

CANADIAN SKI TEACHING

GETTING STARTED



Canadian Ski Instructors' Alliance



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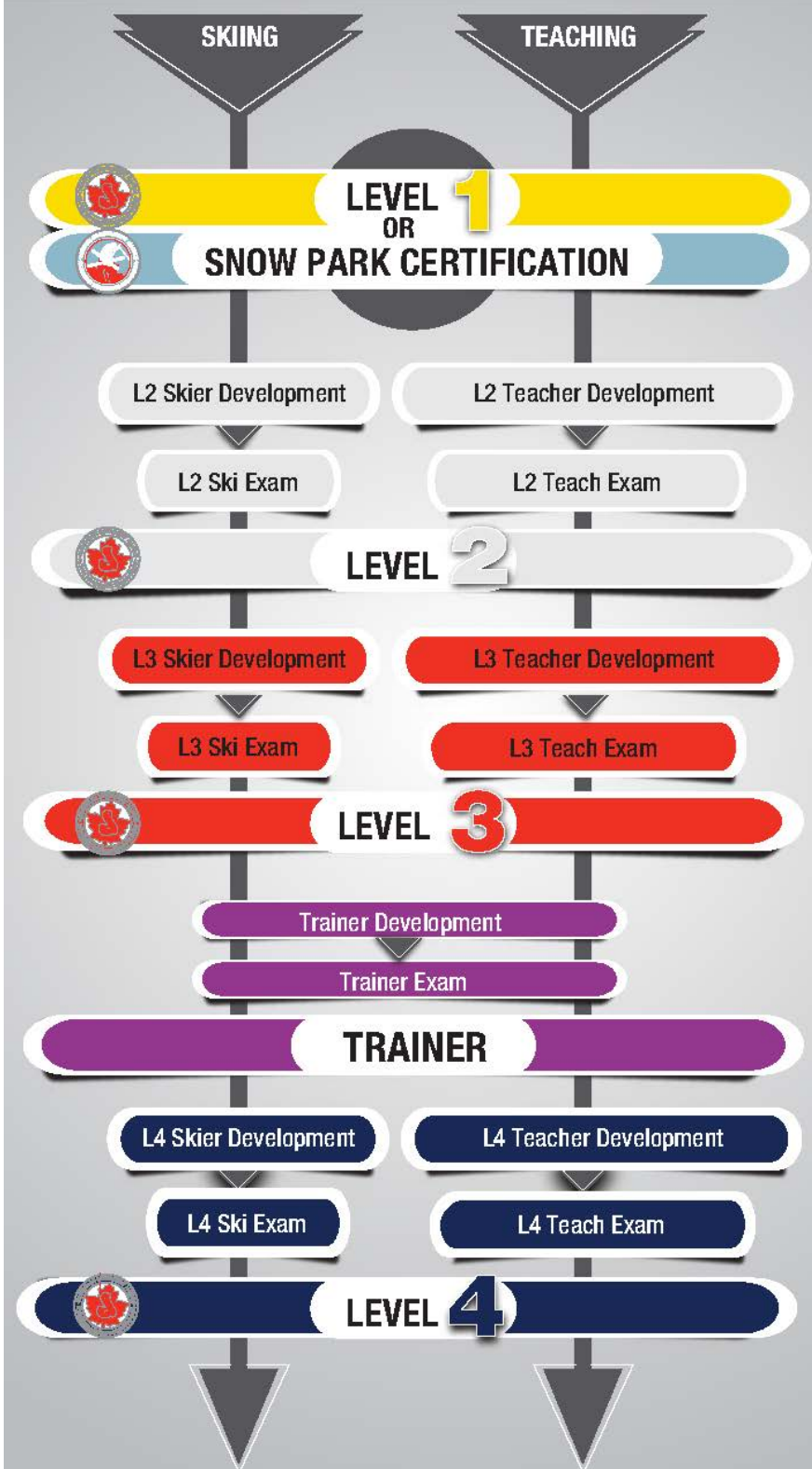
CSIA Certification Pathway

The CSIA has 4 levels of Instructor Certification and a Trainer Designation. As you go through these levels, you will build your skills and learn more about teaching. Working in a Snow School will give you hands-on experience to put what you've learned into practice with real-world teaching experience.

You can begin your journey with a 3-day Level 1 Certification Course. Some Snow Schools in Canada also offer a Snow Park Level 1 and or a Level 1 Apprentice Development Program offered over a longer term, in conjunction with on-the-job experience.

Once you become a CSIA Level 3, you can aim for the Trainer Designation. This designation will help you develop the skills needed to train new Ski Instructors and is an important step towards becoming a Level 1 Course Conductor.

As a Level 3 with the Trainer Designation, you will be close to achieving the highest level of CSIA Certification. Extensive teaching and skiing experience are recommended for those pursuing the Level 4 Certification.



CANADIAN TEACHING APPROACH

INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Teaching Approach, along with the 5 Skills Framework, define the teaching concepts of the CSIA. The technical concepts define WHAT we teach, the teaching concepts establish HOW we teach, while technical knowledge informs the content of a lesson. An instructor's ability to collaborate with their students while guiding them through their experience in a safe, FUN and productive way often determines the quality of the lesson.

PURPOSE

The CSIA teaching concepts provide a practical framework which an instructor can apply in the real world of ski teaching. These principles ensure the delivery of a consistent model and message across the country. Having a strong understanding of the learner's skill level, along with the ability to identify and affect areas for improvement, ensure the delivery of a consistent message in each ski lesson.



Explore the Possibilities

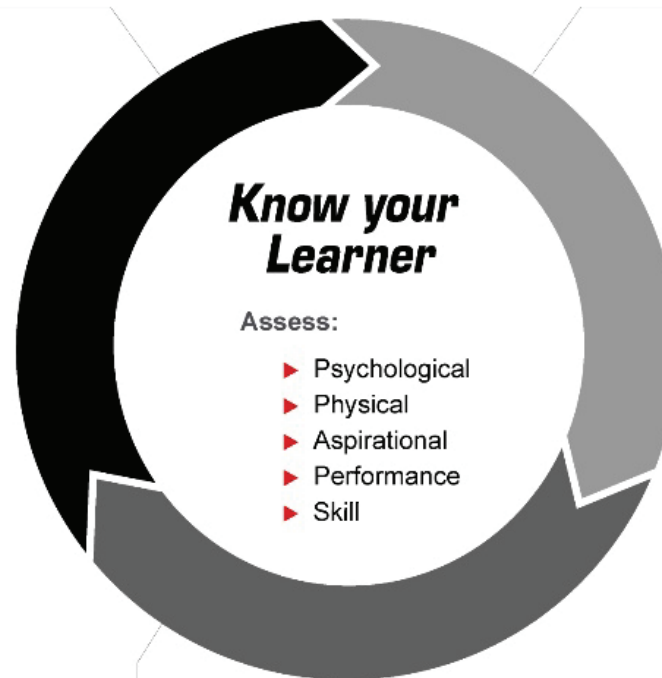
Repeat or vary the Task based on:

