

# **LEVEL I**

## **CERTIFICATION & STUDY GUIDE**

Professional Ski Instructors of America  
*Western Division*



**DEFINING QUALITY SKI INSTRUCTION  
&  
INSPIRING A LIFE LONG PASSION FOR SKIING**

**NOTE:** Candidates participating in any Level I Module must complete the online Level 1 test prior to attending the on-hill module. The test will be e-mailed to each participant once they sign up for the module.

# PSIA WESTERN DIVISION LEVEL I ALPINE CERTIFICATION & STUDY GUIDE

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**This study guide should be supplemented with the following PSIA education materials that can be ordered from *Accessories Catalog* located online at [www.thesnowpros.org](http://www.thesnowpros.org) or by calling: 303-987-9390.**

PSIA Alpine Technical Manual: Skiing & Teaching Skills **(Required)**  
PSIA Core Concepts for Snowsports instructors **(Required)**

### OPTIONAL:

PSIA Adult Alpine Teaching Handbook [pocket size - includes teaching progressions]  
PSIA Children's Instruction Handbook [pocket size - includes teaching progressions]  
PSIA Children's Instructional Manual [[available online @ psia-w.org](http://psia-w.org) at the store]  
PSIA Internet Learning Center [available in the members section @ [thesnowpros.org](http://thesnowpros.org)]  
PSIA Alpine Level I Study Guide [[available online @ psia-w.org](http://psia-w.org) at the store]  
PSIA Visual Cues to Ideal vs. Real Children's Skiing [[available online @ psia-w.org](http://psia-w.org) at the store]

## WHO WE ARE:

The *Western Division* of **Professional Ski Instructors of America** (PSIA-W) is one of nine divisions that make up the **American Snowsports Education Association** (ASEA, the national umbrella organizations of PSIA and AASI –the American Association of Snowboard Instructors).

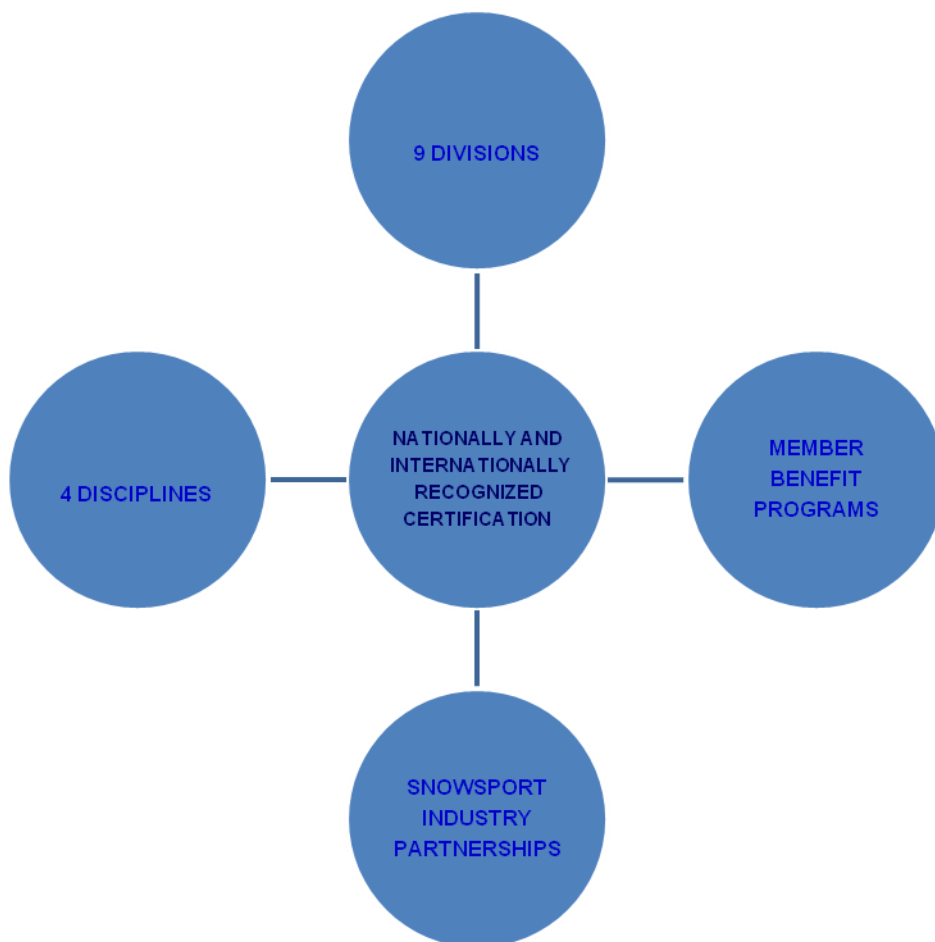
PSIA was founded in 1961 to develop a standardized system for teaching people and to unify instructors throughout the country. Since then the ASEA has grown to include 29,000 members nationwide. We are a non-profit corporation with a 501 (c) (6) tax exempt status. The charitable arm of our organization is Professional Ski Instructors Western Education Foundation, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation. Our main purpose is to support our members and advance snowsport instruction and education in the disciplines of: Alpine, Nordic, Snowboarding, Children, and Adaptive.

PSIA-W/AASI members range from full and part time instructors to “alumni” members, who are retired from teaching. Many of our members come from professional backgrounds such as contractors, small business owners, pilots, doctors, lawyers, and teachers. They all bring a passion for snowsports to share with others.

## Our mission:

To support our members as a part of the snowsport industry and help them to:

- ❄ Develop personally & professionally
- ❄ Create positive learning experiences
- ❄ Have more fun!



## ***WHAT WE DO:***

- **Promote exceptional standards at all levels and disciplines of snow sport instruction.**
- **Build leadership in individuals through education, training and adventure.**
- **Inspire a lifelong passion for snowsports, adventure, and the mountain experience.**
- **Connect snowsport instructors of the world together in order to share, learn and grow.**

## ***Education & Certification Opportunities:***

We provide training, education, and certification for our members. We offer three levels of certification and Accreditation programs in freestyle, children and seniors.

Our educational events range from a variety of clinics on teaching methodology, skiing/riding mechanics, personal improvement to women specific events, racing, and children's programs. No matter how skilled you are, you can always improve. Becoming a member allows you endless opportunities to clinic with some of our countries top trainers.

## BECOMING A CERTIFIED LEVEL I INSTRUCTOR

### Description of Level I Certification Options:

**LEVEL 1 (3-DAY MODULE):** For instructors actively instructing at a resort and have at least 20 hours of teaching experience. This 3-day event consists of an evaluation and feedback to meet the Certified Level I National Standards.

**LEVEL 1 (6-DAY MODULE):** For members not currently working at a snowsport school or who are employed by a school but do not have 20 hours of teaching experience. This intensive 6-day program prepares candidates for becoming professional ski instructors. The 6-day event consists of an evaluation and coaching to meet the Certified Level I National Standards.

**LEVEL 1 IN- HOUSE:** For instructors who are actively instructing at a resort this program allows them to be trained by a resort trainer and attend on-hill and in-door study sessions. Once these have been completed candidates will be validated by a member of the PSIA-W Ed Staff to assure they meet the National Level I Certification Standards. An In-House Portfolio available on the western website @ [www.psia-w.org](http://www.psia-w.org) under Alpine Education Materials is required for this program.

### Requirements:

- Participants must be at least 16 years old and a Registered Member of PSIA/AASI - W.
- Participants must be capable of linking parallel turns on blue intermediate terrain.
- Participant must complete the online Level 1 test (the test will be e-mailed to the participant once they have signed up for the on-hill validation).
- Participants should also read the National Level I Study Guide (located @ [psia-w.org](http://psia-w.org) on the Alpine Education Materials page).

