. As pupils practice their shooting technique, the teacher will go around the class giving feedback.*

## The Reciprocal Style (C)

The pupils work in pairs or small groups and take turns observing & giving feedback to each other using performance criteria. *For example, pupils are in pairs using a skill card on how to perform a 'log-roll' in Gym and take turns coaching each other. Meanwhile, the teacher moves among the class giving feedback through the pupils' coaching.*

## The Self-check Style (D)

As in Style (C) but pupils work on their own and use criteria from self-check resources, video, teaching points, success criteria. *This style allows students to practice and self-correct in their own time and evaluate their own learning. The teacher circulates the class and works in conjunction with pupils to set targets / goals*

## The Inclusion Style (E)

Teacher makes all the decisions before, during, and after the lesson. All activities are performed after a stimulus such as a whistle, or teacher say so. *Pupils decide which task is most appropriate for their abilities and motivations. This style provides a personalized and developmental approach to learning*



## Teacher Led

## Pupil Led



## Divergent Discovery (H)

Teacher designs problems and tasks that engage pupils to find multiple solutions where they exist. *This style has been recognized as an excellent approach when teaching games tactics, gymnastics, dance and OAA.*

## Learner-designed Individual Programme (I)

Pupils have the opportunity to design, develop and present a series of tasks organised into a personal program. *Pupils engaging in this style should have good subject knowledge and creativity, experience in the other teaching styles, and proven themselves as independent in their learning. The students can draw on the teacher's expertise if needed.*

## Guided Discovery Style (F)

Teacher uses questions to guide the pupils towards a single predetermined response or solution. *This conceptual approach to learning allows pupils to be involved in the convergent process of thinking about a particular movement problem or tactical concept e.g. how to beat an opponent in Tag Rugby & Football.*

## Learner Initiated Style (J)

The learner initiates their own learning experience by deciding the learning intent, objectives, the logistics, procedures & assessment criteria. *The pupil meets periodically with the teacher to discuss their progress or when needed.*

## Convergent Discovery (G)

Learners discover new content by producing a single correct response to an unfamiliar specific problem, question, or situation. *The pupils control the process of learning by using trial, error, and logic in order to discover alternative answers to the posed question/problem. They can use previous schema to create new ones*

## Self-teaching (K)

The pupil accepts the decision-making roles of both the teacher and learner. *This is the epitome of independent learning as pupils take full responsibility for their own development and the learning process.*