- ▶ Learner
- ▶ Environment
- ▶ Objective
- ▶ Skills

Create an Experience

Design a Task based on:

- ▶ Learner
- ▶ Environment
- ▶ Objective
- ▶ Skills



Assess the Experience

Assess or Debrief:

- ▶ Objective vs. Outcome
- ▶ Reflection vs. Observation
- ▶ Cause and Effect

Know Your Learner

Getting to know your Learner and building a rapport is a vital step in creating a successful and enjoyable lesson; the Learner is the ‘hub’. The learner-centered approach guides all of the decisions we make as ski instructors, from the terrain we choose and the movements we teach them, to the communication style we adopt.

Create an Experience

Understanding your learner and their needs will help determine the ‘experiences’ that they will benefit from the most. Designing and using concrete tasks can help a learner understand what they should try to do and the possible outcomes, making the tasks measurable for the learner and observable for the instructor. Awareness of the possible outcomes can help a learner recognize if they are successful or not when attempting a task (reflection). For some learners, describing what they might “feel” as they make movements can add clarity and specificity. A well-built task provides parameters for both the task itself and for the reflection.

Assess the Experience

By watching your students as they try a task, you see both the results of their efforts and the effectiveness of your approach. Encouraging a learner to reflect on their experience is proven to promote longer term learning. It is important to keep this process positive. Recognizing negative or unintended results is valuable but should not become the focus. Just like checking a map to ensure you are on the right road, ongoing debriefs with your students can help calibrate the direction of the lesson throughout. Through this process, the instructor can reflect on their decisions and the guidance they have provided and adjust the approach if required.

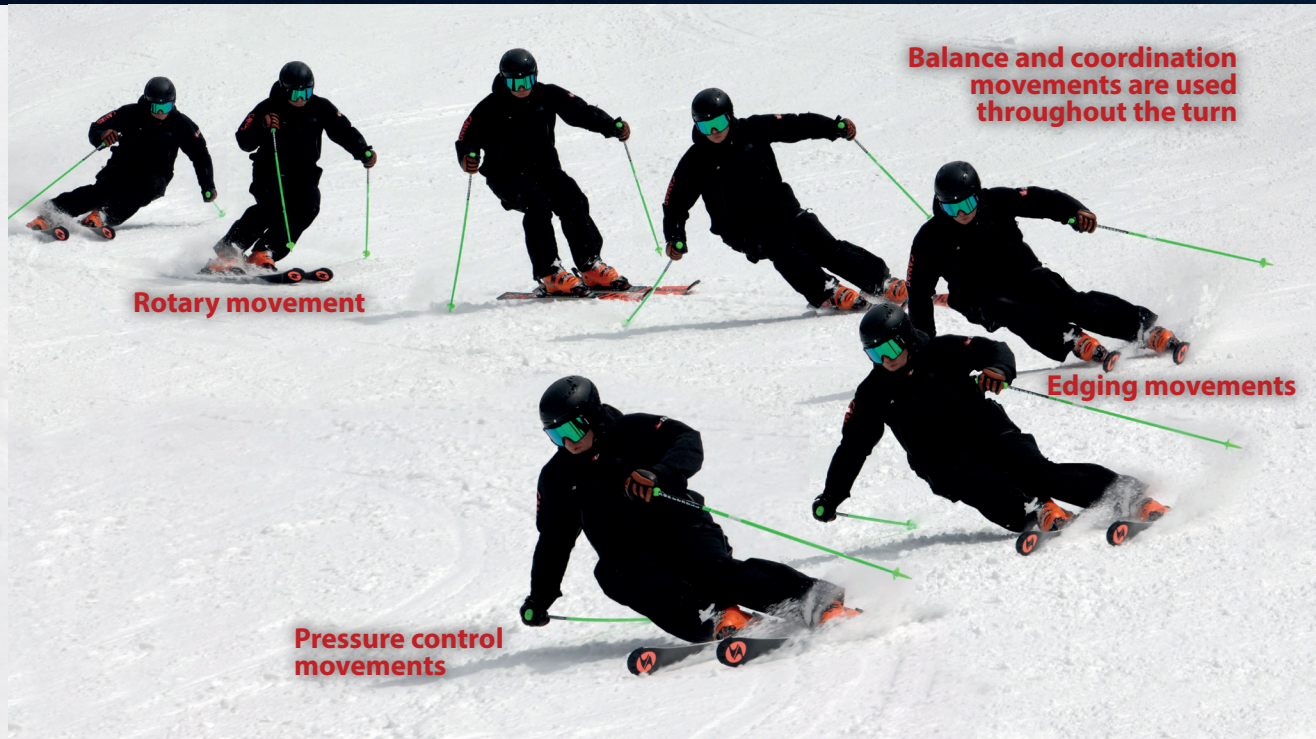
Explore the Possibilities

Skiing is exciting and learning anything new can be thrilling at any level. A balance of skill development and actual skiing is important for a learner to integrate the new skills they have developed and how to use those skills when outside of the ski lesson. The autonomy to explore the skiing environment is invigorating and empowering. Repetition of a successful task can help to consolidate the correct movements and provides an opportunity to practice the new skill.

THE 5 SKILLS

Just as the CSIA promotes an approach that facilitates effective learning (the collaborative teaching approach) the CSIA also provides a system that enables the technical education and understanding of the sport of skiing (the 5 skills).

As you work your way through this manual you will find material on 'how skiing works' as well as within the other online documents found on snowpro.com. Controlling speed, direction and stability are the main objectives of most skiers.



The CSIA uses the 5 skills system to help instructors understand the components of skiing and develop their ability to assess and develop their students. The CSIA defines the 5 skills as balance, rotary, edging, pressure and coordination movements. Skiers must use a combination of the skills to turn. Various combinations and applications of the skills give us control over the performance outcomes on the snow as you progress.

BALANCE

- Balance is the relationship between the base of support (BOS) and centre of mass (COM) and is a fundamental skill in skiing. This dynamic skill encompasses body position (e.g., stance) and muscular activity to align with the forces. Teaching skiing often begins with helping students find a stable stance on their skis. A stable stance helps them avoid falling and control their equipment. Encouraging students to relax is also important, being relaxed makes moving, reacting, and adjusting to terrain and snow conditions easier.
- Stability comes from the feet supporting the body; the body segments are adjusted to maintain balance when skiing. For the greatest range of mobility, the skier should bend and extend the ankle, knee, hip and spine. The body must be aligned for the other skills, rotary, edging, pressure, and coordination movements to be effective.