### **Required reading for all new instructors and those taking the Level I Modules:**

PSIA Alpine Technical Manual: Skiing & Teaching Skills

PSIA Core Concepts for Snowsports instructors

\*Available in the Accessories Catalog @ [www.thesnowpros.com](http://www.thesnowpros.com)

**PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTORS OF AMERICA  
THE WESTERN DIVISION ALPINE LADDER  
FROM REGISTERED MEMBER TO EDUCATION STAFF**

**PSIA/AASI-W BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Ed Staff  
Development Group**

**Tryouts:** 1- day skiing and technical knowledge evaluation.

**Successful Candidates:**

- ❄ Shadow Events
- ❄ Attend Yearly Training
- ❄ Fulfill Requirements of Education Staff Coach

**Ed Staff**

- ❄ ATTEND REQUIRED TRAINING
- ❄ SERVE DESIGNATED DAYS AS A CLINICIAN
- ❄ CONTRIBUTE TECHNICAL ARTICLES TO *THE EDGE*

**LEVEL III CERTIFIED**

**SKIING MODULE LEVEL III**

2-DAY EVENT INCLUDES SKIING ASSESSMENT & FEEDBACK FROM CLINICIAN.

SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES ELIGIBLE TO TAKE THE LEVEL III TEACHING MODULE

**TEACHING MODULE LEVEL III**

**\*MUST PASS SKIING MODULE FIRST**

3-DAY EVENT INCLUDES TEACHING ASSESSMENT, & FEEDBACK FROM CLINICIAN

*SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES PASS LEVEL III*

**LEVEL II CERTIFIED**

**SKIING MODULE LEVEL II**

2-DAY EVENT INCLUDES SKIING ASSESSMENT & FEEDBACK.

SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES ELIGIBLE TO TAKE THE LEVEL II TEACHING MODULE

**TEACHING MODULE LEVEL II**

**\*MUST PASS SKIING MODULE FIRST**

3-DAY EVENT INCLUDES TEACHING ASSESSMENT & FEEDBACK FROM CLINICIAN.

*SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES PASS LEVEL II*

**LEVEL I CERTIFIED [3 OPTIONS]**

**LEVEL I MODULE (3 DAYS)**

FOR CANDIDATES WHO ALREADY HAVE 20 HOURS OF COACHING THIS 3-DAY EVENT INCLUDES EVALUATION & FEEDBACK OF FREE SKIING, DEMONSTRATIONS, TEACHING AND MOVEMENT ANALYSIS.

**SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES  
PASS LEVEL 1 CERTIFICATION.**

**LEVEL I IN-HOUSE CERTIFICATION**

CANDIDATES EMPLOYED BY A SKI SCHOOL ARE PREPARED BY QUALIFIED TRAINERS AT THAT RESORT DURING THE SEASON.

CANDIDATES MUST ATTEND A (1) DAY "VALIDATION CLINIC" AND BE EVALUATED BY A MEMBER OF PSIA-W ED STAFF IN ORDER PASS LEVEL I CERTIFICATION.

**LEVEL I MODULE (6 DAYS)**

**\*A 6-day program for members not actively instructing at a snowsports school or who are employed but do not have at least 20 hours of coaching experience. Module includes education, coaching, and evaluation for Level I Certification.** Successful candidates receive a certificate of completion and are eligible for Level I Pin and official Certification after completing 20 hrs of teaching (2yr/season cap on completing teaching hours).

**Registered Member**

\*MUST BE AT LEAST 16 YEARS OF AGE AND HAVE PAID *MEMBER* DUES TO PSIA-W.

## Overview of Level 1 Module:

The Certified Level I Modules consist of an assessment of basic skiing skills, teaching skills, movement analysis, and professional knowledge (which refers to the practical awareness of general terms and concepts, and an ability to use these concepts in basic lesson situations for Beginner/Novice zone students, as well as to knowledge of guest service, PSIA, the ski industry, and risk management). The Level I is a combination of evaluation and training. Candidates should be prepared to lead a group through some basic ski instruction scenarios.

### Level I Skiing Tasks:

A balanced athletic stance and consistent speed control is required in all skiing tasks.

Basic Parallel Turns – Short & Medium

Beginning Wedge Christie

Wedge Turns

Gliding Wedge to a Wedge Stop

Side Slipping

Traverse on Downhill Ski

### Level I Teaching:

Candidates should be familiar with using Stepping Stones, and demonstrate this knowledge in their practice teaching. Candidates need to be able to add developmental and corrective feedback (when appropriate) to their teaching assignment.

SAMPLE TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TOO:

Teach a level one group using exercises in boots and 1 ski up thru making a straight run

Teach a level one group to stop

Teach a group who can stop how to make their first turns

Teach a level one beginner group consisting of 5 athletic, 14 y.o. inline skaters

Teach a level two group who wants to learn how to turn, they can make a wedge stop

Teach a group of 7 year olds from warming-up in the beginner area to learning to change direction

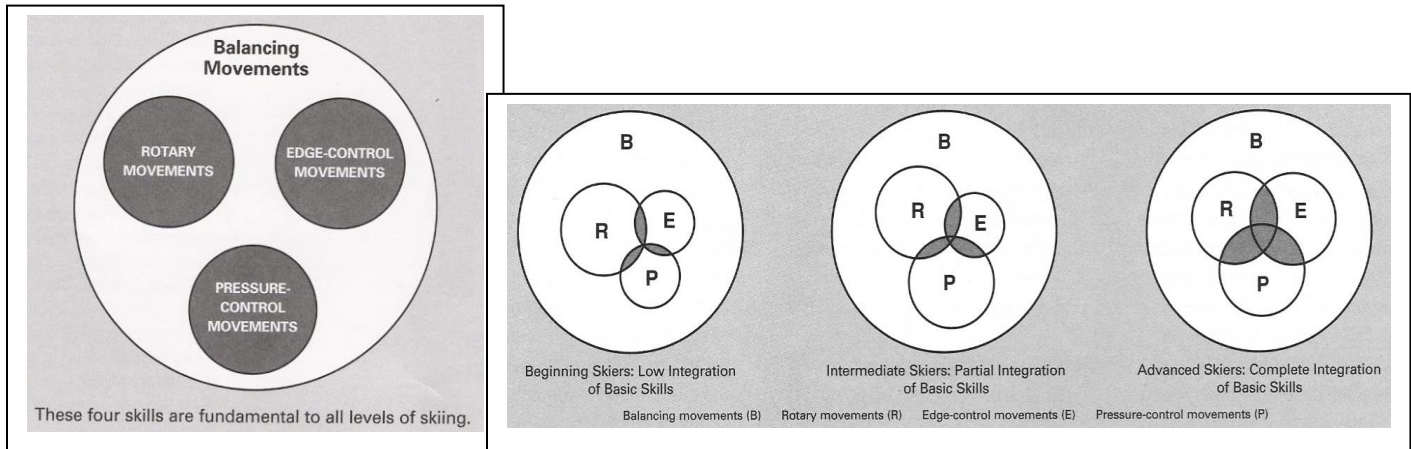
Teach a group of Adults who want more confidence turning on green trails (wedge-wc)

Teach a group of Adults who need several exercises to learn how to turn

# **The Skills Concept**

Referenced from the PSIA Alpine Manual, 1996

The Skills Concept is the framework for identifying and understanding skiing movements. Every movement made in skiing can be broken down into the four major skills of stance/balance, edging movements, rotary movements, and pressure movements.



## **BALANCING MOVEMENTS:**

Maintaining balance while in motion.

## **EDGING MOVEMENTS:**

Aiding in adjusting the edge angle of the skis in relation to the snow

## **ROTARY MOVEMENTS:**

Turning and guiding the skis.

## **PRESSURE CONTROL MOVEMENTS:**

Managing and manipulating pressure variations between the skis and the snow.

## **EXAMPLES OF USING EACH SKILL:**

Balance & Stance: Hoping in ski boots and then with skis on trying to maintain balance.

Edging Movements: Sidestep up a gentle slope without skis on, then with skis on.

Rotary Movements: Trace a semi-circle in the snow with each foot by twisting your leg.

Pressure Movements: Shift weight from foot to foot. Lean forward on boots, then lean backward.

**When teaching beginners we work on developing each skill and then blending them together.**

**For example when making a gliding wedge:**

- The rotary movements come from twisting our legs to form the basic wedge position.
- The pressure movements come from keeping equal weight on each ski.
- The edging movements come from slightly rolling the ankles and knees to the inside edges.
- The balance / stance movements come from maintaining an equal flex in all joints (ankle/knee/hip).



## **TURN MECHANICS FOR LEVEL I CERTIFICATION DEMONSTRATIONS & TASKS**

### **Gliding Wedge to Wedge Stop**

Terrain: Suitable for first time beginning skiers.

