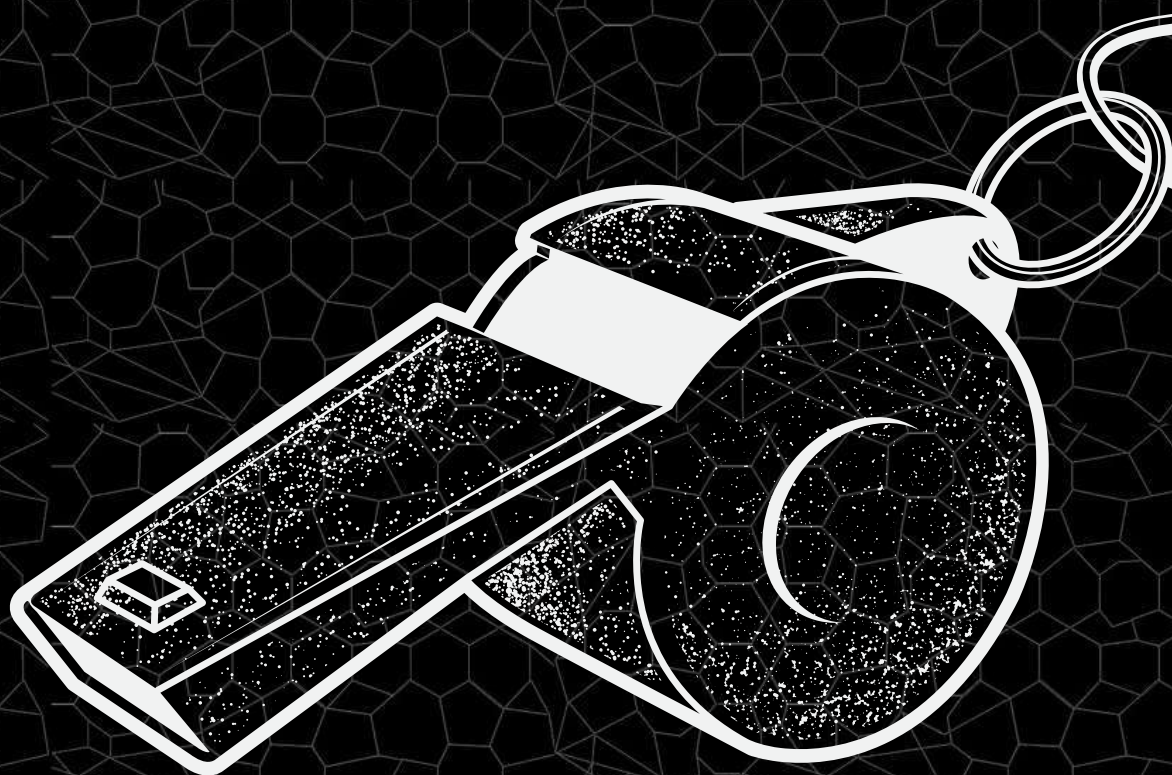


PE BUDDY

# Thrive In Your First Five



A new **PE Teacher's guidebook** for ~~surviving~~ thriving in the first 5 years of teaching. Tips from real PE Teachers from around the world.



# What's in this eBook?

We've gathered the wisdom of 10 amazing PE Teachers from the global PE Buddy community, with a combined experience of 186 years, to equip you with some game-changing tips and strategies to help you not only survive but thrive in your first five years of teaching PE!

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THRIVE IN YOUR FIRST FIVE.



## CHAPTER 1

# Building the Foundation

*Just like the base of support in biomechanics, the bigger your foundation the harder it is to knock you down! Teaching is NO different.*



# *This could be the most important thing you read ...*

Hey, I'm Jamie! I just finished my first 5 years of teaching Physical Education. And boy, oh boy, what a rollercoaster it was! Amazing? Yes. Hardest thing I've ever done? At times, yes. The goal of this eBook is simple: to share some insights, tips, and strategies from myself and 10 other PE Teachers from all over the world to help you not just survive but thrive in your first 5 years (and avoid being among the 1 in 2 teachers who leave the profession within that timeframe). If you're just starting out and are unprepared, your first 5 years could look something like this:

- **WORKING NIGHTS, WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS**
- **BEING PERPETUALLY STRESSED**
- **SAYING YES TO EVERYTHING**
- **HAVING NO RESOURCES**
- **HAVING NO SOCIAL LIFE**
- **HAVING NO WORK-LIFE BALANCE**
- **WORKING AT SEVERAL DIFFERENT SCHOOLS**
- **LOVING TEACHING BUT ALSO HATING TEACHING**



Now, your experience may be *totally* different, but I highly doubt it! This is the reality for most new teachers, and it is not changing fast. Everyone wants to do a good job when they start, and *everyone* sacrifices their own health, well-being, time, and pretty much everything else to achieve it. But not you! **No, you're reading this eBook and therefore are way ahead of 99% of other PE teachers.** So, enjoy, study, take notes, and pick and choose any nuggets of gold that you find useful. I guarantee they will help!

Ps, here's a bit more about me, the random bloke in the terrible profile photo above who looks both exhausted yet buzzed on caffeine at the same time:

- *I'm from Australia!*
- *Husband and father*
- *Soccer addict, coffee addict, beach addict*
- *Completed my Bachelor of Exercise & Sport Science and then Master of Teaching with the Leadership Development Program through Teach for Australia*
- *Taught at 3 difference schools so far and have been Head of PE at 2 of them*
- *Founder of PE Buddy - with over 20,000 PE Teacher members and approaching 1,000,000 views on YouTube with 200+ PE resources created and shared so far*
- *I'm just an ordinary PE Teacher but I think we can do things better, don't you?*
- *I'd love to connect on LinkedIn!*



# *Your teacher toolbox*

Just like a builder, every teacher needs **quality tools** to do the job well. When I started teaching in 2019, one of the first things I searched for were YouTube videos. But very few were to be found! So I started making them myself for my own students and eventually uploaded them to YouTube to see what happened. Pretty soon, teachers from all over the world were using them! So I thought I'd continue to create more resources to make life even easier for other PE Teachers just like you. Because, like me, most new teachers have no resources, no ideas, no videos, and nowhere to go to find them. That's exactly why PE Buddy exists! **So here are a few things to fill your teacher toolbox:**

## 1. RESOURCES

Resources are the cornerstone of quality teaching. Without them, life is very difficult, especially for new teachers. PLEASE don't fall into the trap of wasting precious time creating these yourself (because they already exist!). **Instead, invest in your own stash of resources that you can take wherever you go.** And don't rely on resources provided by your school, because when you move, they stay and you have to start from scratch. Think about your own time as though you are getting paid, so 1 hour working at home is valued at \$43 on an average Australian teaching wage. So, invest this money in resources instead! Join our [free shared resource drive](#), find individual resources on our [TPT page](#) or get 50% off ALL of our [200+ resources](#) included in Membership with code **FREE50**.