ROTARY

- Turning in skiing is achieved through leg rotation, by twisting the upper leg in the hip socket and or by turning the feet, both result in the lower body leading the turning effort and creating separation.
- Applying a turning or twisting force to the skis.
- Using a proper stance with separation in the hip joint allows us to balance against the outside ski.
- Leg rotation should not be confused with rotating the pelvis.
- Varying one part of a task at a time can help a learner deepen their understanding of a new movement and learn how much and when to apply the movement(s) in relation to their objectives. Task variations also allow the instructor to adjust the approach to be more effective, or in other words, they create a new exp Balance is the relationship.



EDGING

- The edge of the ski also helps us turn and on an arc we can use the edge to grip the snow, the COM needs to be inside the BOS.
- To change direction, the skier must decrease the edge angle by bending the outside leg to flatten the ski and decrease the amount of edge.
- Skiers use inclination to balance against the turning forces.
- As speed and performance increase, the amount of inclination increases.
- With the right amount of edging a skier can carve the turn, with less edge the ski begins to steer through the turn (blending rotary, edging, and pressure movements) and with very little edge the ski will side slip with little to no direction change.



PRESSURE

- The skier's ability to manage the forces acting on the ski and skier fore-aft, from ski to ski, and vertically are pressure control movements.
- A skier must use all of their joints to manage the forces or pressure.
- The skier can change the pressure acting on their skis by bending, extending and or by resisting.
- The skier can also change the pressure by adjusting the amount of edge angle or shifting from one ski to the other or a combination of these movements.
- Managing pressure is one of the most challenging skills to master and is required to demonstrate advanced levels of skiing and expert performance.



COORDINATION

Moving the body segments in the correct order creates efficiency. Efficient movements help direct the COM from arc to arc with little interruption of momentum (motion). This is the flow we notice when we see a good skier, and the seamless blend of the skills can be seen with a smooth glide between turns.

Coordinated Movements refer to the skill of harmonizing movements so that the right things happen at the right time. In a sport like skiing, where the very essence of the sport is balancing while moving over changing terrain, coordination is crucial to progressing beyond the beginner stage.



Initially, the student learns to do such things as edge the skis at the right time, extend or flex at the right time, and later, do several of these actions simultaneously (coordinate the movements). In expert skiing, coordination is a magical element that makes skiing appear effortless and fluid. More experienced skiers utilize sensory input by looking ahead to anticipate terrain changes and feeling variations in snow conditions, adjusting their technique well before the fall line or terrain feature.

Various combinations and proportional application of the skills give us incredible control over the performance outcome of our skiing. Timing and coordination are integral to achieving desired outcomes. Timing refers to when, for how long, and how intensely a movement is applied. Forces need to be managed smoothly to create effective skiing at all stages of learning.



As you move through the CSIA pathway you will become familiar with the skills and how the relationship between them affects the skiing objectives and outcomes. Your first exposure to the technical concepts will be during your Level 1 course. The novice lesson plans represent a prescriptive approach to aid you with the content of teaching your first lessons. As you practice the lesson plans and become more experienced you will have the opportunity to hone your skill apply your own personal style and approach to teaching each ski lesson.

Further technical and teaching development will come through actively teaching within a ski school and on hill training.

GUEST SERVICE AND CLIENT BUILDING

Anyone who has spent money to take a lesson has expectations. A big part of your success is the ability to connect with your clients and deliver what they want. Don't deliver all the information at once - focus on key ideas and take the time to develop understanding and results.

Meet and greet

First impressions are powerful. Greet your clients with a handshake and eye contact. Learn their names and use them through the lesson. Ask questions and discuss their expectations. Listen actively and repeat back what you heard to ensure you understand. Explain how you typically work and what they can expect from you.

Confidence and enthusiasm

You are the leader, so display confidence and enthusiasm. Those qualities are contagious and will motivate and engage your students. Build on their successes with positive feedback and encouragement.

Be a guide

Your time with clients goes beyond technical knowledge. Use lift time to find out more about them and develop insight into how to best communicate with them. Share your knowledge of the skiing environment with your clients. Natural history, local interest, and information about the ski area are all good topics for conversation.



Wrapping up

Give a clear summary of what they worked on through the lesson and what their next steps should be. Finish with a handshake and goodbye. This is a good time to schedule another lesson, give a business card, and generate some return business.





TEACHING CHILDREN

INTRODUCTION

Teaching children is a challenging, rewarding and satisfying experience. Children are complex in how they develop, both physically and cognitively. This requires a variety of teaching approaches to meet the needs of all students, all while keeping it safe and fun. A good instructor turns learning objectives into games or tasks that are appropriate to the age and skills of their students... it's an art!

DUTY OF CARE

Courts in Canada have held that the Duty of Care owned by a person charged with the supervision of children is that of the "careful or prudent parent". This duty increases as the age and experience of the child decreases. The instructor will not have discharged his or her duty of care until such time as the child has been safely released into the care of another responsible adult, in accordance with the snow school's policies.



COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN AND PARENTS

The parents are the paying clients! At the beginning and end of each lesson communication will be essential to put them at ease and make sure their objectives are met. Be clear of what you expect to deliver and how – “This is Taylor’s first day on skis so we will try to get her comfortable with her equipment and work on her mobility. We will try to use the magic carpet”. When speaking with your student remember to get down to their eye level and remove your goggles, dont forget to smile.



TIPS – Beginning the lesson



T

Take care to prepare – have pens, class cards, crayons, hand warmers, tissues, grooming report etc.

I

Introduce yourself – and the students to each other. Add things that may help students bond with each other (this is Joey's first day too...he has a dog...).

P

Plan – share your plan for the day with students and parents: where you will be skiing, lunch, pick-up time and location etc.

S

Special considerations – is there anything you need to know (Allergies, concerns, special learning attributes?).

TAILS – End of the lesson



T

Tell the parents about the day (what runs you skied, lifts you took, when you had lunch etc.)..

A

Ask the child to describe their favorite part of the day.

