

Welcome to Instructing!



Welcome! And thank you for donating your time to Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra and our students. People with disabilities gain enormous benefits from participating in our program. Sports provide mobility, freedom of movement and optimal health. The increased self-esteem our students gain through our program enables them to pursue a more rewarding lifestyle by promoting their abilities versus their disabilities. Your time allows this to happen!



This guide will provide instructors with teaching information needed to be successful at DSES and at other ski and snowboard schools. We are a member school of Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) and follow the teaching philosophies of PSIA and American Association of Snowboard Instructors (AASI). This guide will familiarize you with the American Teaching System (ATS) and its components and give you an idea of **who** our students are, **what** to teach them and **how** to do it. You will also find some of the most common adaptations for teaching people with disabilities. For detailed descriptions of disabilities, adaptive progressions and equipment progressions, please refer to our extensive library or attend our clinics specific to those topics.

We believe that consistency of product and service determines the success of an organization, and it is important that all of our instructors



follow established teaching guidelines. Following these guidelines makes lessons within our organization consistent – students can have any instructor and expect the same quality lesson. Not only does this enhance the quality of lessons at DSES but it allows our students to move seamlessly from our program to any other ski/snowboard school.

We have high standards for all of our staff and volunteers and expect you to always act in a professional manner and to promote guest service ideals. Always use the priority of Safety, Fun and Learning in all of your lessons.

Thank you again for donating your time and energy to our students and their families and caregivers – it's one of the greatest gifts you can give. We hope that your time here is enjoyable and rewarding.

Thank you for your time,

The Trainers and Staff of Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra

American Teaching System (ATS)

What is it? ATS is a progression oriented, outcome based and student centered teaching format. Or put another way, an individual's skiing or riding skills build on one another based upon the student's needs.

Principles and Philosophies

- Student Centered
- Outcome Based
- Experiential
- Learning Partnership Based
- Guest Service Driven

Components

- **Teaching Model**
 - Instructor Behavior – Adaptive Teaching Model
 - Student Behavior – Background and Motivation, Learning Preferences, Attitude, etc.
- **Skiing/Snowboarding Model**
 - Skiing skills concept – balance, rotary, edging, pressure
 - Snowboarding skills concept – pivoting, pressure, tilting, twist
- **Service Model**
 - Meet and greet everyone
 - Effective communication

Why follow ATS?

ATS gives instructors and ski schools a format for consistency. ATS allows all instructors of all abilities in all disciplines a guideline for progressing or correcting movement patterns. Using ATS as a foundation for creating lesson plans gives us a base for adapting to any variety of students.

Who Are Our Guests?

Our guests include people with any of a wide range of cognitive and physical disabilities and their families or their caregivers. People come to our program for a variety of reasons, and it's imperative that instructors find out guests' needs and goals, abilities and limitations before determining a lesson plan. Generally, our students are not able to learn in the environment of a group or require specialized equipment. Recognizing and understanding our students' unique needs is a key component of the Teaching Model.



The Adaptive Teaching Model

1. Introduce the Learning Segment

Establish and continually build rapport with the student. Create a fun, open and supportive environment. Clearly define the general process and outcome of the lesson.

2. Assess the Student

Conduct a thorough evaluation of the student's disability so you can adapt, modify and prepare the physical aspects of the lesson to meet the student's needs. Review the disability or disabilities on the DSES website to understand how the disability might affect on hill performance. Inquire about previous experience with skiing and other sports. Take the student's learning preferences into consideration. Remember, the student or the student's family is the best resource for his or her disability.

3. Determine Goals and Plan Objectives

Jointly set goals based on the skier's potential and desires. Select and fit appropriate adaptive equipment. Plan learning objectives relative to the student's goals. Formulate a logical progression. Choose suitable terrain and snow conditions for lesson activities.

4. Present and Share Information

Demonstrate the appropriate adaptive technique and use of the adaptive equipment. Vary styles of presenting information to be suitable to the situation.