Description: Skier begins in a small gliding wedge and gradually increases the size to finish in a wedge stop.

Mechanical Priorities:

- Balanced stance, similar flex at ankle/knee/hip
- Balanced over base of support
- Legs twist at same rate/time

### **Wedge Turns**

Terrain: Green terrain.

Description: Linked wedge turns with consistent speed, turn shape, rhythm and flow.

Mechanical Priorities:

- Turn legs under stable upper body and pelvis
- Consistent wedge size
- Flexion/extension movements are present throughout the entire turn
- Skis tip/turn at constant rate/time
- Speed control is managed through rounded turn shape

### **Wedge Christie:**

Terrain: Groomed green terrain.

Description: Wedge christie turns begin with steering both skis into a wedge and is finishing in a christie (skis skid during the turn on corresponding edges i.e. parallel). The inside ski is matched through speed, rotary, and edging movements. The timing of the match is dependent on speed and slope of the hill.

Mechanical Priorities:

- Balanced over base of support
- Flexion/extension movements are present and observable throughout the entire turn radius
- Both skis are steered into a wedge
- Turn legs under stable upper body and pelvis
- Inside ski is steered to parallel
- Speed control is managed through rounded turn shape

### **Side Slipping:**

Terrain: groomed blue terrain.

Description: Side slipping is a movement of the skis sideways down the fall line, controlled by maintaining a balanced stance over the skis and engaging the edges with the ankles and knees. The upper body remains facing downhill while the skis stay parallel facing across the hill. From a stop the edges are released and the skis travel down the fall line. The edges are then engaged to slow down or come to a stop.

Turn Mechanics:

- Align center of mass to outside ski and manage pressure foot to foot
- Legs remain under stable upper body and pelvis
- Angulation manages edge angle
- Skis tip at same time/rate

## **Traverse on downhill ski**

Terrain: Green groomed trail.

Description: Skier begins traversing across a green trail with both skis on the snow and parallel. Once the skis start to glide the skier balances more weight on the downhill ski and lifts just the tail of the uphill ski while continuing to a designated stopping area (where the tail of the uphill ski is placed back onto the snow).

Mechanical Priorities:

- Athletic stance, similar flex at ankle/knee/hip.
- Balance over outside ski, allowing inside tail to be picked up (tip may remain on snow)
- Legs are under stable upper body and pelvis
- Angulation manages edge angle
- Tails follow tips

## **Short Radius Turns:**

Terrain: Groomed blue terrain.

Description: A basic short radius turn is a parallel turn that has a quicker twisting of the legs against a disciplined and stable upper body. The turns stay in a corridor that is about 1 cat track wide.

Mechanical Priorities:

- Center of mass moves to direction of travel
- Legs turn at same rate/time
- Tails follow tips
- Flexion/extension movements are present and observable throughout the entire turn radius
- Align center of mass to outside ski and manage pressure foot to foot
- Turn legs under stable upper body and pelvis
- Pole use enhances turn
- Speed control is managed through rounded turn shape

## **Medium Radius Turns:**

Terrain: Groomed blue terrain.

Description: A basic medium radius turn is a parallel turn about 3 cat tracks wide. It's a faster turn with enough speed to release and then engage both edges simultaneously. Progressive edging from ankles, knees, and hip helps to minimize skidding of skis.

Mechanical Priorities:

- Center of mass moves to direction of travel
- Legs turn at same rate/time
- Tails follow tips
- Flexion/extension movements are present and observable throughout the entire turn radius
- Align center of mass to outside ski and manage pressure foot to foot
- Turn legs under stable upper body and pelvis
- Pole use enhances turn
- Speed control is managed through rounded turn shape

## THE MOVEMENT ANALYSIS SYSTEM

Ski instructors use the movement analysis system to:

- Evaluate and prioritize a student's skiing ability and goals.
- Identify movement patterns and cause/effect relationships.
- To better understand ski performance and turn mechanics.
- To develop progressions that are logical and based on a solid understanding of turn mechanics and biomechanics.

The following movement analysis sheet is one example of how to learn more about your students. Using the list on the sheet you can break down skier's movements to better understand how they move about, and then come up with a plan that blends your understanding of turn mechanics, biomechanics, and the skier's goals to formulate a progression.

To learn more about the movement analysis system you can read the Alpine Technical Manual (available in the accessories catalog at [www.thesnowpros.com](http://www.thesnowpros.com)). Resort training and PSIA clinics are other great opportunities to practice the movement analysis system with a trainer.

### Level 1 Movement Analysis

**Profile: Briefly describe the skier?**

- Male/Female
- Adult/Child
- Comfort level on terrain
- Athletic/non-athletic

**Turn Type: What type of turn is the skier attempting to make?**

- Straight run, Gliding Wedge, Braking Wedge, Wedge Turn, Beg. Wedge Christie
- Other
- Turn Shape (round, z, asymmetrical, skidded)

**Skills Assessment (use the skills concept to identify the skier's movements):**

Balance movements:

- Athletic stance: similar flex at ankle, knee, and hip
- Leaning on back of boot for support
- Laterally (side-to-side)
- Fore/aft

### Rotary movements:

Where does the rotary or twisting force originate from to turn the skis?

- Legs & feet (lower body), hip & shoulders (upper body), whole body

### Edging movements:

How does the skier roll or tilt the skis onto the edges?

- Active edging movements from: ankles, knees, and/or hips
- Passive edging movements from: slope of hill, shape of wedge, other
- Banking

### Pressure control movements:

How does the skier manage pressure changes while skiing?

How and when does the skier transfer weight from ski to ski?

- Active flexion and extension movements
- Active foot to foot movements / Equal weight on both feet
- Static
- Fore/aft leverage against front or back of boot

### Summarize the Skills Assessment:

Describe how the skier uses the skills during the initiation, shaping, and finishing phases of the turn.

### Equipment Factors:

- **Skis:** traditional, modern, length appropriate
- **Boots:** rear entry, 4 buckle, buckled, unbuckled
- **Pole use**

### Using the skills assessment evaluate, prioritize, and develop a lesson plan to meet the goals of your student.

- Identify a Primary & Secondary Skill Focus
- What would you work on first with this skier?
- What progression & exercises would you use to develop their skills?
- What terrain would you use for the progression & alternative exercises?
- How do you address different learning styles in your progression?

# THE TEACHING MODEL

Referenced from the PSIA Alpine Technical Manual, 2007

Snowsport instructors use a teaching model to help them learn about their students, design a teaching plan, and create a fun and memorable experiences for the guest.

## **Student Makeup + Instructor Behavior = The Learning Partnership**

### Student Make-up

*Discover your student's:*

- Characteristics & Background
- Learning Styles
- Motivation & Desires
- Emotional States
- Beliefs, attitudes, and values
- Physical Conditioning & health

### Instructor Behavior

*The Teaching Cycle/Outline of Plan to teach your students:*

- Introduce & develop trust
- Assess students and their movements
- Help determine goals & plan experiences
- Present & share information
- Guide practice
- Check for understanding
- Debrief the learning segment

### Learning Partnership

*Create a lesson that:*

- Is creative, individualized, and student-centered
- Is interactive & Fun
- Contributes to the student's success
- Produces positive results
- Provides ownership of skills
- Creates lasting memories
- Encourages future learning
- Culminates in guest satisfaction

# The Teaching Cycle - Adults

Referenced from the PSIA Alpine Technical Manual, 2007

## **Introduce and develop trust**

Begin the class by introducing yourself, establishing rapport and trust with the group. Create an environment that is fun, welcoming, and supportive.

## **Assess students and their movement**

Watch and assess your students to help understand their ability level, goals, fears, and determine how they learn may learn best from your instruction.

## **Help determine goals and plan**

Select appropriate goals, plan logical progressions of short meaningful information, choose appropriate terrain, link your teaching with your students goals.

## **Present and share information**

Identify your students learning styles and use appropriate teaching styles. Create a clear demonstration of the movements you want them to learn, describe the movements verbally, get your students to feel the movements you describe. Demonstrate movements to your students from many different angles.

## **Guided Practice**

Set practice at levels appropriate to the ability level, energy, and desires of your students. Provide feedback that is specific, timely, and relevant to what they are doing. Let students experiment, play, and problem solve.