I

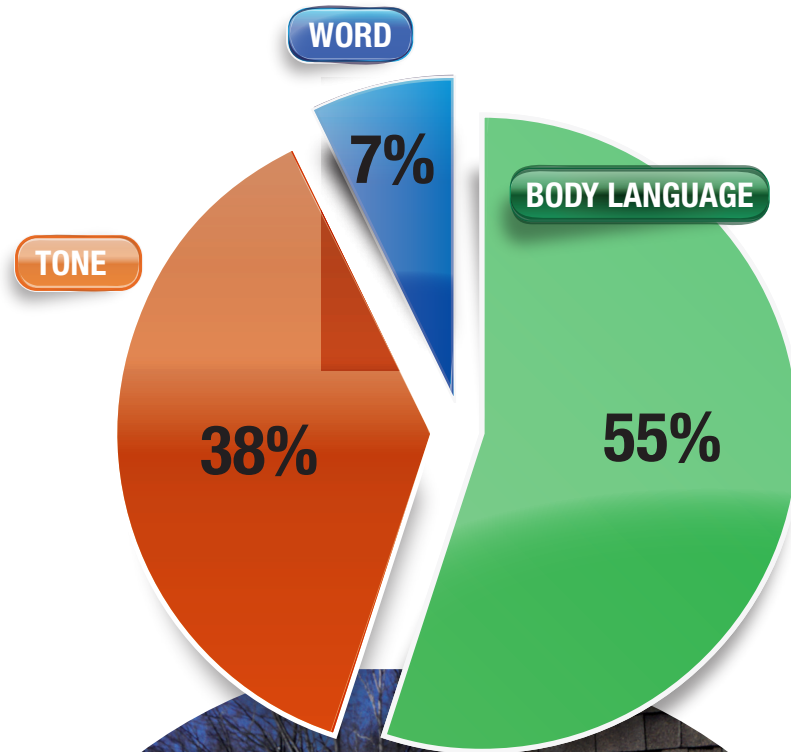
Inform the parents of any Incidents (arguments, separated children, wet pants etc.).

L

Learned summarize what they learned today and what to keep working on.

S

Smile and say thanks for a great day! Let them know how to book another lesson.



UNDERSTANDING HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH CHILDREN

Certain situations will amplify feelings and lead to unwanted behaviors, like angry fits or cries. It is important to notice and identify those feelings or behaviors and find ways to encourage cooperation or participation. This is what makes kids lessons challenging - it isn't always what you say, but how you say it. So take the time to observe, ask questions and above all else stay positive.





BE AWARE....

Children all have different personalities and feelings coming into a group lesson. Like an iceberg, what we see on the surface does not always indicate what is underneath!



ACKNOWLEDGE FEELINGS – LISTEN TO UNDERSTAND!

Look for non-verbal signs that children are uneasy - crying, looking away, hanging on to parents, stiff posture, and acting out. Use these cues to start the communication process right away! Be pro-active and you will gain the confidence of the children and parents. When acknowledging feelings, you are not necessarily trying to fix the problem - just listening and trying to understand.

- Identify the child's feelings. i.e. "You look frustrated." Ask why with open-ended questions. "Can you tell me why?"
- Put the feeling into words. "Sounds like you're frustrated..., that must make you feel angry..."
- Acknowledge the child's feelings with a sound or a word. "Hmm,... yes..." Encourage them to continue, but you don't always have to have something ready to say. Sometimes safe silence is the best. Remember to keep body language calm.
- Give the child in fantasy what you can't give them in reality. Use humour! "Wouldn't it be great if we could have hot chocolate on the chairlift..." or "I wish we could fly right up above us and see everyone on the mountain, including our moms ..."
- Accept the child's feelings even as you stop unacceptable behavior. "Frank, I can see you are very angry about Taylor stepping on your skis. However, hitting is not acceptable."





ANGER MANAGEMENT

Some events can make children feel like they are threatened, frightened, frustrated, humiliated or hurt, and this can escalate to angry fits or crisis. When this happens, it is best to give space and let the child calm down. Then, approach them gently and use the above techniques to acknowledge feelings and listen to understand. Encourage cooperation within the group to minimize other similar situations.

BE A GOOD LISTENER

- Open Body – arms and legs uncrossed, eye contact, kneeling or bending down to their level
- Rephrasing – “So what you said was...”
- Write it down

CLASS MANAGEMENT

- Count, count, count. Or better yet, have older children count themselves.
- Stay in close verbal and/or visual contact to make sure that the class is together.
- Ask each child to pick a “buddy” and have them keep track of each other.
- Assign a student as assistant to act as “caboose”.
- Use verbal and visual signals. For example say “start your engines” and at the same time put your hands on your helmet or give the “thumbs up” sign.
- You can lead in a single line, but avoid “snake” formations if you are skiing on congested slopes.
- In controlled situations ski in pairs or threes to let skiers choose their own tracks but if safety is a concern move to the front to choose terrain and control the group’s speed.
- Encourage reflection and participation in the decision making: “What should we do before we come to an intersection?” “How can we approach this jump safely in the park?” “Where should we stop next?”



STOPPING A CLASS

- Give the students a landmark where they should stop.
- Use predetermined signals - raise a hand or pole combined with a key word. Get children involved with the use of signals.
- Stop where students are visible to approaching skiers.
- Allow sufficient space – children may have difficulty “stopping on a dime”. “Beyond/behind/below” - each child skis behind and just past (beyond) the person in front, and stops just below him.





MAKE A LESSON PLAN

Build your lesson plan around the physical and cognitive age characteristics of your students, the technical objectives, and the terrain and conditions. This will let you determine the right activity and approach. Details that help you form your plan. Age, strength, experience, comfort level, terrain. Your overall objective should be based around safety and control



AGE SPECIFIC
PHYSICAL
CHARACTERISTICS

AGE SPECIFIC COGNITIVE /
MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

MOTOR SKILL /
TECHNICAL REFERENCE

STORY /
INTERESTS /
CONTEXT



ACTIVITY /
TASK

CONDITIONS
TERRAIN



USE OF LIFTS WITH CHILDREN

(you have a responsibility of safety when using it.)

Know and respect your area's policy concerning lifts and children. Most injuries occur either getting on or off the lift, so good communication between the operator and the instructor is imperative. Before riding any lift, take the time with the child(ren) to observe and discuss how to get on the lift, what he/she should do while riding it, and how to be safe when getting off the lift. Before getting on, provide a meeting place for when they get off so that they can regroup clear of the exit area. Since most children are strong visual learners, provide simple directions and cues. Provide adult support when students are riding lifts for the first time and tell the adults how to help.

Conveyor lifts

- When getting on the lift, have students keep their skis parallel or like “french fries”.
- Remind them to keep their hands by their side and to stay still while riding the carpet. Some areas have fencing along the side of the lift that could be tempting to grab.
- At the top shuffle off and move out of the way as quickly as possible. If students are not mobile on their skis, it will be important to ride behind them.
- With very young students, ride directly behind them to help.