## 2. PE IDEAS

Thinking of new PE ideas is tough! Students get bored VERY quickly when simply playing sports. **It is a great idea to keep students engaged by incorporating variety and different versions of sports and activities with specific outcomes or goals.** There are several free [PE ideas](#) in our blog (all 52 included in [Membership](#)) and more free PDF's in our [shared resource drive](#). But in general, a good pattern of progression to follow for teaching any new sport is:

1. Introduce key skills (limit to 3)
2. Allow practice time for key skills
3. Introduce 'fun' competition with possession activities and mini games that focus on 1 of the skills
4. Progress to a full game that incorporates all focus skills
5. Repeat
6. (Or, reverse this process for a more game sense style approach!)

## 3. VIDEOS

**Kids love videos.** Fact. They are a great way to hook students into content, teach concepts, review information and much more. But finding GOOD videos is the real trick. I struggled with this big time when I first started, which is one of the reasons I started making my own. PE Buddy's [YouTube channel](#) has 250+ free videos covering most major topics from curriculums around the world and we are quickly approaching 1,000,000 views!

## 4. LESSON PLANS

**This is your bread and butter.** A good lesson plan will not only achieve the curriculum objectives, guide the lesson and set your students up for success, it will also reduce 90% of behaviour management issues. Here are 15 free lesson plans to get you started on a variety of common theoretical and practical topics. [Check them out now!](#)





# *Get the right gear*

I still remember rocking up to my first teaching placement without a whistle. My mentor was horrified, and for good reason! **Equipping yourself with the right gear will make your life SO much easier and teaching more effective.** A lot of new teachers fall into the trap of trying to get by with the bare minimum. FORGET THAT! Invest in your own success and don't be afraid to spend a bit of money early on. Just like setting up a business, setting up your teaching career takes upfront costs to ensure future wins (**plus most of it is tax deductible!**). The following list of items are things that I LOVE and have tried and tested over the years, plus I've included some Amazon links to save time:

### 1. SUPPORTIVE SHOES

This should be your first major purchase! If you're anything like me you'll be clocking up 10,000+ steps each day, easily. Therefore a supportive shoe is a MUST. I personally love the [New Balance Roav's](#), I've tried pretty much every big brand and these are by-far the comfiest (and also look awesome). Whatever you choose, make sure it is supportive! Also don't be afraid to go purchase 2-3 pairs a year, they wear out. Compliment these with some padded, breathable sports socks and you'll be laughing.

### 2. A SMARTWATCH

This is a must-have! Your next big purchase should be a smartwatch. Why? Stopwatch, heart rate, timing, steps, music control, reminders, phone connectivity, weather ... the list goes on. In short, you need one! I've tried a couple over the years. Garmin was pretty good, FitBit was ok, but I am now rocking the [Apple Watch](#) and loving it! (More specifically, the Apple Watch SEE 44mm - the cheapest decent entry level version).

### 3. A WHISTLE

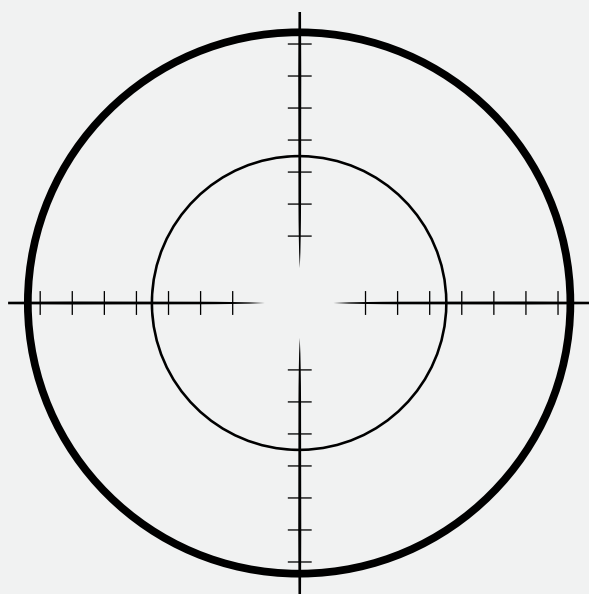
As I mentioned earlier, every PE teacher NEEDS a whistle. Now there are a few different types. Firstly, your traditional blow whistle is great but does pose a risk of transferring germs; the best is the [Fox40](#). Other more germ-smart options include [squeeze whistles](#) and [electronic whistles](#). Personally, I love the squeeze whistle, it's fun! And I've gone about 3 years without getting significantly sick so something is working!

### 4. SUN SMART STUFF

Get yourself a good pair of polarised sunglasses! One of the perks of our job is plenty of outdoor time and one of the risks of our job is plenty of outdoor time. The balance here is to get an effective pair that doesn't cost much because you WILL lose them, guaranteed ([These ones](#) are a good option). The same goes with a hat! Now it is a good idea to role model sun safety with a broad brimmed hat (Like a Bunnings hat) but [truckers caps](#) are great too. Skin cancer is no joke, in Australia 2/3 people will get it by age 60. Please look after yourselves!

### 5. A GOOD DEODORANT

Lastly, no one likes a smelly PE Teacher! Because we are so active, the risk of sweat and body odour is real. Don't be that teacher! There are plenty of great deodorants out there but I highly recommend [No Pong](#)! It's natural, cheap and works ridiculously well. And it's a balm, much better than asthma-inducing aerosol sprays. Please don't use Linx Africa, you're not a year 8 boy!



# *Setting Goals*

## FORGET ABOUT GOALS\*

Everyone needs a goal, right? Well, with everything that is happening during your first few years of teaching, your only goal is probably going to be to make it through each day in one piece! So, what is the point of half-committing to a single goal for the year, especially if it is forced by your school? **\*Instead, focus on doing the small things well:** developing positive relationships, planning good lessons, setting high expectations, following up and having fun! This will produce FAR better results in the long run. Think about these as the 1%er's - small things, big impact. And once you've mastered these, you can start zoning in on specific goals for improvement.

## FORGET ABOUT CLIMBING THE LADDER\*

Where do you want to head in your teaching career? Do you aspire to leadership? Do you dream of traveling while teaching? Do you aim to become Head of PE? **Whatever your long-term goals are, FORGET about them in your first 5 years.** Yes, that's right! This was one of the best pieces of advice that I was given but completely ignored. **\*The rationale is to give yourself enough time to focus on actually becoming an AMAZING teacher without the distractions and HUGE stress of leadership roles.** It is far better to become an exceptional teacher than be average at multiple roles. While the lure of increased pay and responsibility is tempting, ALL leadership roles take you away from the classroom: meaning more meetings, more stress, more admin, less dodgeball!

