Physical educators are looking for new ways to excite students to participate in lessons. Brusseau & Burns (2015) have identified that the most valuable units to increase physical activity in Physical Education (PE) lessons are fitness activities and large space invasion games. The Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE America, 2015) recommend well-designed PE programs that keep students active for most of their time in class. Invasion games have the ability to adhere to this recommendation and are particularly popular in many PE classes; however, not all invasion games are created equal. Novel games are said to support students’ multicultural experience especially if the selected game is played in another country or culture (Clancy, Portman & Bowersock, 2007). Netball is a fresh invasion game option for teachers to involve students at all ability levels. Netball is an all-inclusive and engaging ‘true’ team global sport that has the ability to keep students active and engaged in PE classes.
History of Netball

In 1892 James Naismith’s basketball rules for women were adapted by gymnastics instructor Senda Berenson Abbott and she introduces the game to her students at Smith College, Massachusetts (O’Reilly & Cahn, 2007). This version of the game was called women’s basketball. Berenson solved the question of overtaxing the women physically by dividing the court into three equal sections and requiring players to stay in their assigned section. Thus, the players could not run all over the court and become exhausted. She justified the three-section court because it encouraged team play. To assure womanly play Berenson prohibited players from snatching or batting the ball from the hands of another player. To increase the pace of the game, players were not permitted to hold the ball for longer than three seconds and they could not bounce or dribble the ball more than three times. It wasn’t until the 1960’s that this version of the game was changed to the name of ‘Netball’. The sport of Netball has taken off through the Commonwealth countries. It is currently played semi-professionally in the top four ranked netball countries in the world: Australia, New Zealand, England and Jamaica. However, the United States has never made it into the top four in the world. Even though Netball has been played in the USA for 40 years, several organizations have failed to get Americans playing the sport. Netball America is the leading authority on Netball in the United States and they are focused on showing how Netball creates an exciting atmosphere of participation and supports individual progress, team
unity, good health and education of youth. They also provide young people with the opportunity to learn Netball and then progress through a pathway to either recreational play or elite Netball.

Netball America’s aim is to encourage children and families to be physically active, maintain a healthy lifestyle and includes those with disabilities to ensure they feel part of their community. Netball America’s Be An Inspiration Program™ falls in line with SHAPE America’s National Standards & Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education (2014). The national standards identify the skills and knowledge necessary to support the development of physically literate individuals: those who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of physical activity.

Netball America seeks to have Netball included as part of the core curriculum for educational systems throughout the USA as a way of promoting good health and aiding in the education of youth. Netball America runs clinics and education programs throughout the USA to get youth moving; reduce obesity and provide opportunities to underserved youth through inclusive strategies for all. They are also the first Netball organization to have introduced Netball into core USA education curriculums. Miami-Dade County Schools, under the leadership of Dr. Jayne Greenberg, District Director, was the first school district to have Netball introduced to their teachers at their continuing education day.
Netball provides a platform in PE with many benefits. Netball is a team orientated sport; and a wide range of positions suits all ability levels, played at any age by both males and females and it is a cost-effective sport to implement and maintain. It is also a great way to enhance youths hand/eye coordination skills and teaches them on space awareness and body control. Playing Netball requires you to run around the court, sprint short distances and change direction quickly.

Implementing netball into a PE curriculum is relatively painless as many students have already been provided with opportunities to play similar sports such as basketball, handball and ultimate Frisbee. These ‘sister sports’ allow students to make cognitive connections with more familiar activities. Considering this, the sport provides an opportunity for students learn a new game on a level playing field. Thus, all students learning the game at the same time gives students a fairer chance to succeed.

Netball is an inherently fair sport due its inclusivity; the court is split into three zones and the ball has to be passed and touched in each zone, therefore everyone has to actively contribute to the scoring of the game. This is achieved as the ball must to be passed to other players and must be touched in each of the thirds before one of the two goal shooters can shoot for goal. Consequently, all players are of equal value and importance within the game as each one has a designated role. The various roles are restricted within areas of the court and this creates a group environment where teamwork skills are vital.
Implementation

When implementing the game of netball teachers should consider the students in front of them and set up games that support student success and allow students to make direct connections. An example recommended by Clancy, Portman, & Bowersock (2007) in their Netball article was: pass the ball like you would a basketball. Teachers might also consider the instructional model used to teach netball, we recommend teaching netball through the Teaching Games for Understanding Model or Sport Education. An outline and more information on these models can be found in Metzler (2005). Ultimately our reasoning for this is to increase student activity levels, promote an authentic sporting experience and promote teamwork in which each model promotes.