J-Bars/T-Bars

- Place one of your skis between the child's skis so that your knee or shin becomes the platter or bar for the child.
- Hold the lift with the hand closest to the bar, and wrap the other arm across the child's chest like a seat belt.
- If the child is big enough to ride beside you, hold the T-bar low enough that they can put it behind their backside. You will need both hands to steady the T-bar.



Chair Lifts

- Have the lift attendant slow down the lift to provide extra time for loading.
- Know your area's age size restrictions for riding chairs. Younger and smaller children need to ride with an adult or responsible adolescent to ensure they can be lifted on and off the chair and have the safety bar lowered.
- Once children can ride on their own (know your area's policies) the safety bar should be lowered as soon as it is clear of the loading area and lifted only where indicated at the top.
- Students should sit back in the seat till the back of the knee touches the seat with arms over the safety bar. If you are carrying ski poles, run the poles across their laps to prevent small children from sliding under the bar.
- When getting off the lift, clear the unloading area and meet as a group at a specific safe location.
- Problems in the loading and unloading areas require the quick attention of the lift operator.



Gondolas

- Many areas require small skis to be brought inside the cabin.
- Be watchful when loading and unloading. Even though the gondola slows down, there is still potential for trapped arms and legs.
- Once in the cabin, make sure students are sitting at all times.
- Before leaving the gondola, check if they have all their clothing items.



THE SKILLS FRAMEWORK WITH CHILDREN

How to use the Skills framework to guide the development of younger skiers. Use the ski snow interaction to design a task that develops/promotes control and safety in the alpine skiing environment.

Safety should be the priority when developing skill with Children

What to look for:

Balance: Is the skier mostly balanced in the middle of the outside ski and or downhill ski by a bending of the joints? Develop the use of ankles, knees and hips. Good alignment makes it easier to turn, and less tiring.

- student should feel shin contact in both boots keep in mind some kids can't physically do this
- stance acts like the suspension in a car
- balance is active, not a result of position
- promote an agile and mobile stance that allows for adaption to terrain and pitch





Rotary: Is the skier able to twist the skis in the direction they want to go, by using their entire body or parts of the lower body?

Steering with the legs keeps the upper body stable and makes it easier to balance on the outside ski.

- Skis can be turned and skidded on the surface of the snow
- Ski design helps in direction change

Edging: Can the skier develop enough grip to maintain their desired direction by rolling the ski on its edge and balancing on it?

Angling the hips and knees into the hill to roll the ski onto its side. Reducing the length of the uphill leg while keeping the shoulders level will allow the skier to move inside and roll the ski onto its edge. Do the shoulders look level or are they tipped towards the hill? Is there more balance and thus pressure on the outside ski edge? Remember a shorter ski will make a shorter arc more by its design. Be aware of the turn shape you are using a turn shape that is round to promote speed control? Be aware of the turn shape you are using and encourage your students to experiment try different size turns.

TOOLBOX BY AGE GROUP AND ABILITY

CHARACTERISTICS OF 3-5 YEAR OLDS

- Preserve their energy for skiing – assist them with climbing, carrying, standing up, etc.
- Teach in short sequences to maintain their focus
- Use a wide track stance or wedge. So that they have stability (sometimes hands on the knees helps promote stability and lower their COM.)
- Work one-on-one as much as possible, do not encourage competition amongst students. individual attention to each person in the group as much as possible. Give each student the opportunity to follow directly follow behind you. Talk directly to each individual.
- Use a warm, cheerful and gentle approach.
- Create a bond with your student by being animated and fun. Use your imagination, play games.
- Give attention, provide quick change of pace and activities.
- One task at a time.
- Show and help them with what to do, play copy cat, Teach by showing not talking
- Stand beside student for demos, not in front.





TACTICS AND TOOLS

● ENTRY

- Stickers to identify left and right skis, to focus where to press or push against their skis or inside their boots, etc.
- Walking, bouncing, sidestepping, forwards and backwards
- One ski sliding. Skateboarding/Scootering
- Red light, green light. This is a tactic to teach them how to control their speed
- Hands on knees to aid balance and stability
- Bamboo pole or hula hoop to help support them and keep them standing. Gliding and Balance are the primary objective.
- Instructor holds tips together to help with snowplow. An “edgie-wedgie” or “ski bra” can also help. Each ski school will have their own policies regarding this
- Follow the leader.
- Simon says

● BEGGINER

- Use hands to show what you want the feet to do. Hands and arms form a wedge, it is easier for the legs to follow.
- Use themes and imagination.
- Cones/cubes/poles for terrain assisted learning and for a controlled turning environment.
- “Spread peanut butter” or “squish a strawberry” with outside ski. (Balance ski to ski)
- Hops, jumps. (Balance for and aft)
- Airplane turns. (Balance ski to ski)
- Choose a turn shape that helps control speed. Too big a turn is challenging for small children.

■ INTERMEDIATE

- Cat and mouse, “copy cat” games.
- Powerplow.
- Obstacle course.
- Terrain use – sidehills, gullies, rollers.
- “Bunny hops”.
- Side slipping
- Hockey stops
- Skiing soccer
- Drawing marks in the snow to follow or jump over



CHARACTERISTICS OF 6-8 YEAR OLDS

- Increase challenge and precision of tasks.
- Use longer sequences, but monitor energy levels for safety.
- Rest periods may still be necessary.
- Increase complexity of tasks.
- Focus on mobility of all the joints
- Will bond well with instructor and others in the group.
- A cooperative group approach with no 'losing' is recommended.
- Provide demos so they can watch and do.
- Combine concrete examples with some trial and error experimentation.
- Controlled environments to keep it safe.
- Develop awareness of risks.



ENTRY

TACTICS AND TOOLS

- One ski sliding.
- Straight running.
- Stop and go.
- Varying wedge size while gliding.
- Hopping while moving.
- Exaggerated positions –tall and small.
- Simon says
- Drawing marks in the snow to follow or jump over





BEGINNER

- Vary size of snowplow.
- Leaning side-to-side while turning.
- Hands on outside knee.
- Picking flowers on the outside of the turn.
- Opposite lean airplane turns (arms to the side, leaning over outside ski).
- Follow the leader.
- “Roller coaster” on safe rollers.

INTERMEDIATE

- Bouncing through the turn.
- Hops – ‘pushing’ head away from the snow rather than jumping and lifting the feet. This uses the ankles, knees and hips and develops a centred and mobile stance.
- Appropriate speed is critical for safety and success.
- Pairing, cat and mouse, follow the leader.
- Safe amount of speed on minimum terrain should be mixed with time on reasonably challenging terrain; keep in mind that stance changes will not necessarily be consistent.
- Use of shallow turns on easy terrain to work balancing skills.
- Lift inside ski while turning.
- Obstacle course.
- “Canoe game” – pretending to paddle over outside ski.
- 360s on snow.