## **Check For Understanding**

Visually watch students to see if they understand what you are teaching them. Ask them questions to help clarify concepts or movements. Be willing to re-assess your student's needs by presenting new information or re-packaging what you've already shown/told them to make it easier to understand.

## **Debrief the Learning Experience**

Summarize the lesson, experiences, successes, and give students a forecast for where they can go next (that day to practice) and what they will learn in their next lesson.

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# **A Simple Plan For Delivering An Effective Lesson**

## **by Mermer Blakeslee**

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### **Teaching A Lesson**

#### **Introduction (Goal Setting)**

- Introduce yourself.
- Open a dialogue with your student so that you create the feeling that learning is easy and fun.
- Ask questions so you learn about your student and what (s)he wants from you.
- Watch your student so you can discern his/her skill level (and what (s)he needs the most).
- Plan what to do to reach an achievable goal, one that satisfies what your student wants and what you can offer.

#### **Body (The Progression)**

- Speak concisely in simple language. Ask, "Am I being clear?"
- Show clearly what to do. Make sure your student can see you.
- Point out parts of the body they should look at. Ask, "Could you see that?"
- Let the student do it.
- Give necessary logistics (follow you? follow another student? where to stop, etc.).

#### **Give Feedback**

- Be specific. Check for reaction. End on a positive note.
- Repeat or progress to the next step based on your student's performance and attitude.

#### **Summary**

- Review and reinforce what is gained from the lesson.
- Give practice tips.
- Tell your students what they could learn in a future lesson and if appropriate, when you are available.

## Learning Styles

Referenced from the PSIA Alpine Manual, 1996

*The following chart illustrates ways to present information to students based on their learning preferences.*

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Watcher</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The instructor demonstrates differences in Z-shaped and round turns.</li><li>• The instructor has students ski behind him or her to observe how to make round turn shapes.</li><li>• The instructor demonstrates and has students focus on turn initiations, showing students not to rush at the start of the turn.</li></ul>                                          | <b>Doer</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The instructor draws two huge "C" shapes in the snow, one in each direction, and has students try to ski in the shapes.</li><li>• The instructor has students follow in his or her tracks and initiate turn shapes.</li><li>• The instructor places cones on the snow, two for each turn, that dictate turn shape. The students turn around each set of cones.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Thinker</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The instructor describes differences in turn shapes, providing reasons for rounded turn shapes.</li><li>• The instructor has students ski both Z-shaped and round turns, having them compare the benefits and problems of each turn.</li><li>• The instructor uses a ski pole to draw a turn in the snow and discusses how gravity can help round out turns.</li></ul> | <b>Feeler</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The instructor has students use flexion and extension to help smooth out turns. Students are instructed to flex progressively, instead of all at once, resulting in smoother, rounded turns.</li><li>• The instructor has students flex their ski boots a little forward and to the inside of the cuff. Students feel the increasing pressure that helps to round out turns.</li><li>• The instructor asks students to be aware of the lightness at turn initiation and heaviness at turn completion, then asks students to retain the lightness and soften the heaviness.</li></ul> |

## Teaching Styles

|                         |                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>COMMAND</b>          | Instructor is the main focus, while explaining and demonstrating.                                  |
| <b>TASK</b>             | Instructor steps back and watches the student perform the task, then provides feedback.            |
| <b>RECIPROCAL</b>       | Refers to pairing up students and having them observe each other. Encourages student interaction.  |
| <b>GUIDED DISCOVERY</b> | Take students through a range of activities that lead to self-revelation about a skill or concept. |
| <b>PROBLEM SOLVING</b>  | Set up a situation and have the students work through the problem.                                 |



## CLASS HANDLING

Class handling is the way you organize your group throughout the lesson.

- The way you line up your class
- The way you ski the group down the hill
- The way you analyze, give feedback and correct the group's skiing
- Where and how you stop the group



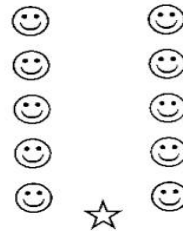
**Line up:** this is well structured but is 'dictatorial' and can create a you vs them feeling. Good option for limited space situations.



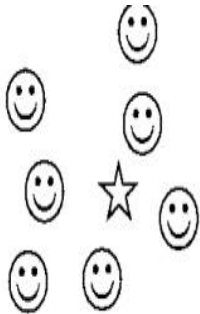
**Diagonal Line up:** this helps everyone see when you are doing a demo.



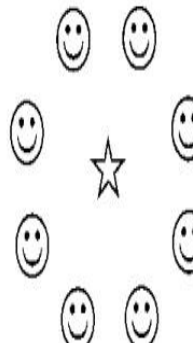
**Instructor included circle:** informal group feel but instructor is able to have visual and verbal communication with all students.



**Corridor:** good for large groups of beginners, especially for straight run exercises.



**Huddle:** Informal. Good for advanced students or for a casual atmosphere.



**Instructor at the centre of the circle:** good for beginner groups on the flat, although instructor must be careful to communicate with whole groups.



**Semi-circle:** More informal. Students all feel like part of the group. Limits vision when moving off.

## USING THE CAP MODEL TO TEACH CHILDREN

[CAP = Cognitive - Affective - Physical]

The main theme of the CAP Model is to teach the whole child by understanding how they think, what they value, and how they move physically at different developmental phases.

The charts below summarize each component of the CAP Model by different age groups.

| AGE   | PROFILE<br>(Cognitive Traits)       | HUMOR                           | FANTASY    | VALUES<br>(Affective Traits) |
|-------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|------------------------------|
| 3-5   | JUST ME                             | SLAPSTICK                       | I'M A FROG | BLK & WHITE                  |
| 6-9   | YOU'RE MY FRIEND                    | KNOCK/KNOCK<br>&<br>TOILET TALK | HEROS      | I'M SMARTER THEN<br>YOU      |
| 10-13 | ALL MY FRIENDS                      | NOTICING<br>DIFFERENCES         | TEAMS      | GROUP RULES                  |
| 13+   | ALL MY FRIENDS ARE<br>LOOKING AT ME | SARCASM                         | TEEN IDOL  | CONSCIENCE                   |

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

| AGE   | CENTER<br>OF MASS     | SKELETON/MUSCLES                                | COORDINATION                   |
|-------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 3-5   | CHEST-ISH             | LESS MUSCLE MASS                                | GROSS MOTOR                    |
| 6-9   | MOVING<br>DOWN        | PROPORTIONS CHANGING, STILL LESS<br>MUSCLE MASS | ARMS/LEGS                      |
| 10-13 | SORT OF<br>ADULT LIKE | MORE MUSCLE, PROPORTIONS GOOD,<br>GIRLS GROWING | UPPER/LOWER BODY<br>SEPARATION |
| 13+   | ADULT LIKE            | BOYS GROW AND GET "GANGLY"                      | FINE MOTOR                     |