Set up

The equipment is easy to setup and portable and can be used indoors, outdoors and even on grassy flat surfaces. The equipment is also adjustable for different age levels. A netball court is 100 feet by 50 feet; divided into three areas (thirds) with two goal circles, The court can be seen in Figure 1. Most gymnasiums in the United States have a basketball court, this can easily be adapted and marked out using painters tape. Refer Figure 2 for a picture of a basketball court marked up.

Figure 1: The Netball Court and Playing Positions
Figure 2: FISU World University Netball Championships 2016 organized by Netball America and held at St. Thomas University, Miami, Florida.

There are seven individuals on a netball team and each player must remain in their assigned playing areas and have specific roles. That being said, they can rotate during interval periods. You can also have players learn to umpire as two umpires (one of each side of the court) is also needed. Figure one identifies the positions along with their role and the zone they are assigned to.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RULE</th>
<th>EXPLANATION</th>
<th>INFRINGEMENT / RULE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact</strong></td>
<td>No player may contact an opponent, either accidentally or deliberately touch another player.</td>
<td>Penalty pass to opposing team = against a player therefore the infringer may not take part in play until the ball has been released or make any attempt to intercept the penalty pass. Anyone can take the penalty pass in that area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Obstruction</strong></td>
<td>A player must stand 3ft from the player with the ball.</td>
<td>Penalty pass to opposing team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Footwork</strong></td>
<td>Having caught the ball, a player may land or stand on: one foot - while landing foot remains grounded, the second foot may be moved anywhere, pivoting on the landing foot if desired. Once the landing foot is lifted, it must not be re-grounded until the ball is released; or two feet (simultaneously) – once one foot is moved, the other is considered to be the landing foot, as just stated. Hopping or dragging the landing foot is not allowed.</td>
<td>Free pass to opposing team: Any player allowed in that area may take the free pass. The infringer does not have to stand where the infringement happened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Playing the ball</strong></td>
<td>Once the ball is caught it must be passed or shot within 3 seconds. A player who has caught the ball may not bounce or drop the ball and replay it.</td>
<td>Free pass to opposing team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Offside</strong></td>
<td>Player moving out of own area, with or without ball (on a line counts as within either area)</td>
<td>Free pass to opposing team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Over a third</strong></td>
<td>Ball may not be thrown over two transverse lines without being touched.</td>
<td>Free pass to opposing team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Out of Court</strong></td>
<td>The ball is out of court when it contacts anything outside the court area (not the goal post). The ball is returned into play by a throw-in taken from a point outside the line where the ball left the court. The player stands with foot close to the line</td>
<td>Throw in within 3 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scoring</strong></td>
<td>Each goal is worth one point only and must be shot within the goal circle.</td>
<td>Only the GA and GS can score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Starting the game</strong></td>
<td>The game is started (and restarted after each goal) with a centre pass from the centre circle which must be received in the centre third</td>
<td>If the centre pass is not received in the centre third a free pass is given to the other team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Simultaneous contact/fouls</strong></td>
<td>Toss-up between players at a height no more than two feet above the shorter person’s shoulders. Ball may be caught or batted.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

Netball might seem daunting to many teachers to implement in their curriculum and many may think where can I start? A Netball resource was created for the Shape America National Conference in Boston outlining sessions for implementation and can be found on Netball America’s website. Help is always at hand from Netball America and you can contact them at Info@NetballAmerica.com to organize clinics for schools and PE teachers. Teaching netball can effectively promote sport-related motor development concepts, physical activity levels and cultural awareness. Furthermore, with support from Netball America it can provide recreational and elite opportunities for students who have a passion for the sport. Lastly, as the spirit of netball is inclusive it increases teamwork and collaboration between students which is needed now more than ever to provide an engaging curriculum to our students.

Note: Netball America’s website is http://www.netballamerica.com/ or contact Sonya Ottaway at President@NetballAmerica.com.
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138  Netball America website: www.NetballAmerica.com

139  Notes about contributors

140  Shrehan Lynch is a doctoral student at the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa.

141  Sonya Ottaway is the President and Founder of Netball America Inc.