## THIS SHOULD BE YOUR GOAL

Having said all that, your ultimate goal should be ... **EFFICIENCY!**

**The best possible teaching achieved with the minimal possible time and effort.**

Why? Because this is the only way to be both effective AND sustainable.

If you strive for the best possible teaching regardless of the time, effort and personal sacrifice you use to achieve this (like most do) - you'll end up burnt out and leave the profession like 50% of teachers after 5 years: pretty much guaranteed.

If you focus on only giving the bare minimum, then you'll produce poor teaching which will probably lead to more work and stress in the long run when sub-par preparation, behaviour management and performance catches up with you.

The aim is to strike a balance of **both**. Think about the **law of diminishing returns**. There comes a point whereby no extra time, planning or work will produce ANY positive impact on your students. The real art is identifying this point and being bold enough to honour it. NEVER spend more time planning a lesson than it takes to deliver it.





# Mindset Matters

## FAKE IT UNTIL YOU MAKE IT

If you've spent even 1 week in a classroom, you could write a book about it. **Fact.** You learn so much as a teacher when you actually start teaching. By now, you've probably realised that most of what you learned at university is not relevant AT ALL to what happens in the classroom. Perfectly crafted lesson plans often mean nothing when kids and teenagers are involved. Adaptability is key. So come in with a mindset that you already are an amazing teacher/human being who can handle anything that is thrown your way. Fake it until you make it! Why? **Because most kids have no idea who has just started teaching and who has been around for years and years; they only care about being cared about.**

## YOU ARE A CONTRACTOR, NOT AN EMPLOYEE

If you hire a plumber, do they expect all the necessary tools to be provided at every job? Of course not! They own everything they need. Teaching should be no different! 99% of you will work at more than one school in your teaching career. **Fact.** So what does this mean? Well, apart from having to re-learn different school management systems, values, behaviour management flowcharts and 1000 other things when you move, you need to see yourself as a teaching contractor from day 1, not simply an employee of the school you are at. This means a few things. **Firstly, as a teaching contractor you need to have a personal resource stash and not rely on your school's resources.** Why? Because, as I mentioned before, when you move, the resources stay and are the property of the school, not you. **Secondly, if you are not happy with your school, move!** This is a tough thing to do as a new teacher. It takes guts! Teaching is hard work, but there are a few red flags that warrant seeking a new gig: poor leadership, lack of consequences for student behaviour and/or no support or mentorship for you. There is plenty of work out there!

## DEMAND WORK/LIFE BALANCE FROM DAY 1

**Ok, this is controversial .... A good night's sleep and under-preparing for a class is better than a late night spent over-preparing for a class.** Boom. What do you think? New teachers will probably disagree. Veteran teachers will wholeheartedly agree. The moral of the story is that you **MUST** be physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy to be an effective *and* sustainable teacher. **My ultimate goal as a teacher is efficiency: to be the best possible PE teacher with the minimal possible time and effort.** What does this look like practically? It means striving to **NEVER** work at home during my nights, weekends, and holidays. This is MY time. This also means that I need to set firm boundaries at school in order to get the work done there instead. So, limit pointless chit-chat with colleagues, social media scrolling and extra-curricular activities (committees, lunchtime activities etc) that you are not paid for or are not in your role description. Firm boundaries during school time means effective teaching **AND** freedom, fun, family time, hobbies, and good times outside of school hours - for years and years to come!



THRIVE IN YOUR FIRST FIVE.

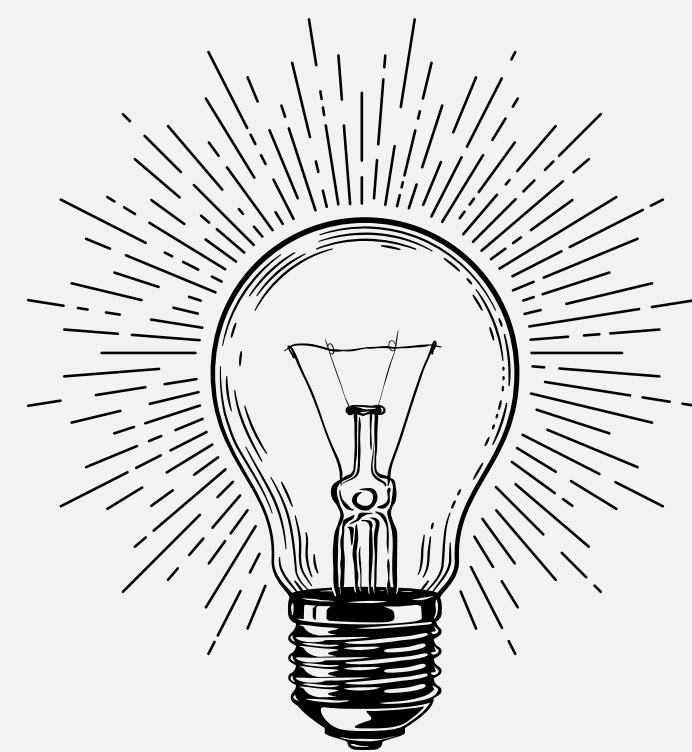


CHAPTER 2

# PE tips from PE Teachers

*Learn from 10 amazing PE Teachers from around the world who are part of the PE Buddy online community. Join our [Facebook group](#) for resources, ideas and networking!*





# Tip #1

## Teach out of who you are!

There are a lot of amazing teachers in all different subjects that you will be able to learn from, but just because something works for them, it doesn't mean it will for you. You have to teach out of who you are naturally, otherwise you will exhaust yourself trying to be someone else, which is robbing energy from you putting into your students. You also don't have to get it right first time, in fact, you won't. But that doesn't matter, be honest with yourself and your students. If you make a mistake, own up to it and deal with it openly - students pick up on these things and being open with them will go a long way to building relationships with them. If you hit a homerun, celebrate it and build on it with the students. Relationships are essential for any subject, but without the constraint of a classroom, your relationship with your PE students becomes the centrepiece for a successful class, both in behaviour management and delivering content.