ADVANCED

- More challenging terrain and turn radius mileage, experience and terrain adaptation – bumps, jumps, various snow conditions.
- Inside ski turns.
- Pole touch for older kids in this age group.
- Hockey stops.
- Side slipping on steep terrain.
- Exaggerated positions.
- Controlled skiing in easy moguls.
- “Watch and do” – maximize experience and avoid talking.
- Terrain – bumps, jumps (stress responsibility and safety).



CHARACTERISTICS OF 9–12 YEAR OLDS

- Consider individual coordination and strength when establishing tasks.
- Set precise objectives.
- Longer sequences and varied mileage can be used.
- Set clear expectations and boundaries for safety and learning.
- Teach to their 'watch and do' learning style.
- Experimentation (within the bounds of safety).
- Encouraged to try things for themselves.
- Act as a mentor to help them learn when they need direction.
- Pairs and teams – Working as a group/team – taking turns choosing, leading.



TACTICS AND TOOLS

- Hopping, mobility drills.
- Pushing on flats with poles.
- Relay games/team races.





BEGINNER

- Drag poles for stable upper body.
- Lift inside ski.
- Hopping, bouncing through turns.
- Obstacle courses/pylons.
- Convex and concave terrain.



INTERMEDIATE

- Pole plant.
- Ski with rhythm and using different turn radius.
- Skiing to extremes – leaning against the front and back of the boots, very tall, very small, etc.
- 360s on snow.
- Air time – small, safe jumps.
- Skiing switch



ADVANCED

- Synchro skiing.
- Hockey stops.
- Alternate edge sets and sideslip.
- Mileage, experience and terrain adaptation – bumps, jumps, various snow conditions.
- Short radius turns.
- Pole plant.
- Tuck turns on moderate terrain.
- Turning on side hills.



CHARACTERISTICS OF 13–18 YEAR OLDS

- Precise definition of tasks.
- Increase challenge and complexity.
- Adjust tasks to individual coordination.
- Can largely be approached as adults in terms of skiing goals.
- Emphasize strengths, accept mistakes and failures matter-of-factly.
- Ask their feedback in how they learn best.
- Teach using the “whole-part-whole” approach.
- Precise feedback as much as possible.
- Can use questioning.
- Be respectful and inclusive – encourage input, give them responsibilities when possible.
- Let them be with their friends whenever possible.
- Encourage team work.



TACTICS AND TOOLS



- Hopping, mobility drills.
- Pushing on flats with poles.
- Relay games/team races.





BEGINNER

- Drag poles for stable upper body.
- Increase speed on flat terrain.
- Lift inside ski.
- Hopping, bouncing through turns.
- Obstacle courses/ pylons.
- Convex and concave terrain.



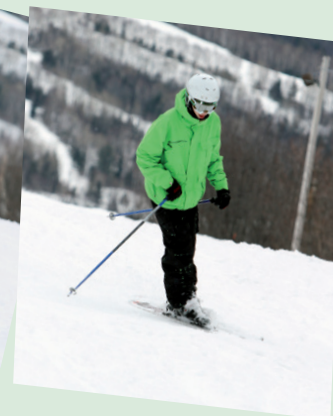
INTERMEDIATE

- Faster speed on flat terrain.
- One ski turns.
- Pole plant.
- Ski with rhythm and using different turn radius.
- Skiing extremes – leaning against front / back of the boots, very tall, very small, etc.
- 360s on snow.
- Air time – small, safe jumps.
- skiing switch



ADVANCED

- Rollerblade turns.
- Jump turns with pole plant.
- Terrain variations –bumps, safe jumps.
- Hockey stops with pole plant.
- Short turns.
- Javelin turns.
- Inside ski turns.
- “Switch” skiing.



SAFE TEACHING

Safety first

Your primary concern is for the safety of your clients. Appropriate challenge, common sense and mountain awareness reduces risk. Know the safety rules and accident reporting policies of your area. The following are safety points that should be part of all ski lessons:

- Know and respect the Alpine Responsibility Code
- Warm up for physical and mental readiness.
- Ensure that students are ready to learn.
- Set appropriate challenges for their skill level.
- Make sure students are familiar with the use of lifts; use lift operator's assistance when necessary.
- Choose terrain that allows students to stay in control.
- Use safe stopping areas away from traffic. Keep moving and keep contact with your students in high traffic areas. Keep moving in blind spots – below knolls, narrow trails or trail merges.
- Have students stop below the class to avoid collisions.
- Create awareness of other traffic and potential hazards.
- Alert students to changes in weather and conditions.
- Advise on appropriate clothing and skin protection.
- Consider equipment type and condition.
- Create awareness of area signage.
- In difficult situations, have students follow closely to develop confidence.



Alpine Responsibility Code

Know the Alpine Responsibility Code. The instructor should be a model of responsible behavior on the slopes. As well as paying close attention to the group's well-being, a good instructor includes safety awareness in every lesson. You will find suggestions throughout this manual for conducting your lessons safely.

ALPINE RESPONSIBILITY CODE



THERE ARE ELEMENTS OF RISK THAT COMMON SENSE AND PERSONAL AWARENESS CAN HELP REDUCE. ALWAYS SHOW COURTESY TO OTHERS. PLEASE ADHERE TO THE CODE LISTED BELOW AND SHARE WITH OTHERS THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR A SAFE OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE.

- 1** Always stay in control. You must be able to stop or avoid people or objects.
- 2** People ahead or downhill of you have the right-of-way. You must avoid them.
- 3** Stop only where you are visible from above and do not restrict traffic.
- 4** Look uphill and avoid others before starting downhill or entering a trail.
- 5** You must prevent runaway equipment.
- 6** Read and obey all signs, warnings and hazard markings.
- 7** Keep off closed trails and out of closed areas.
- 8** You must know how and be able to load, ride and unload lifts safely. If you need assistance, ask the lift attendant.
- 9** Do not use lifts or terrain when impaired by alcohol or drugs.
- 10** If you are involved in a collision or incident, share your contact information with each other and a ski area employee.

Know the Code - It is Your Responsibility

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GETTING STARTED

Lesson Planning

Organizing lessons goes beyond background knowledge of teaching and ski technique and into the practical realm of organizing specific activities within a fixed time frame. To satisfy paying clients, instructors must be organized, skilled in dealing with people, and provide tools and solutions. The following pages contain some ideas to help you get started with beginner to intermediate skiers.

Add this link to your mobile device to access basic lesson plans for new instructors: www.csia-lesson-plan.com

GETTING STARTED

FOR FIRST TIME SKIERS

Introduce equipment

Make sure that the skis, boots and poles are appropriate. Look for adjustment issues and take them to the shop if necessary. Show how to carry the skis and once in the learning area, how to get in and out of the bindings.



