

CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF
TEACHING MATERIAL

If the objectives selected are to be attained, it is essential that there be first formulated definite criteria by which the teaching material can be evaluated and the wheat sifted from the chaff. The following criteria are proposed for tentative use:

1. Physical education should be an integral part of the whole system of education, with health, and with character and personality education as its primary field. Teaching material should be primarily adapted to accomplishing these things, and should not encroach on other fields of education. The curriculum of physical education should be so organized that it will cooperate with mental and moral education, and these other fields of education should cooperate with physical education. At present, the physical educator knows too little about general education, and the general educator knows too little about physical education. The result is too much water-tight-compartment organization in the educational field, with resulting loss of educational efficiency.

2. Physical education should be educational. This does not mean that health and the purely physical values should be neglected. On the contrary, it should be emphasized that the health of the body is of the utmost importance, and the physical educator should have it in his plans constantly. Most of the activities listed as physical education activities, however, have sufficient exercise content to be used as health producers, but many of such activities have no other value. There is a sufficient wealth of physical education teaching material to enable us to select carefully and use only those activities which will give positive educational values as well as health. In other words, physical education teaching material should be selected for effectiveness as an educational tool, not just for exercise.

3. Every activity taught should be purposeful and useful, rather than traditional. That is, it should be selected to accomplish the objectives sought, and should be useful for that purpose. This would exclude more than half of many curricula today, for in too many places, either there is a blind teaching of the traditional, or the desire to "develop first-team material" is the determining factor. This last leads to the seeking only the immediate, and a neglect of the real objective, which is the developing of a man. This criterion would call for the teaching of activities for use in later life as well as for immediate educational use. All activities should be utilized as a means to the end, not as the end themselves.

4. All teaching material should be beneficial to the individual. This would seem quite obvious, but the promotion of not a little marathon running and the use of men's basketball rules for girls would indicate that the criterion is worth stating. In addition to the eliminating really harmful activities, it would seem wise to emphasize the positive side. Classroom education as well as the general high-tension life of today burns more than a normal amount of nervous energy. It would seem wise to endeavor in the physical education activities to give as few nerve straining situations as possible; and where necessary to use them to secure educational results, to present them in instinctive situations where there will be as great a normal motivation as possible. The attention-straining response to artificial command, and the memorized drill work would seem to have little of value and much that is not in harmony