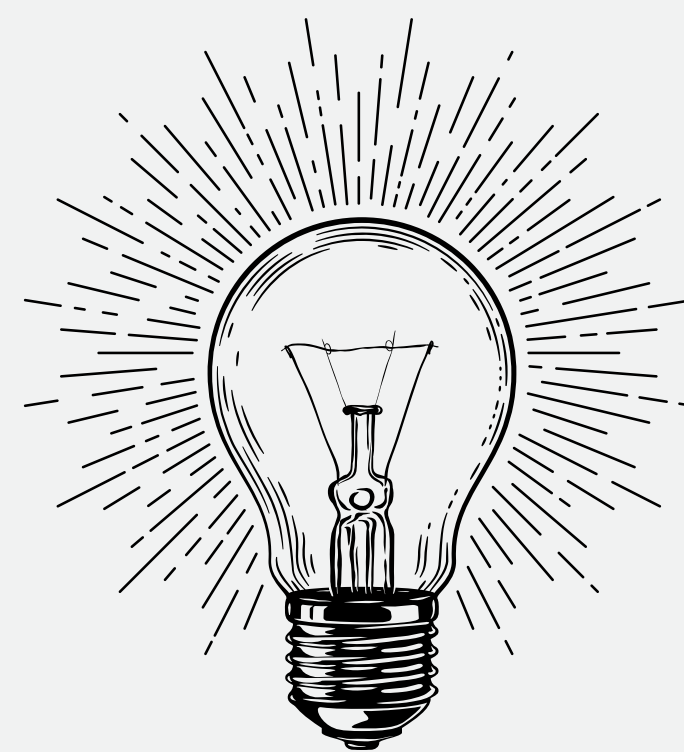
**Teacher Name:** Mr. Hutch

**Country:** Australia

**Years of Teaching:** 4

**Why you became a PE Teacher:** To build relationships with students that thrive outside of the 4 walls of a classroom, so that I can help support them when they struggle in their classrooms.





# Tip #2

## Get students to help you set up!

Allow your students to assist you with the equipment for the lesson. They love to help and it is a good way to get them involved in the game/skills that you are teaching. Ask students to help with setting up markers, getting balls/bats out and helping to pack away. Most students love it when you chat with them whilst setting things up for the lesson or packing away. It helps to build positive relationships with your students.



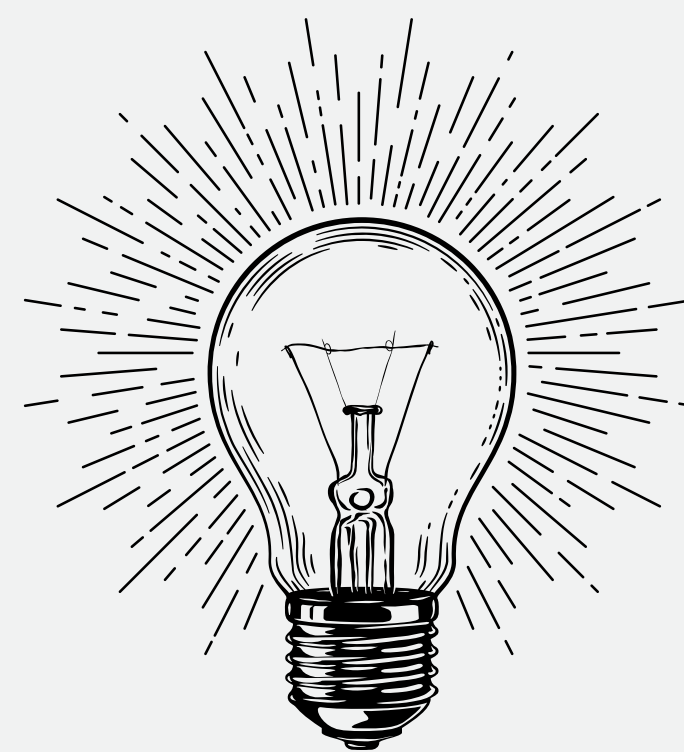
**Teacher Name:** Ray Field

**Country:** Australia

**Years of Teaching:** 20+

**Why you became a PE Teacher:** Love of sports and enjoying being outside





# Tip #3

### Say what you mean and mean what you say!

Lay your expectations out in writing, never waver from them but apply them individually according to each child's personal needs. Never play favourites, hold all according to the same standards and you should rarely need to if ever raise your voice other than to be heard in the gym or outside. Also, never use a cageball in PE despite the fun. Serious accidents can and do happen even to you no matter your safety rules and enforcement.



**Teacher Name:** Carrie J Klempel

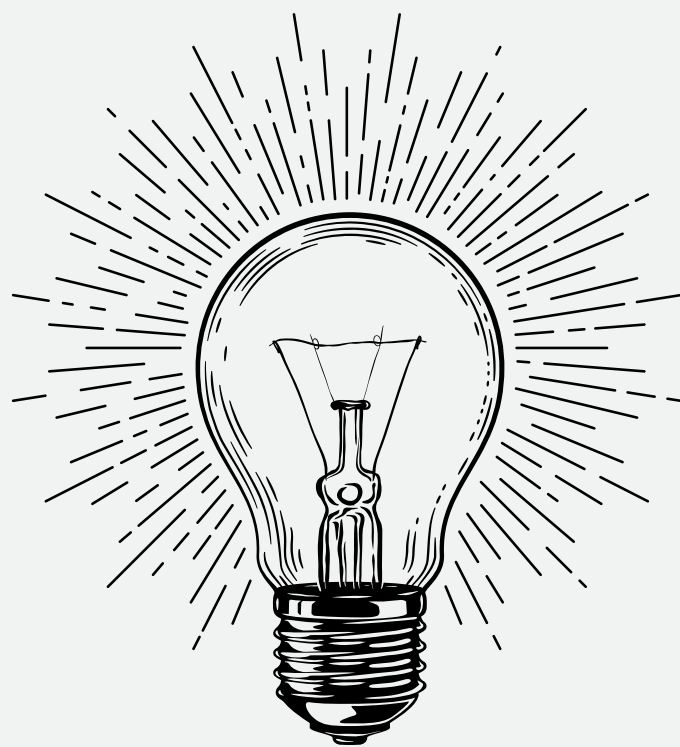
**Country:** USA

**Years of Teaching:** 27

**Why you became a PE Teacher:** I Love working with kids and teaching Healthy Decision Making Skills

**LinkedIn:** [Carrie J Klempel](#)





# Tip #4

## Enjoy the journey!

Be patient and understand children are exposed to all different things and always show new sports and games. Don't be afraid if children reject it. Children are honest creatures and they will tell you what they think.