## REALISTIC VS. IDEAL MOVEMENTS IN CHILDREN

| SKILL    | COMMON TRAITS                                                                                         | WHY THEY DO IT                                                                                                                                                           | REALISTIC                                                                                                             | IDEAL                                                                                    |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BALANCE  | WIDE STANCE 2 FOOTED<br>BREAKING @ WAIST<br><br>STRAIGHT BRACED DH SKI                                | *LACK OF STRENGTH<br>*PROVIDES BALANCE BECAUSE HEAD IS LARGER IN PROPORTION.<br>*GROSS MOTOR SKILLS MORE DEVELOPED THAN FINE.<br>*WHOLE LEG OFFERS STRENGTH AND SUPPORT. | *WEIGHT ON SKI TAILS<br>*INSIDE SKI WEIGHTED EQUALLY OR WITH MORE THAN THE OUTSIDE SKI                                | ALL JOINTS FLEXED EQUALLY<br><br>HIPS OVER FEET, EARS AHEAD OF HIPS, HANDS AHEAD OF EARS |
| ROTARY   | WHOLE LEG AND TORSO MOVE TOGETHER. YOUNGER KIDS BALANCE ON INSIDE LEG AND TURN OUTSIDE LEG AROUND IT. | WHOLE BODY MOVES AS UNIT<br><br>*ADDITIONAL TORQUE WITH UPPER BODY ADDS STRENGTH TO ROTARY                                                                               | SHOULDERS AND TORSO ROTATE IN THE SAME DIRECTIONS AS THE KNEES AND ANKLES IN ORDER TO GENERATE A TURN                 | LEGS ROTATE UNDERNEATH UPPER BODY TO GUIDE SKIS<br><br>*UPPER BODY STAYS STABLE          |
| EDGING   | EDGING BY PUSHING SKI AWAY FROM BODY OR MOVING BODY TO THE INSIDE                                     | GROSS MOTOR MOVEMENTS CREATE EDGE ANGLE UNTIL FINE ONES LIKE KNEE OR ANKLE ARE DEVELOPED                                                                                 | *LEGS AND BODY TIP INTO HILL AND AWAY FROM SKIS.<br>*SHINS HAVE LITTLE CONTACT WITH FRONT OF BOOT<br>*MOVEMENTS JERKY | *SHINS PRESS BOOT CUFFS TO HELP DIRECT SKIS ON EDGE                                      |
| PRESSURE | BRACING AGAINST OUTSIDE SKI WITH A STRAIGHT LEG                                                       | *LARGE EDGE ANGLES CREATED BY WIDE STANCE CAUSE PRESSURE BUILD UP<br>*LARGE MUSCLE GROUPS IN LEGS AND HIP GIVE STRENGTH TO DEAL WITH PRESSURE                            | *ENTIRE BODY BOUNCES OR IS UNSTABLE<br>*JOINTS OVER FLEXED/MOVEMENTS UNEVEN<br>*FOOT TO FOOT MOVEMENTS NOT REFINED    | FOOT TO FOOT MOVEMENTS HELP MATCHING OF SKIS AND EASE OF TURNING                         |

# THE TEACHING CYCLE FOR CHILDREN:

## PDAS

**PLAY** --- INTRODUCE THE LESSON AS FUN AND ASSESS ABILITIES IN A RELAXED, HAPPY ENVIRONMENT

**DRILL** ---DETERMINE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES THAT TARGET SPECIFIC SKILLS. WORK WITH ACTIVITIES THAT ARE CHALLENGING, FUN AND SUCCESS ORIENTED. PRESENT INFORMATION IN SHORT TIME SPANS AND PROVIDE LOTS OF DEMONSTRATIONS. KEEP IT INTERACTIVE

**ADVENTURE** ---TAKE WHAT THE STUDENTS HAVE LEARNED AND APPLY IT TO OUR WONDERFUL MOUNTAIN PLAYGROUND. EXPAND SKILLS IN A WIDE RANGE OF EXPERIENCES DURING PRACTICE TIME. TRANSFER LEARNING TO NEW SITUATIONS, AND CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

**SUMMARY** --- REINFORCE THEIR LEARNING WITH REMINDERS THROUGHOUT THE DAY. USE EASY TO REMEMBER CUE WORDS, REFRESH MEMORIES BEFORE GOING HOME AND TAKE TIME TO TALK WITH PARENTS.

# **Teaching Children -- CAP Summary**

## **The CAP Model:**

Cognitive: How we think

Affective: How we feel

Physical: How we move

The CAP Model reflects the changes inherent in children during the different stages of development. For our sake we have divided these stages into three groups:

1. From Age 2 or 3 to Age 6
2. From Age 7 to 11
3. From Age 12 to 18

These are generalizations and will vary from child to child, especially at either end of the age group.

## **Ages 2/3 to 6:**

Cognitive:

Child is egocentric, not part of the group; has little sense of personal vs. outer space.

Has little understanding of cause and effect; things just “are.”

How does it look and feel to ski correctly?

Can process one instruction at a time; use as few words as possible

Affective:

Humor is slapstick and silly

Play is individual

Identity is self-determined (as opposed to group)

Physical:

Center of Mass is higher; head is disproportionately large

Little muscular strength; hard to get up, use skeletal strength for support and balance

Motor Control is less developed; will use bigger muscles (legs) rather than smaller ones (feet)

Visually can focus near but not far. Aurally cannot isolate one noise among many.

## **Ages 7 to 11:**

Cognitive:

Can understand hypothetical ideas, visualization, and imagery to explain movements

Know the difference between real and make-believe (don't patronize them)

Can sequence 3 or more instructions, but still keep it simple

Can reverse movements; understand directionality (front/back, left/right)

Affective:

Humor: knock-knock jokes, riddles

Play is more cooperative, group-oriented, rules and competition begin to appeal (try to allow for multiple winners or self-competition)  
Identity as part of a group; realize that adults are not infallible – will test you!

**Physical:**

Center of Mass around navel  
Beginning to develop more muscular strength; better able to center themselves  
Fine motor control developing; can start to use more foot rotary

**Ages 12 to 18:**

**Cognitive:**

These are basically smaller adults in their ability to process information  
Can follow a complex series of instructions (but may not want to stand still for them)

**Affective:**

Humor is more sophisticated (they will appreciate adult jokes but try to keep it clean)  
Play can be more competitive; they expect rules.  
Identity is peer-driven

**Physical:**

Adult-like strength and motor control  
During adolescent growth spurts they may experience regression of coordination

# EXERCISES/TEACHING PLANS FOR LEVELS 1-3 SKIERS

The following material is excerpted from PSIA's *Alpine Handbook* and is used with permission from the Professional Ski Instructors of America.

## Beginning Phase—Level 1

**Student:** First time on skis.

**Technical Content:** Walking, straight gliding, and gliding wedge; introduction to wedge turn

### Lesson Goals—Level 1

- Become comfortable with new equipment and the new sensations associated with skiing.
- Develop a comfortably tall stance, with weight distributed over the whole foot; slight flex in the ankles, knees, and at the waist; and shoulders rolled gently forward.
- Acquire movements of guiding the feet and legs through walking, sidestepping, straight running, and changing the size of the wedge.
- Develop a sense for edge engagement and release by keeping the ski flat to walk and edged to sidestep; and by maintaining a relatively flat ski in the gliding wedge to more edge engagement in the braking wedge.
- Transfer weight from foot to foot while walking and during a straight run.
- Learn how to climb uphill on skis.
- Develop the sensations of moving on the flats, of climbing, and of straight running.
- Learn to do a gliding wedge and a braking wedge.
- Introduce easy (mild) wedge turns.

## Exercises—Level 1

### Becoming Acquainted with Skiing

- Try stance and balance movements without skis.
- Learn how to carry skis.
- Practice getting into and out of bindings.
- Learn how to hold ski poles.
- Lift one ski and turn it from side to side, then repeat with the other ski. Develop comfort with the length and weight of skis and boots.
- Try scooter turns in both directions.
- Walk with both skis on, then change direction.
- Glide between steps, then add poles to push.
- Flex and extend the legs.
- Turn by opening the tips in small steps. Then turn by opening the tails in small steps.
- Change from a normal stance to a bowlegged position, then to a knocked-knee position. Examine the relationship between the outside edge, inside edge, and a flat ski.
- “Fall” while stopped, by getting low and sitting down to one side. Get up by removing one ski. Other alternatives can be used with athletic students.

### **Climbing and Static Turning**

- Use leg movements to tip the skis sideways onto their edges. Perform this exercise on flat terrain. Localize the movements, first in the feet, then in the ankles, the knees, and finally in the whole leg.
- Sidestep on the flats to develop the movement pattern.
- Sidestep for a short distance up and down the slope.
- Try pie or bullfighter turns. (Step the tails of the skis around, using the poles for support.)

### **Straight Running**

- Straight run on shallow terrain to a stop. Select terrain that has a flat runout or a slight counter-slope to allow stopping with minimal effort. Stand in a slightly flexed position, with eyes and hands forward.

- Alternate between high and low body positions.
- Experiment with extreme positions to discover a balanced stance; make exaggerated fore/aft movements to find a comfortable position.
- Move smoothly up and down to develop ankle and knee flex.
- Alternate lifting one ski up and then the other to become comfortable with balance while transferring weight from one foot to the other.
- Alternate taking small steps to each side.