Climbing and sliding

Start moving and sliding on one ski or two. Show how to push with the poles and start sliding. Move up the slope by side stepping, or in a “herringbone”, showing how to put the skis on edge. Slide on the edges to make short traverses.



MOBILITY

Mobility

means better access to the skiing environment. Familiarize skiers with their equipment by **walking** and **sliding**. Climbing and pushing with poles also create mobility in the skiing environment.

GLIDING

Gliding

is unfamiliar to new skiers. Create comfortable situations and link gliding to **balance**. Skiers that stand naturally over a sliding platform will be less fatigued and better at turning and controlling too!



Falling and getting up

Falls are inevitable, so show how to fall safely to the side and slightly back. To get back up, take off one or both skis, or show how to put the skis across the hill and stand using the poles to help.



Gliding to a stop

With sliding comes the need to stop and good terrain helps naturally. The snowplow provides friction and stability. Encourage a comfortable width of stance and focus on gliding on the inside edges. Use a hands-on approach if necessary – **ski backwards** while holding the tips and push the skier's feet and knees apart to develop the feeling. Develop a stance that is slightly bent and relaxed over the middle of the ski.

A safe setting

The learning area should be flat with a gentle run out. Avoid obstacles like fences, ski racks and other skiers. This avoids distraction and lets students concentrate on learning to ski.





Speed management

can mean slowing down, maintaining speed or going faster, depending on the situation. Be observant and match your approach to the needs of your students and situation.

SPEED MANAGEMENT

Direction Change

provides control, grip and maneuverability. Encourage round smooth turns and edging through balance. Linking turns creates a sense of flow and rhythm, which is a big part of skiing.

DIRECTION CHANGE

The first turns

From the snowplow stance, get skiers to balance over the ski opposite to where they want to turn. This is counter-intuitive for most, so exaggerate by tipping the shoulders to that side, or putting the outside hand closer to the snow. This creates angulation and grip with the outside ski so the skier turns with balance and the ski design instead of twisting and brute force. Try this on both sides and be ready to repeat – this is often the first big challenge of the lesson. Some students may naturally turn with both legs - if they don't need the snowplow, turning both skis simultaneously should be encouraged.

The first lifts

Many first lifts are conveyor lifts. Show how to get on with a shuffling of the skis, using the poles for balance. Explain how to get off before you send them up or walk off beside them and be there to guide them at the top.



Linking and rhythm

Once skiers can turn on both sides encourage linking by **releasing** the **grip** on the snow and directing the skis into the next turn. Flat terrain will make this easier, with a round and open turn shape. Try to create a sense of rhythm with one turn leading to the next. A relaxed stance and turning with the lower body will help.

Developing confidence

Keep beginners sliding and moving to get the feeling. Provide lots of encouragement - the focus is **not** perfection but discovering a new activity and having fun.



THE FIRST GREEN RUNS

1 Taking skiers up the mountain for their first green run is a big step. Know your terrain and time-frame so you don't run out of time. The first step is lift access – tell them what to expect and how to get on and off. Accompany them on the lift and use that time to put them at ease and prepare for their adventure.



2 At the top of the lift find a good place to get organized and remind them of what they learned in the beginner area. Stay close to your students – good communication and trust is essential for them to develop confidence.



4 Provide guided mileage and put them at ease. Show them where to look and where to turn to make it easier. Be directive and attentive in tougher situations. Take the time to connect with people - it goes a long way towards creating a positive and memorable experience.



3 Review the key technical aspects – a relaxed stance, turning with the legs and balancing on the downhill ski. They will need repetition and practice so break the slope into easy sections. Positive reinforcement is crucial so build on small successes.





THE FIRST GREEN RUNS

Skating

Pushing with poles

Traversing on edges

Focus on turn completion

Side slipping on steeper sections

Low stance, balance on the downhill ski and or the outside ski



Maximum speed on minimum terrain

Reduce size of snowplow

Open turn shape

Know the intention... "look ahead!"

Round turn shape

Keep a rhythm - "ski in my tracks"





THE FIRST BLUE RUNS

1

Blue run skiers have some experience, so find out what they expect of their lesson. Some will want specific technical feedback and others to explore new terrain. This, plus the time frame of the lesson, will determine your choice of terrain.



2

Use a tactical approach based on the conditions and objectives. Ski improvement can be exercises, but can also mean playing with terrain and other opportunities that present themselves. Set clear objectives and provide a variety of activities that work toward the same goal.



4

As you explore new terrain be aware of safety. Provide an adventure and a positive learning experience. People come first so your job is to create committed skiers that will come back for more.



3

Intermediate skiers need to consolidate their skills so it takes practice time and repetition. Stick with a plan and find a level of challenge that pushes them without going beyond their capacity.





THE FIRST BLUE RUNS

Follow the leader/ cat and mouse

Skating while pushing with poles

Look ahead, planning a route

Adjust turn shape to terrain

Carry speed on flats

Side-slipping and hockey stops on steps



Tuck turns on flat terrain

Turn with ski sidecut / lines in the snow

360's on flat skis

Hop turns

Short turns in a corridor

Introduce pole plant



USING THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NEW SKIERS

Skating on flats

Climbing walls of mini-pipe

Pushing with poles flats and mini-pipe

Mini-pipe creates acceleration and stopping

Rollers create natural speed control

Varied terrain features to play with angle of skis on slope



Use of mini-pipe/ concave terrain for confidence

Berms and fall-away - skis on edge

Berms and fall-away - skis slipping sideways

Banked turns help with direction change

Convex terrain/ berms aid turning of skis

Rollers develop rhythm

Terrain Assisted Development

Man-made and natural terrain features can enhance the learning experience in the beginner area and on the mountain. The right terrain builds confidence and skills. Use these contours to make learning to ski a game.



Berms and ridges

Small berms or ridges often form on the edges of trails. They are safe to use if the contours are smooth and there are no obstacles. Change the edges on the top of the berm, planting the pole on the ridge to help with timing.

Small jumps

Have fun by introducing the first jumps. Safety first - look for small terrain features free of obstacles with a clear view of the takeoff and landing and have skiers go one at a time. Jumping will help your students discover weightlessness. Getting off the snow even a few centimeters creates agility and a sense for staying in the middle of the skis.



Rollers and bumps

Small rollers develop mobility, leg independence and awareness of pressure on the skis. In bumps put the focus on where to turn. Have skiers look ahead and try to turn on the crests of the bumps where there is less snow contact. Encourage a round turn shape and steer around the biggest troughs.