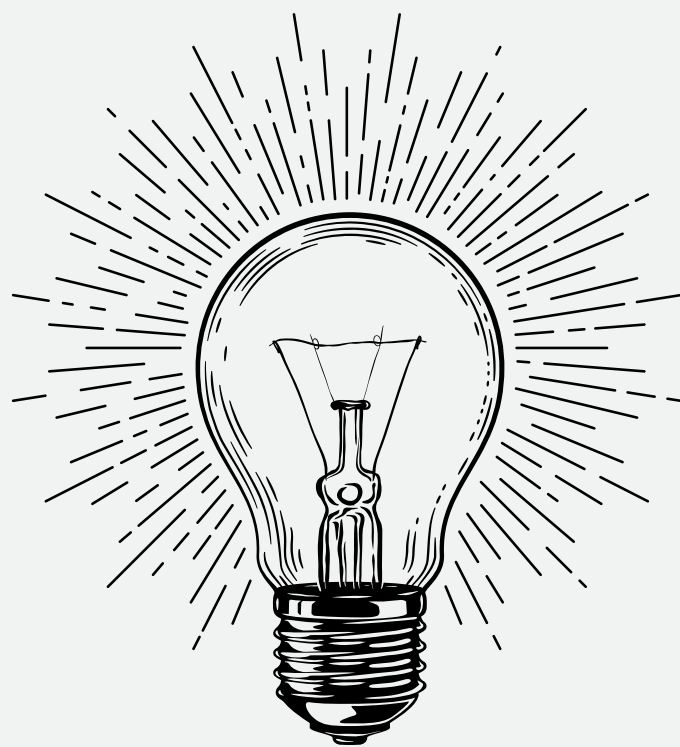
**Teacher Name:** Gigi Graham

**Country:** USA

**Years of Teaching:** 17+

**Why you became a PE Teacher:** Because I like to learn.





# Tip #5

## Find a great mentor!

As soon as you decide to become a physical education teacher, find a great mentor and keep learning from them. Take all the great ideas and lessons you can find from mentors and make them fit your situation. Smile and be exciting every day!



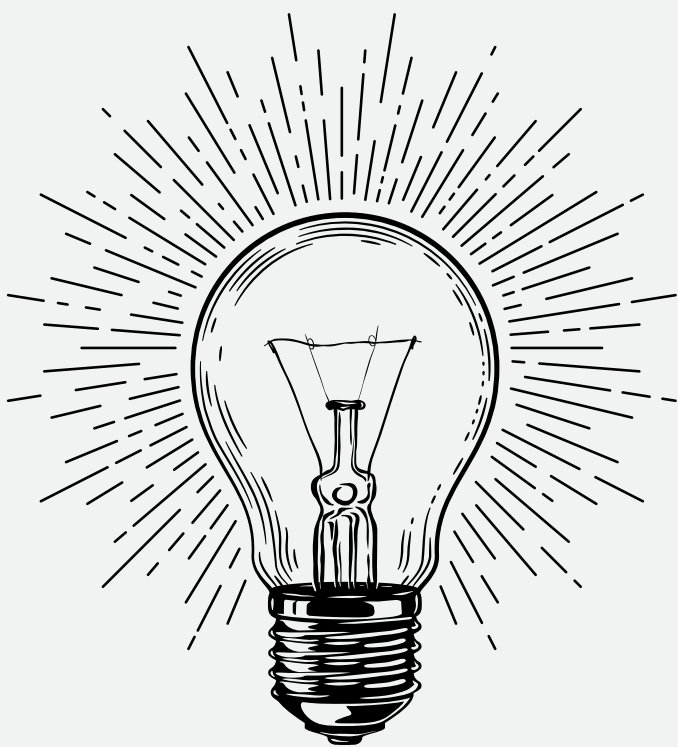
**Teacher Name:** John L Smith

**Country:** USA

**Years of Teaching:** 45

**Why you became a PE Teacher:** Love of teaching through activities.





# Tip #6

## Empower your students with positivity!

Set high expectations for students and allow the students to be problem solvers and build confidence by doing, trying, and improving. Manage groups in a positive way by looking for positive reinforcement to seek what you are trying to convey to students



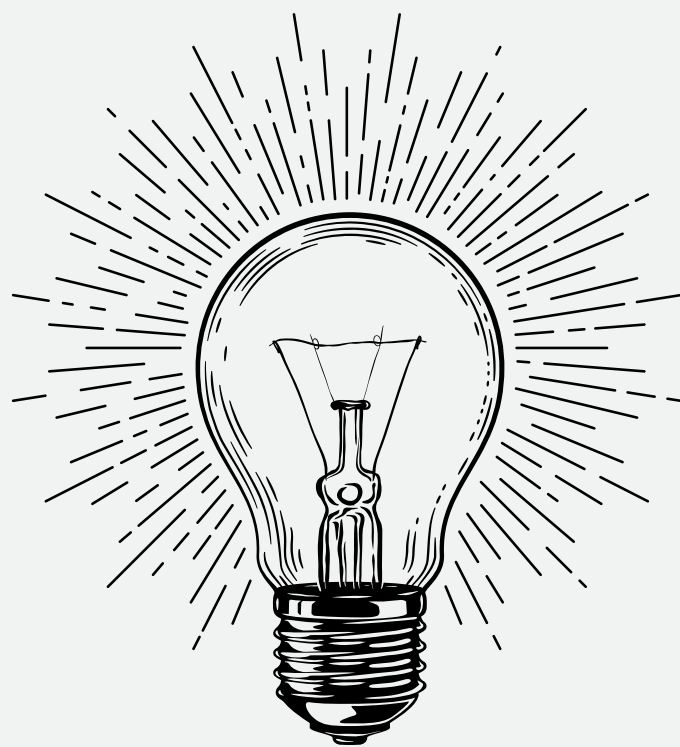
**Teacher Name:** Andrew Graham

**Country:** USA

**Years of Teaching:** 23

**Why you became a PE Teacher:** To inspire the desire to be healthy in children.





# Tip #7

## Establish relationships!

THE most important tip for new PE teachers is: establish relationships. Build relationships with your students, faculty, community, and other PE teachers.