### **Gliding Wedge and Braking Wedge**

- On flat terrain, hop the ski tails into a wedge, then hop back into a parallel position.
- Brush the skis into a wedge. Repeat until you can brush both skis evenly.
- Start in a straight run and brush the skis into a wedge.
- Go from a straight run to a wedge and back to a straight run again (i.e., a wedge change-up).
- Make a wedge stop to demonstrate ability to control speed.
- Go from gliding to braking to gliding. Explore the feeling of engaging and releasing the skis' edges while in a wedge.

### **Wedge Turn Introduction**

- Demonstrate a mild wedge turn.
- Ask students to turn toward a landmark.
- Have students follow a line drawn in the snow for one turn.
- Try turning out of the fall line in a fan progression.
- Ski following a line drawn to represent two turns.
- Extend the legs slightly between turns.

### **Sample Indoor Progression**

Try the movements of this progression with shoes or in stocking feet and then while wearing ski boots.

1. Introduction to equipment.
2. Do sidestep and pie turns.
3. Walk forward, alternating between pointing the toes out and pointing them in.
4. Use tape to create an obstacle course on the floor to simulate skiing movements.
5. Practice the wedge position. (On a slick surface such as linoleum, practice going from a straight run to a wedge and back again in stocking feet.)



## Sample On-Snow Progression

1. Introduction to equipment.
2. Walk around with boots on.
3. Practice carrying skis.
4. Walk on snow with one ski on and one ski off.
5. Learn scooter push-off and scooter turns. (Take one ski off, then push off of the foot without the ski, as if riding a scooter.)
6. Try pie or bullfighter turns.
7. Practice climbing (sidestepping, herringbone).
8. Ski a straight run.
9. Make a straight run with balancing exercises.
10. Learn a gliding wedge.
11. Vary wedge size.
12. Make a braking wedge.
13. Learn a wedge stop.
14. Try first wedge turns.

## Beginning Phase—Level 2

**Student:** Has spent a few hours on the slopes and can ski in a cautious wedge stance on easiest terrain; can link basic wedge turns.

**Technical Content:** Wedge turns that are progressively more round and rhythmic

## Lesson Goals—Level 2

- Practice and review balance and wedge exercises.
- Increase and decrease edge angles while moving downhill in a wedge position.
- Start turns with both skis flat. The edge angle on the outside ski increases throughout the arc of the turn.
- Adjust body position to change weight distribution from ski to ski during the turns.
- Guide the skis by turning the feet and legs in the desired direction of travel.
- Review and become comfortable with the gliding and braking wedge. Vary the size of the wedge for speed control.
- Develop linked wedge turns.
- Learn to ride the lift.

- Be able to change turn shape, control speed, and move around on easier beginning terrain.

## Exercises—Level 2

### Traversing and Stopping in a Wedge

- Perform a wedge change-up, going from a gliding wedge to a braking wedge.
- Change edge angles by moving the knees in and out while maintaining a braking wedge.
- Ski with an open-stance traverse, applying more weight to the downhill ski.
- While traversing, lift the tail of the inside ski, lift the whole ski, then lift the tip.
- Make a wedge and stop out of a traverse.
- From a traverse, take parallel steps uphill until stopped. (The stopping occurs naturally as the steps move the skier more across the fall line and finally uphill.)

**Tip:** Being able to stop and control the direction of travel is one of the most important concerns for a beginning student. Remain on easier terrain until the student can accomplish these maneuvers.

### Linking Wedge Turns (With and Without Traverse)

- Begin with slight direction changes in the fall line.
- Look in the direction of the intended turn.
- Extend to start the turn, and flex the knees and ankles to complete the turn.
- Move the knee of the turning ski forward and in the direction of the turn to add more shape.
- Guide the outside ski by moving the outside leg and foot in the direction of the turn.
- Make round wedge turns with a traverse.

## Varying Turn Shape

- Ski turns in the fall line and while crossing the fall line. Select unchallenging terrain for this exercise.
- Reduce speed by turning across the fall line, and accelerate with turns in the fall line.
- Perform turns that decrease speed, and learn to feel the increase in pressure distributed on the outside ski in braking turns.
- Ski turns with different shape and speed, and learn to distinguish the difference in edge and pressure in various turns.

### Suggestions for Teaching Students to Ride the Lift

One of the most challenging experiences when learning to ski (other than those first bewildering minutes on the snow) is learning to ride the lift. As an instructor, you can help reduce the potential for problems to occur by providing a clear description of the process. Observation, explanation, and guided experience save problems for the student and for you. The following tips may prove helpful in this effort.

1. Review the area's lift loading/unloading procedures.
2. Remember that students should be able to handle the terrain serviced by the lift before going up.
3. Explain lift loading, riding, and unloading procedures, and check for understanding.
4. Have students watch other skiers load the lift, and point out the steps to them.
5. Go through lift loading and unloading simulation.
6. Instruct students where and how to regroup after unloading.
7. Organize the class to ride the lift.
8. Let the lift operator know that this is the class's first time loading.
9. Ask the operators for assistance, if necessary.

### Sample Progression

1. Do a gliding wedge to a stop on a natural runoff.
2. Go from a gliding wedge to a braking wedge to a stop.
3. Do a wedge change-up (go from a wedge to a straight run and back). This can be repeated several times.
4. Make slight direction changes from a straight (fall-line) wedge.
5. Link wedge turns.
6. Learn to ride the lift.

## Beginning Phase—Level 3

**Student:** Skis with a solid wedge turn on easier green trails.

**Technical Content:** Wedge turn exploration and improvement; introduction to wedge-christie turns

### Lesson Goals—Level 3

- Flatten the skis to release the edges as the turn is initiated.
- Make turns in which edge angles in the middle phase of the turn are small and the turn is skidded.
- Increase edge engagement after crossing the fall line.
- Review the wedge turn to increase confidence in the ability to change direction. Link wedge turns rhythmically.
- Vary turn size and shape. Skiing around cones or terrain features can help.
- Develop the ability to control speed by changing turn shape.
- Ski faster and across the hill to encourage skidding and matching.
- Explore the mountain environment on easy terrain.
- Learn to sideslip and do wedge garlands. (In a garland, start the turn but do not cross the fall line. Several of these done in succession make a wavy line or garland across the slope.)
- Do a beginning wedge christie—link turns with a skidded finish.

### Exercises—Level 3

#### Developing Confidence in Gliding Wedge and Wedge Turns

- Do wedge change-ups.
- Do a backward wedge on a very gentle slope. (This exercise is for young students.)
- Start in a wedge. Lift up the tail of one ski, then lift the whole ski off the snow. Lift the left ski and step left, then lift the right ski and step right.
- Do wedge turns of various sizes and at slow and then faster speeds.

### **Beginning Wedge Christie: Linked Turns With Skidded Finish**

- Make short turns in the fall line using a small wedge.
- Increase speed and round out the turn by guiding both feet through the turn.
- Lift the inside ski and set it down while making round turns.
- Do a straight sideslip.
- Do a forward sideslip.
- Perform linked turns with a skidded finish.
- Guide the skis with the feet and legs to round out the turn.

### **Sample Progression**

1. Review wedge and wedge turns (use this as part of an active warm-up).
2. Vary the wedge size and turn shape.
3. Introduce sideslipping.
4. Ski gliding wedge turns across the fall line to encourage skidding.
5. Ski green terrain that facilitates matching at turn completion.

### **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY CODE:**

1. Always stay in control
2. People ahead of you have the right of way.
3. Stop in a safe place for you and others.
4. Whenever starting downhill or merging, look uphill and yield.
5. Use devices to help prevent runaway equipment.
6. Observe signs and warnings, and keep off closed trails.
7. Know how to use the lifts safely.

## LEVEL 1 BEGINNERS

### DEVELOPMENTAL EXERCISES:

#### Boot Exercises:

1. Walk around, flex, rock forward/back and side to side.
2. Walk with boots buckled and unbuckled.
3. Hop, jump, step side to side.

#### One Ski Exercises:

1. Explore balance – trying to keep and equal flex in all joints
2. Scooter in a square, circle, races.
3. Push and twist ski to a wedge position.

#### Stationary Exercises:

1. Rock forward and backward and find center.
2. Stand low and flexed and then tall and straight.
3. Bounce/hop up and down.
4. Walk in place lifting skis.
5. Step into a wedge position.