HOW WE LEARN

In 1967, **Paul Fitts and Michael Posner** presented the stage model of psychomotor learning which is the relationship between cognitive functions and physical movements. The Cognitive stage, Associative stage and Autonomous stage describe how a student's memory and experience combine to perform actions. The CSIA recognizes this model and breaks it down into common characteristics of skiers at various stages of psychomotor learning through the following scale: Initiation, Acquisition, Consolidation, Refinement and Creative Variation.

The characteristics of each, described in the following pages, help instructors understand how motor skill development occurs, how it appears and the teaching implications associated with each stage of development, or in other words, how best to teach their students.



UNDERSTANDING MOTOR LEARNING

I Initiation

- First contact with skill or activity.
- Learner may have no idea of what to do.

A Acquisition

- The skier coordinates and executes the key components of the movement in the correct order.
- Execution is inconsistent and lacks precision.
- Conscious execution by skier.
- Rough form, lacks synchronization, rhythm and flow.

C Consolidation

- Coordination of movements appears.
- Controlled and rhythmical execution of task under stable conditions.
- Some performance elements are maintained, but are inconsistent when skier is under pressure, conditions change or demands increase.

R Refinement

- Performance is consistent and precise in demanding conditions.
- Movements are automatic and done subconsciously.
- Only minor fine tuning may be necessary.
- Critical reflection and correction is possible by skier.

CV Creative Variation

Varying

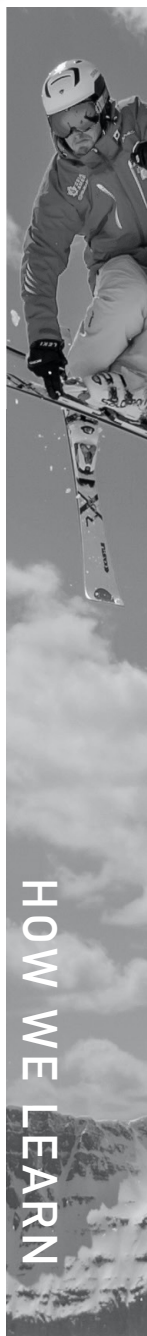
- The movement is perfect under complex situations.
- The skier has developed a personal style that is efficient.
- Movements can be performed according to a model.

Improvising

- Can spontaneously use novel combinations of movements to cope with unexpected situations.

Composing

- Competitive and unfamiliar situations develop personalized movements that are efficient.



- Progress is generally quick and results may be easily achieved.

- Mileage to integrate motor skills.
- Broader variety of situations.

- Situational aspects continue to broaden.
- Learners develop their own understanding and autonomy.

I
Initiation

A
Acquisition

C
Consolidation

R
Refinement

CV
Creative Variation

TEACHING IMPLICATIONS

- Demonstrate often and adapt it to type of learner.
- Provide a safe and easy learning environment.
- Ensure a high volume of repetition - not seeking perfection.

- Increase repetition - not necessarily seeking perfection.
- Allow learning by trial and error.
- Ask questions that cause critical thinking to increase the skier's awareness.
- Look for and/or emphasize right and left symmetry.

- Expose skiers to a variety of situations.
- Repetition under varied conditions.
- Challenge with more complex and demanding tasks.
- Find more solutions through trial and error.

- Expose skiers to complex and demanding situations that require the skill to be executed at a high level.
- Higher volume of repetition.
- Develop decision making skills.

- Create environments to enable skiers to develop their own solutions.
- Ask for perfect execution in demanding and competitive situations.

FEEDBACK

- Instructional (what, where, how, when).
- Use demonstrations and video – visual benchmarks.
- Positive reinforcement.
- Feedback mostly coming from instructor.

- Skier develops internal feedback – instructor acts as a facilitator.
- Develop knowledge and understanding – some instruction and explanation.
- Question to increase the skier's self-awareness.
- Volume of instructor feedback decreases.

- Teamwork between skier and instructor regarding all decisions.
- Mostly situational based on the environment.
- Should focus on external cues (use of timing).
- Creating opportunities (cross team training).
- Proper skier/athlete management to optimize natural training effect.

THE LEARNING BRAIN

Neurons in the brain work together to control motor skills. These neural pathways build in speed and efficiency over time and this is how skillfulness develops. Learning a new skill or movement is the building and reinforcement of a new neural pathway. Similarly, correcting “bad habits” replaces established pathways with new ones.

Good practice requires conscious execution and self-monitoring, with the learner comparing outcomes with the objectives. The instructor helps by setting realistic objectives, establishing a time frame, controlling the practice environment and creating cues to monitor the results.

- Correct “bad habits” with tasks that block established patterns, giving new neural pathways a chance to get established. Example: A skier that over flexes on the downhill ski will be unable to do this if asked to ski on the inside leg.
- Focus on new feelings or sensations. These become internal cues which the learner can then access to monitor a new movement pattern. Gradually transfer these sensations to more challenging situations.
- When instructor and learner match observations of a key action this reinforces change and provides motivation.
- Analysis of poor performance can be counterproductive if it is the main focus. Instead, build on small successes and reflect on positive outcomes to reward the learning brain for not defaulting to old habits.

- Learning requires doing things that **won't feel comfortable** or familiar. Reassure your students that it is normal to not feel “good” when learning a new skill.

- Create achievable objectives and measurable outcomes. The learning brain needs clear indications of success to reinforce new patterns and stay motivated.

The self-monitoring necessary for learning can get in the way if an athlete needs to perform and produce results automatically. This is what happens when a high end athlete “chokes”. Separate the task of learning (conscious execution) and performing (unconscious execution). Give permission to think things through when learning and reward instinctive solutions when performing.



CSIA MISSION STATEMENT

The Canadian Ski Instructors' Alliance provides excellence in education for the profession of ski teaching, contributing to the growth and enjoyment of skiing.

We value our sport and its environment, our members, our partners and the skiing public. As the leader in the profession of ski instruction and a most valued and respected contributor to the sport of skiing, we develop a safe and positive guest experience, a progressive approach and set national standards in ski teaching.

ABOUT THE CSIA

Founded in 1938 and incorporated in 1949 as a not-for-profit organization, the CSIA is the professional ski teaching body in Canada. It is a federally recognized teaching institution and it trains and certifies ski instructors to service snow schools and the skiing public.

A national Board of Directors oversees the strategic development and management of the organization. With a head office staff in Montreal, the CSIA manages the website, program registration and national member services. National programs include standardized instructor development programs from coast to coast and level 2, 3 and 4 certification. In addition there are six CSIA regions: British Columbia, Alberta, Central, Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic. Each region has its own board or directors and offer region services and events.

Program content and delivery is developed by staff under the direction of the national Technical and Education Committee which meet annually.



Credits

Thank you to all members who appear in these pages

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