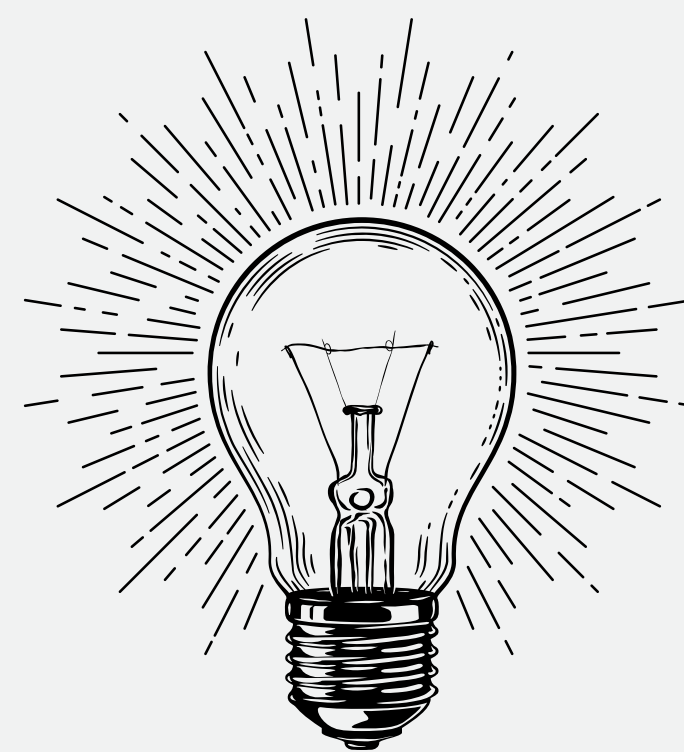
**Teacher Name:** Muhammad Shariq Siddiqui

**Country:** Pakistan

**Years of Teaching:** 27

**Why you became a PE Teacher:** I enjoy being a P.E Teacher





# Tip #8

## You come first!

Take time out for you. Do stuff for you. Look after you. As a dad of 4 (12, 11, 4 & 4) my time is very limited. I found myself being stressed and irritated. Having time to do something for myself meant I could reset and have a breather.



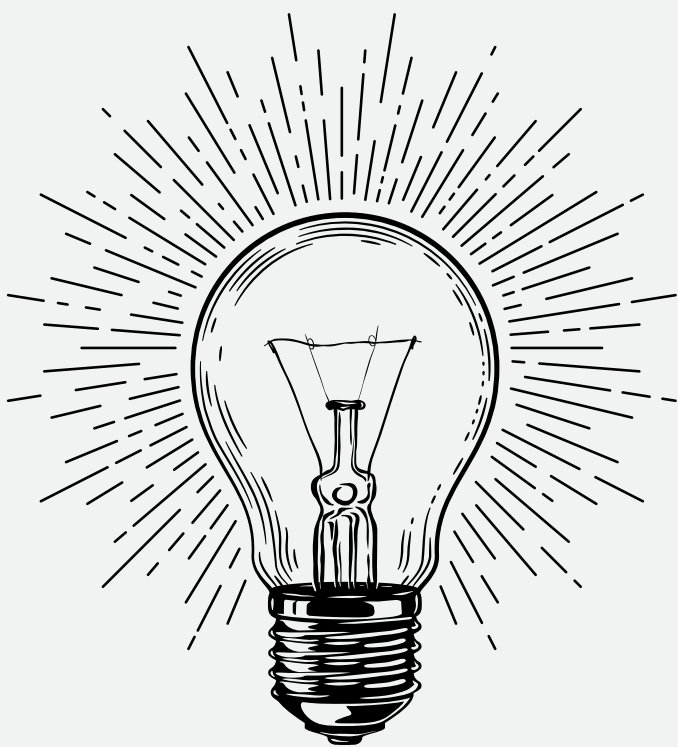
**Teacher Name:** Uncle Mol

**Country:** Australia

**Years of Teaching:** 10

**Why you became a PE Teacher:** To guide sporty students to be their best





# Tip #9

## Adaptation is key!

Adapt how you teach skills and game play. Constantly find a way to make skill development fun through different strategies. Establish a culture in your class that skills are important for enjoying the game. With that, allow for mistakes and remind the students we need to be bad before we can alright. Also, be involved more! Make mistakes and let the kids make fun of you. Breaking those barriers help in PE, we have a special job where our interaction with students are way more personable. Don't take yourself too serious.



**Teacher Name:** Taylor

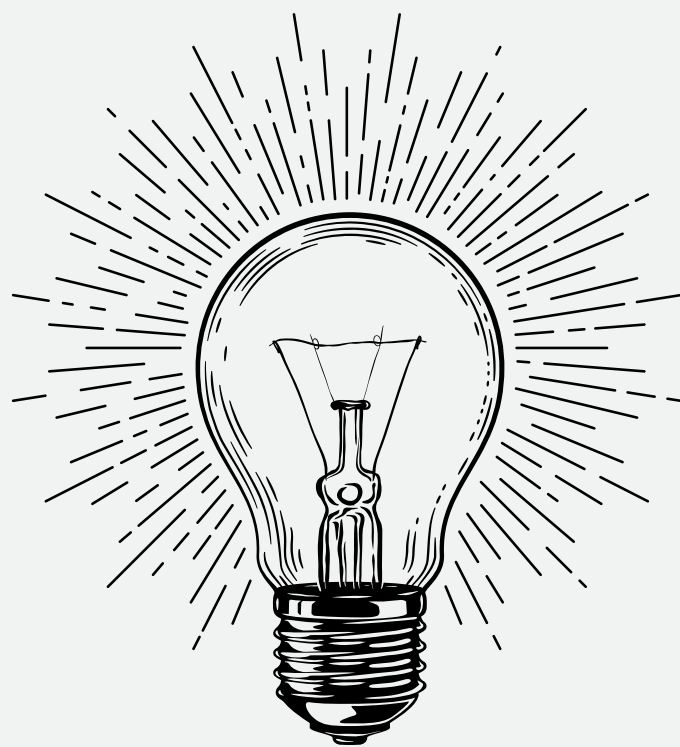
**Country:** Australia

**Years of Teaching:** 4

**Why you became a PE Teacher:** Passion for coaching, mentoring and development

**LinkedIn:** [Taylor Geracitano-Smith](#)





# Tip #10

## Get students to ‘lift the weights!’

You can’t get fit by watching someone else lift weights! In the same way I try to get students involved as much as possible in lessons! I love getting students to umpire their peers to develop leadership and empathy for real umpires, I get students to pack up equipment to develop responsibility, I leave students in charge of making equal teams to develop fairness and I get students to provide constructive feedback to each other to encourage metacognition on key skills. This requires initial scaffolding and modelling from you but makes life so much easier in the long run, and students often thrive when given responsibility and treated as adults!



**Teacher Name:** Mr D

**Country:** Australia

**Years of Teaching:** 6

**Why you became a PE Teacher:** Sport has given me so much in my life and I wanted to give this gift to the next generation!



THRIVE IN YOUR FIRST FIVE.