#### Walking / Stepping / Climbing Exercises:

1. Shuffle forward.
2. Shuffle backward.
3. Step around tips, step around tails.
4. Walking in wedge forward.
5. Step sideways, step sideways uphill & downhill

#### Sliding Exercises:

1. Push with poles and slide forward on flats
2. Push with poles and slide backward on flats.
3. Slide forward flexing and extending.
4. Slide forward and shift weight from foot to foot.
5. Slide across the hill.

#### Wedging Exercises:

1. Review wedging in place
2. Slide and wedge. (gliding wedge)
3. Slide and wedge in different sizes. (wedge change-ups)
4. Slide and wedge small to large.
5. Gliding wedge to full stop.

#### First Turning Exercises:

1. Wedge and follow slightly curved track.
2. Wedge and turn one foot (like stopping with one foot).
3. Wedge and turn one foot, then the other foot alternately and gradually.
4. Wedge and point (aim) wedge to left and then right (two footed turning).
5. Wedge and flex over outside ski while turning.
6. Wedge and step tiny steps in new direction.
7. Wedge turn to a stop across the hill.

## **CORRECTIVE EXERCISES**

### **Losing Balance While Standing:**

1. Check equipment.
2. Check terrain, are you on a flat area or slight slope.
3. Explore balance in ski boots, then in one ski, then both skis.

### **Losing Balance While Walking:**

1. Check boots for fit.
2. Check skis for snow build-up or icing.
3. Check terrain for ice or excessive pitch.
4. Practice movements without skis.
5. Practice movements without poles.
6. Hold hands and walk in pairs or as a group.
7. Make smaller steps.

### **Losing Balance While Sliding:**

1. Check terrain for pitch and snow conditions.
2. Check skis for snow or ice on running surface.
3. Check bindings for dragging brakes.
4. Practice movements without poles.
5. Make sure skis are the correct length.
6. Flex all joints equally for good balance.
7. Ski with hands on thighs.
8. Slowly build longer straight gliding.

### **Difficulty Climbing Up Slope on Skis:**

1. Check boots for a snug fit, tighten buckles if necessary.
2. Check stance on flat terrain.
3. Practice sidestepping on flat terrain.
4. Roll downhill ankle and knee uphill before stepping.
5. Make sure the skis are pointing across the hill and stay perpendicular to the slope.
6. Take skis off and practice sidestepping in boots.

### **Difficulty Wedging:**

1. Check terrain. Do not go too high up practice slope.
2. Practice wedging in just ski boots.
3. Do flatland wedging drills (see Development Exercises).
4. Check for imbalances in turning both legs.
5. Start in a wedge before sliding.
6. Stand in a wedge and practice making the skis flat before wedging.
7. Step into a wedge.
8. Try to turn both feet and legs equally as they wedge.
9. Wedge gradually, not abruptly.

**Difficulty Turning:**

1. Check terrain. Move to easier area if necessary.
2. Check wedge size. Smaller wedges turn, bigger wedges drag.
3. Check for “wedge-lock”. Are the skis locked on too much of an edge angle.
4. Check that boots are buckled snugly.
5. Turn gradually in a an arc, not in an “L”.
6. Keep weight evenly balanced, then lean over downhill ski.
7. Practice tracing half circle in boots to work on leg turning skills.

**REINFORCEMENT EXERCISES:****Walking / Stepping / Climbing:**

1. Take a walking tour of the teaching area.
2. Set an obstacle course to walk or go on 1 ski – scooter style.
3. Have a relay race, pass off a glove or pole.

**Sliding:**

1. Slide for increasingly longer and longer distances.
2. Have short slide races.
3. Slide over small bumps or mounds of snow.

**Wedging:**

1. Slide and widen and then narrow the wedge.
2. Slide over changing terrain and change wedge to keep speed consistent.
3. Wedge across the fall line.

**Turning:**

1. Set a simple course with cones or poles.
2. Draw a line in the snow and have students keep line in between ski tips.
3. Try having student hold hands over skis and turn hands with legs and feet.
4. Try linking more turns and then turning uphill or across the hill to slow down.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL EXERCISES:**

### **WEDGE TURNING EXERCISES:**

#### **Rotary Movements:**

1. Stand in boots on flats and twist legs and feet into wedge position.
2. Practice making wedge turns walking in boots downhill.
3. Make small wedge turns. Aim, "point of arrow" from side to side.

#### **Edge Control Movements:**

1. Walk on inside edges of boots without skis on.
2. Wedge traverse across hill, roll ankle and knee of downhill ski into the hill.
3. Gliding wedge to a stop, increase rolling inside edges into the snow.

#### **Pressure Control Movements:**

1. Wedge turns starting with equal flex in all joints (relatively tall) then flex more.
2. Wedge turns using a peddling motion from foot to foot (use in garland across hill).
3. Tap tail of uphill ski through the turn.
4. Take small steps lifting each ski to turn.

## **CORRECTIVE EXERCISES:**

#### **Difficulty Turning to One Side:**

1. Strengthen weak side with fan progression. Wedge turn uphill to a stop from a steeper and steeper wedge traverse.
2. Pedal strongly from one ski to the other as you move from one turn to the next.
3. Practice flexing uphill ski more and staying balanced over downhill ski.

#### **Over Rotating Upper Body While Turning:**

1. Boot turns to emphasize leg and foot turning skills.
2. Ski with hands on thighs to focus on turn the legs.
3. Use gentle terrain, put a line in snow with pole, have student aim their wedge from one side of the line to the other just with feet and legs.

## APPENDIX

# NATIONAL CERTIFICATION STANDARDS - ALPINE LEVEL 1

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION: LEVEL 1

Level I-certified members will demonstrate a solid foundation of information and experience necessary to be an effective ski teacher. The Certified Level I instructor possesses an understanding of *basic* skiing skills, teaching skills, and professional knowledge. It is not expected that Level I candidates will have in-depth knowledge and experience in each of the areas of competence listed in these Standards. It is expected, however, that candidates will be able to show basic competence and knowledge in all of these areas. In addition, it is expected that candidates will be able to demonstrate a significant level of competency with the skiing and teaching tasks listed specifically for assessment at a Level I event.

## CATEGORY A: SKIING

### General Requirements

Level I – certified teachers must be able to ski all greens and groomed blue terrain demonstrating consistent balance and control of speed through turn shape. Demonstrations must display an “understandable picture” of the technical elements of Beginner/Novice zone skiing. The turn dynamics are limited by the speeds and terrain appropriate for Beginner/Novice zone skiing and tasks.

## CATEGORY A: SKIING

### Specific Skill Requirements for Level I Instructors

| Skills                                                                                     | Description of Skill Requirements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>General Characteristics</b>                                                             | <p>The candidate will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consistently link turns with sustained rhythm</li><li>• Maintain consistent speed by controlling the shape of a turn</li><li>• Maintain a balanced stance throughout a series of turns</li><li>• Demonstrate an appropriate blend of skills (with consideration for the snow conditions, equipment, terrain, etc.)</li><li>• Ski a variety of turn sizes within a series of turns while maintaining speed control</li></ul> |
| <b>Balance</b><br><br>(Level 1 Beginner/Novice zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)          | <p>The candidate will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintain lateral and fore-aft balance through common tasks and demonstrations.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Rotary Movements</b><br><br>(Level 1 Beginner/Novice zone terrain, speed, and dynamics) | <p>The candidate will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrate a gradual steering of the skis to assist turn shaping</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |



|                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Edge Control Movements</b><br><br>(Level 1 Beginner/ Novice zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)     | The candidate will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate a gradual increasing and decreasing of edge angle throughout a series of turns</li> <li>• Demonstrate use of ski design in Beginner/Novice zone level skiing tasks</li> </ul> |
| <b>Pressure Control Movements</b><br><br>(Level I Beginner/ Novice zone terrain, speed, and dynamics) | The candidate be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain ski-snow contact with both skis</li> <li>• Demonstrate a shift of pressure to the outside ski throughout a series of turns</li> </ul>                                                 |

## CATEGORY B: TEACHING

### General Requirements

Level I-certified teachers demonstrate a solid foundation of information, and experience necessary to be an effective teacher of Beginner/Novice zone skiers. A basic understanding of how to manage the learning environment for different age and gender situations is required.