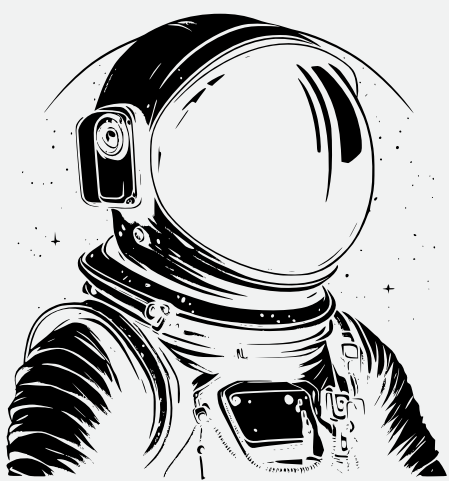


## CHAPTER 3

# Some bonus tips for future-proofing

*Teaching (and the world in general) will look VERY different in 5 years, And if you're one of the 50% of educators still teaching by then, here's how to prepare.*





# Future-proof yourself

## WHAT WILL TEACHING LOOK LIKE IN 5 YEARS?

This eBook is all about equipping you with nuggets of gold from experienced teachers to help you thrive (and survive) your first 5 years of teaching PE. But with the speed of change and progress in our world right now, what will teaching look like in 5 years time?

Here are some predictions and how to prepare:

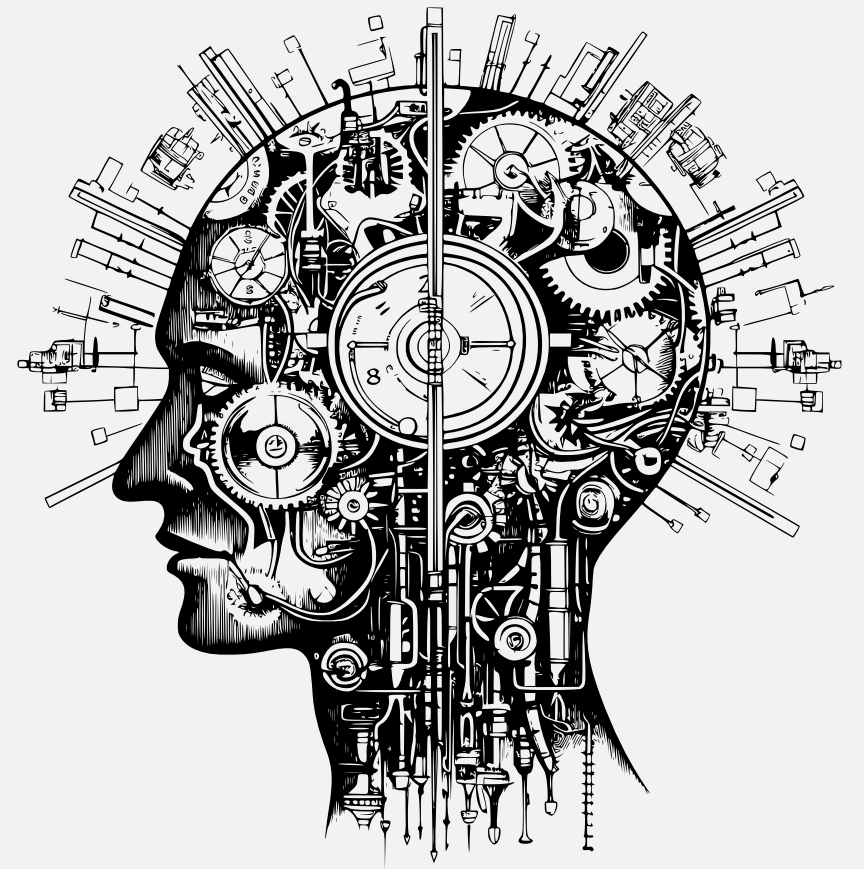
- **Rapid Integration of Technology:** Expect to see more technology like Virtual Reality (VR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in classrooms and schools, making learning more interactive and engaging. Start using [ChatGPT](#) (your students are!) or [ChatGPE](#).
- **Teacher Shortage Crisis:** The ongoing shortage of teachers may lead to innovative solutions such as alternative certification programs, increased support for teacher retention, and leveraging technology for teaching assistance. Use this to your advantage! Undoubtedly, education departments around the world will lower the bar for teaching entry into university and offer more incentives. This means more teachers of a lower quality. If you are even a semi-decent teacher, you will be able to get a job ANYWHERE! Use this to negotiate for better pay, conditions, and bonuses. You are more valuable than gold!
- **Increased Need for Health & Movement:** With technology, the COVID hangover, and inactivity adversely affecting the world's kids and teenagers, the need for us PE Teachers should increase and (hopefully/finally) be recognised for the invaluable contribution that our work has on academic performance, wellbeing, health, and longevity. Unfortunately, PE Teachers have been 'bottom of the teaching barrel' for too long; with English, Maths, and Science getting all the priority, funding, and focus. Don't accept it! Stand up for our domain and let the results speak for themselves.
- **Improved Conditions for Teachers:** Around Australia (and I suspect the rest of the world as well) teachers are having their face-to-face teaching time reduced, personal planning time increased, requirement for covering extra classes eliminated and better compensation for additional work including camps, excursions and event organisation. This is good! HOPEFULLY this pattern continues! But what does this mean for you? It means you should stay up-to-date with what is happening at surrounding schools, districts and states and use this as accountability for your own agreement and school policies. Joining a union can also be a great way to ensure you are being treated fairly!

**To summarise: you'll need to get your head around AI, you'll be able to get a job anywhere and hopefully PE teachers will start to gain the respect we deserve!**



# More on AI

**Artificial Intelligence (AI)** has emerged as one of the biggest technological leaps forward in human history, just ask Elon Musk! It is defined as the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, like a nerdy genie in a bottle!



Whether you like it or not, it is here to stay. Most teachers are using it, most students are using it. Depending on which data set you look at, an estimated 50% of students have or are using AI regularly. But most of them are using it wrong. We should be teaching students how to use it in the **LEARNING PROCESS** not the **ASSESSMENT PROCESS**. Anyone can ask ChatGPT to generate a biomechanical analysis of a soccer kick in 30 seconds. But how does that help learning? However, asking ChatGPT to tutor you, explain concepts and give personalised feedback on your learning IS good. This is what we should be aiming for; a learning liaison not a plagiarising partner.

But what about teachers? The rules don't apply to us! You should 100% be using it! Why? It will help you produce better teaching with less work: guaranteed. ChatGPT is the big player right now and is good but not super beginner-friendly; if you get slightly off track it is difficult to end up with something useful. So, to make life *even* easier for you, we created ChatGPE: our PE-specific AI tool. It is designed to guide you through the process and help produce personalised resources to suit your individual needs and curriculum! Watch it in action or try it free!

And here are some more AI resources to help you:

- [AI for Teachers article](#)
- [ChatGPT for PE Teachers online course](#)
- [AI for Educators online course](#)
- [ChatGPE: our PE-specific AI tool](#)
- [ChatGPE user videos](#)





# Summary of the good stuff

**As a beginning teacher, your ultimate goal should be EFFICIENCY: to deliver the best possible Physical Education program with the least possible time, effort, and stress.**

Why? A happy teacher is a good teacher, and a good teacher is a sustainable teacher. You should aspire to NEVER work at home during your own, unpaid nights, weekends, and holidays. Achieve this by sourcing resources (don't make them yourself!), leveraging AI, and setting boundaries during school hours to get all your admin done to set yourself up for success (planning, preparation, marking, etc). You are a teaching contractor, not an employee. Ensure you have your own personal resources and work in a school with good leadership, strong behaviour management, and other PE Teachers you respect and can learn from. And MOST of all, enjoy doing the best job in the world and changing the lives of literally hundreds if not thousands of young people along the way!

Here are the 10 tips from our amazing global PE Buddy community:

- ***TIP 1 - TEACH OUT OF WHO YOU ARE!***
- ***TIP 2 - GET STUDENTS TO HELP YOU SET UP!***
- ***TIP 3 - SAY WHAT YOU MEAN AND MEAN WHAT YOU SAY!***
- ***TIP 4 - ENJOY THE JOURNEY!***
- ***TIP 5 - FIND A GREAT MENTOR!***
- ***TIP 6 - EMPOWER YOUR STUDENTS WITH POSITIVITY!***
- ***TIP 7 - ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIPS!***
- ***TIP 8 - YOU COME FIRST!***
- ***TIP 9 - ADAPTATION IS KEY!***
- ***TIP 10 - GET STUDENTS TO LIFT THE WEIGHTS!***

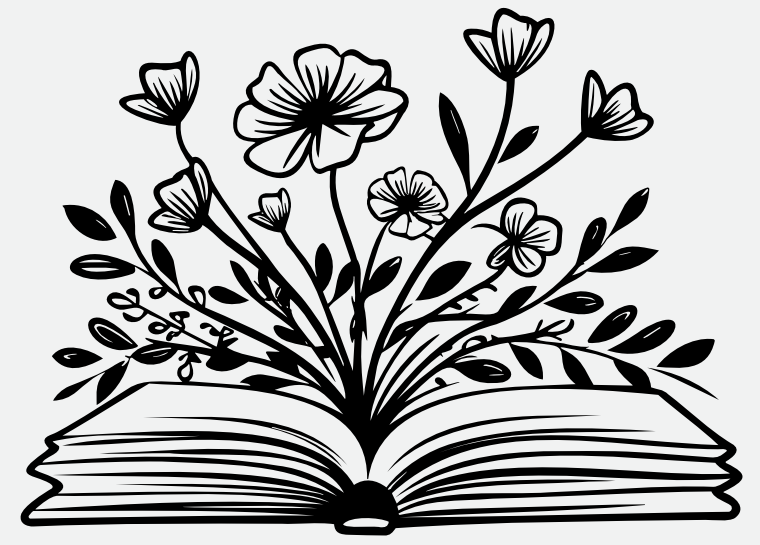
And there you have it, that's all folks! I truly hope you found some value in this eBook. We'd love to hear what you thought of it **here** in order to make it even more useful. Our goal is to get this eBook into the hands of 1000 new PE Teachers around the world! How can you help? **Well, if you enjoyed it PLEASE pay it forward by sending it to any other new PE Teachers at your school or in your network.** Our goal at PE Buddy is to make your life easier and help you teach better PE with less work, so make sure to check out [www.onlinepebuddy.com](http://www.onlinepebuddy.com) for lesson plans, resources, videos, online courses, PE ideas, articles, merchandise and more!

Yours, for the good of PE, now and into the future,

- Jamie De Smit: PE Buddy Founder



# Glossary of resources

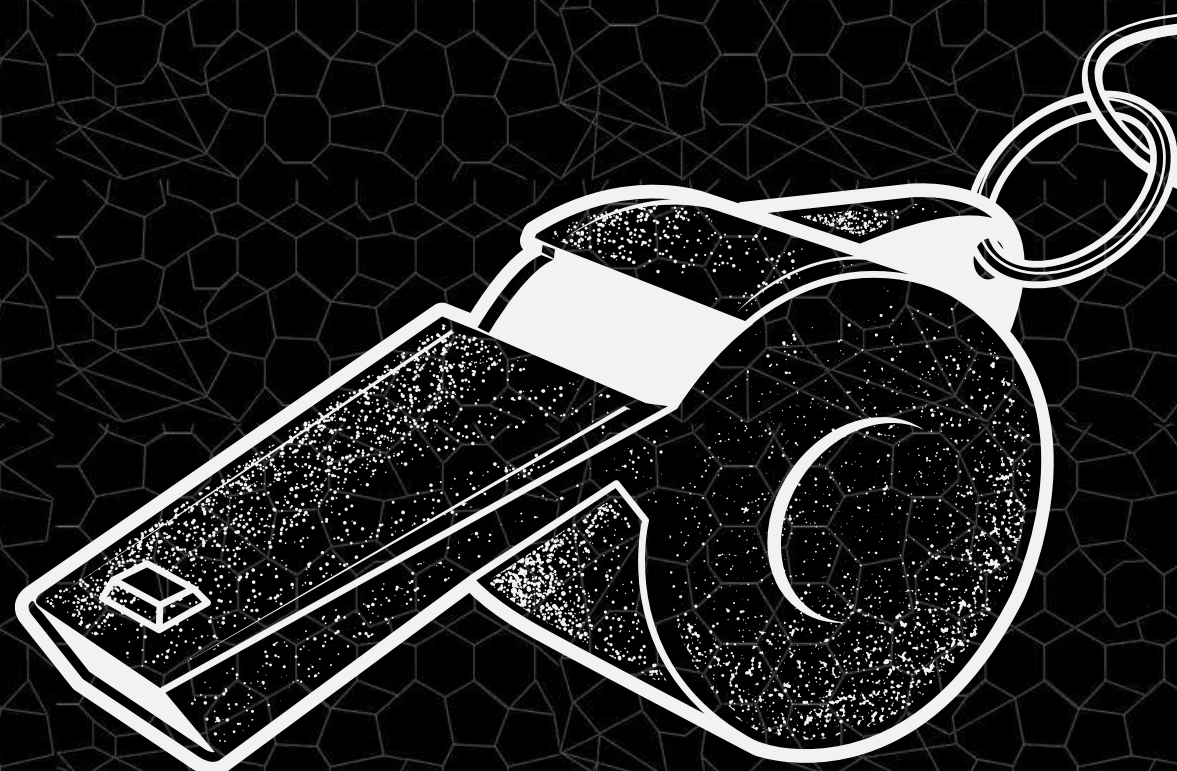


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- PE IDEAS (ALL INCLUDED IN MEMBERSHIP)
- TIKTOK PE IDEAS
- ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ARTICLES
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# Thrive In Your First Five



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