### Specific Skill Requirements for Level I Instructors

| Skills                                        | Skill Requirements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Awareness, Understanding And Knowledge</b> | The candidate will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the coach/student relationship and how to develop trust between him – or herself and the student</li> <li>• Recall the components of the learning environment and discuss how to incorporate them into lessons that will create memorable experiences</li> <li>• Identify the components of good teaching</li> <li>• Categorize teaching, skiing, and guest service principles of ATS, relative to Beginner/Novice zone students</li> <li>• Understand student needs of specific groups (i.e., adults, children, women, seniors, beginners, etc.)</li> <li>• List considerations for managing the learning environment for children at different stages of development</li> </ul> |

|                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Application</b> | <p>The candidate will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach the public through the Beginner/Novice zone</li> <li>• Demonstrate an ability to develop a relationship of trust between teacher and student</li> <li>• Identify learning styles and preferences and cite examples of how to use them in a lesson</li> <li>• Recognize the “stepping stones” concept and identify a pathway to learning based on the needs of students specific to the instructors home area</li> <li>• Handle a class based on group energy level, conditions, safety and lesson content</li> <li>• Predict and meet the needs of specific groups (i.e., children, seniors, men)</li> </ul> |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### **CATEGORY C: Professional Knowledge**

Professional knowledge requirements for Level I-certified teachers reflect a practical awareness of general terms and concepts, and an ability to use these concepts in basic lesson situations for Beginner/Novice zone students. Decision-making and lesson content will most likely follow preplanned options, with consideration for varied skill development emphasis.

#### **Specific Skill Requirements for Level I Instructors**

| <b>Skill Category</b> | <b>Skill Requirements</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Terminology</b>    | <p>The candidate will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define and explain basic skiing terminology as described in the <i>Alpine Technical Manual</i></li> <li>• Define and explain basic terminology as described in the <i>Core Concepts Manual</i></li> </ul>     |
| <b>Equipment</b>      | <p>The candidate will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify equipment needs for skiers through the Beginner/Novice zone</li> <li>• Categorize the basic options and benefits of modern ski designs</li> <li>• Identify common equipment safety issues</li> </ul> |

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|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Skills Concept</b>    | <p>The candidate will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the role of balance relative to the other skill categories and movements</li> <li>• Identify effective movements and skill development through the Beginner/Novice zone</li> <li>• Understand the concept of skill blending, and identify how different skill blends create different outcomes regarding ski performance for a Beginner/Novice zone skier</li> <li>• Teach a traditional skill blend for Beginner/Novice zone skiers (<i>wedge stepping stones</i>)</li> <li>• Develop Beginner/Novice zone skiers along a track to parallel skiing that is not based on the foundation of a wedge (<i>parallel stepping stones</i>)</li> <li>• Create an activity list for each skill category</li> </ul> |
| <b>Movement Analysis</b> | <p>The candidate will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize general movement patterns relative to skill categories in Beginner/Novice zone skiers</li> <li>• Identify desired skill and movement outcomes in various types of Beginner/Novice zone skiing including beginner parallel and wedge turn progressions</li> <li>• List exercises and tasks that address a student's needs, the equipment being used, terrain options, etc.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Personal Mastery</b>  | <p>The candidate will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and develop a vision for personal growth as a snowsports teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the pathways for personal and professional growth by identifying the resources available both inside and outside of PSIA-AASI</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Plan short- and long-range schedules for training and certification goals</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

## NEW SKIER RETENTION

### INSTRUCTORS VITAL CONNECTION TO GROWING THE INDUSTRY

Snow sport instructors are the critical interface between resorts and the skiing guests and are crucial in keeping both beginners and more experienced skiers connected to the sport. Surveys (2000-2005) conducted by Snow Sports Industry America (SIA) and the National Ski Areas Association (NSAA) point out that only an estimated 5 % of all Americans are engaged in winter sports. This rate has remained steady for the past ten years with no evidence of growth. Furthermore, the drop out rate for first timers is a whopping 85%. These results underscore the vital link instructors hold in promoting our sport. Despite the apparent numbers of new skiers and snowboarders that arrive at our areas each season, the industry is not growing skier/boarder participation over time. Instructors are pivotal to skier and boarder retention.

#### DISPELLING INDUSTRY MYTHS:

Many instructors believe that lack of growth is caused by the high prices to participate. However, SIA and NSAA data show a variety of factors not just economics, as the leading causes. Shared responses such as wanting someone to go with, perceiving that you have to be skilled to have fun, and learning the sport is difficult; greatly outnumber factors such as standing in lift lines and the

expense. Another key finding is the relationship between guest's skill level, enthusiasm, participation, and sales. Enthusiasm tends to be high among advanced skiers/boarders. These folks make up the largest group of participants on the hill, and they tend to spend more money. In contrast, enthusiasm among beginners is low. First timers did note that they would be much more likely to increase participation if they were better at it.

Resort managers often ask themselves, "How can I get the guest to spend more time at my area than my competitors?" According to SIA's (2000) research, "When the consumer feels their proficiency at skiing/snowboarding is increasing, they feel more confident, they participate more and they spend more dollars." This emphasis on the value of instruction is woven into every aspect of growing the industry.

### **IMPROVING RETENTION:**

The end of season report compiled by NSAA in 2005 noted that, "skier visitation models demonstrate that long-term, sustainable growth in the industry will be strongly tied to improving the retention of entry level skiers, in large measure through improved and upgraded lesson programs." In order to address the dwindling number of beginners returning after their first experience, the NSAA created a *Model for Growth*. This plan has been in place for the past 4 years. By utilizing test sites from across the country to gather data, the NSAA and other research associates have been instrumental in changing our knowledge of new participants and how to better meet their needs, as well as important industry trends that help resorts plan for the future.

The following ten elements best describe some of the primary recommendations cultivated by NSAA test sites for their Model for Growth:

1. Provide information about what to expect
2. Improve arrival process with signs and greeters
3. Focus on boot fit and on providing extra attention in rental shop
4. Maximum group lesson size of seven students
5. Grouping of lesson participants by athleticism and learning goals
6. Staff beginner lessons with senior instructors
7. Focus on personalized lesson closure
8. Provide roving instructors for non-lesson takers
9. Follow-up with guest and invite them back
10. Create a resort culture with all resort staff of valuing beginners

### **MAKING A DIFFERENCE AT YOUR RESORT:**

Resorts have the opportunity to influence all the factors that will have a positive effect on new skiers and boarders returning. However it's impossible to pigeon-hole a single element that could transform the resort as a whole. Simple areas to begin with are helping guests know where to start their day upon arrival, and giving them extra attention in the rental shop to help stream-line the process before taking a lesson. At the lesson area, double check that the guests are appropriately grouped, and then designate a roving instructor to give free tips in the beginner areas.

There are several things you can do as an instructor to make the guests' day more enjoyable. Begin by learning how to recognize equipment related issues that could be remedied before the start of the lesson. Develop a checklist that includes observing the guests choice of clothing, protective gear (goggles, sunscreen, etc), and type of boots and skis. If having a successful first lesson means returning to the rental shop before continuing with the lesson to address an uncomfortable boot fit, lack of appropriate socks, or skis that are too long, ultimately this may be the best option.

During the lesson take breaks often, but use these as opportunities to demonstrate how to carry your equipment or explain what to anticipate when using the lifts. Most importantly avoid making guests wait in line with the call down method. Try setting up space for them to be able to hike up the hill and slide down at their own pace. While it takes a tiresome 5 to 7 steps to equal sliding the length of your skis, consider encouraging your management to invest in *Magic Carpets*. By eliminating what can be a very exhausting experience for new boarders and skiers, we are more likely to see these people return the next day eager for more. Even when you are limited by space, working together with fellow instructors to come up with creative solutions is better than doing nothing at all.

The development and implementation of progressive and innovative lessons have been identified as a crucial link to growing the industry. However, our role as instructors is only as effective as the information we receive from PSIA or by seeking out the recommendations put forth by NSAA and SIA. Staying current with these industry initiatives is as important as attending professional development clinics or pursuing another level of certification. Clearly, we as instructors have been designated as having the greatest effect on creating lifelong skier and boarder enthusiasts.

Heidi Ettlinger, 2006