- a. Cognitive – explaining the rationale behind the technical, mechanical and tactical elements in a logical and concise manner.
- b. Visual – creating clear and meaningful images of specific movement patterns
- c. Kinesthetic – developing body awareness and sensations associated with different movements.
- d. Trial and Error – allowing the student the opportunity to experiment with new information.

5. Guided Practice

Set practice tasks that are appropriately challenging. Make sure that students get lots of mileage to practice new skills. Provide specific feedback to the student. Reinforce student progress.

6. Check for Understanding

Verify the student's level of physical understanding based on skiing performances that are consistent with the lesson objectives.

7. Summarize the Learning Segment

Review the learning segment goals and objectives and describe the degree of accomplishments to the student. Preview the next learning segment and encourage further development. Establish independent practice guidelines for each student. Invite the student back!



What Do You Teach?

As member of PSIA and AASI, DSES follows the principles of the American Teaching System and the Skiing Model.

The Fundamental Skills of Skiing and Snowboarding have three common skills with skiing adding balance as a skill and snowboarding adding torsional flex. As you read through the following please note the similarities between the skills involved in both snowboarding and skiing.



The Four Fundamental Skills of Skiing	The Four Fundamental Skills of Snowboarding
<p>Balancing Movements: This is the most fundamental skill. If a student is not able to balance over the center of the skis all the other skills and the student's ability to progress will be affected. Generally a balanced skier is one where the skier's center of mass is over the center of the ski. For stand up skiers, individuals should be upright with shins lightly touching the front of the boots, hips over the feet, looking ahead and hands in front. For sit down skiers the same principles apply, but positions need to be modified for the individual, so the skier's center of mass is over the center of the ski.</p>	<p>Torsional Flex or Twisting Movement: This movement twists the board along the long axis of the board. When initiating turns, twisting the board allows for a smoother turn and earlier initiation point during the turn. It also allows the snowboarder to maintain an edge while traversing flat areas without fear of catching an edge.</p>
<p>Rotary Movements: For beginning skiers this is the skill of next highest priority after balance. The most efficient way to turn the skis is by rotating the whole leg within the pelvis. This is the movement that should be taught to all stand-up skiers if it is possible. For many of our students that lack the muscle control, balance or strength to rotate their legs (or for sit down, 3-track and 4-track skiers) alternative rotary movements can be used.</p>	<p>Pivoting Movements: Beginner snowboarders learn to steer the board by attaining a flat board and pivoting the board in the direction they wish to travel. As in skiing, the goal is to use the feet and legs to steer the board but many of our students need to steer with their shoulders to guide the board. As students progress and become more comfortable on their board, foot steering becomes a priority.</p>

<p>Pressure Control Movements: These movements manage the pressure exerted along the skis. The three main types of pressure control are: flexion/extension (up and down), fore/aft leverage (front to back) and lateral weight shifting (foot to foot). These movements enhance balance and rotary movements by giving the student more control over the shape of the turn.</p>	<p>Pressure Control Movements: These movements manage the pressure exerted along the snowboard. The three main types of pressure control are: flexion/extension (up and down), fore/aft pressure (tip to tail) and lateral pressure (side to side). Snowboarding uses flexion/extension throughout the turn to help initiate turns and absorb terrain features as well as fore/aft movements to enhance speed control and give shape to turns.</p>
<p>Edge Control Movements: These movements regulate the edge angle of the skis. Beginner skiers use the wedge to create edge angle. As skiers develop, edge control should be managed with lateral movements of the lower legs.</p>	<p>Tilting Movements: These movements regulate the edge angle of the snowboard. Toe-side edging and heel-side edging regulate speed and give control to the snowboarder. Managing the amount of edge using smooth consistent movements is imperative for the success of the beginner snowboarder.</p>

By understanding the four fundamental skills of skiing and snowboarding, you will have a solid framework for understanding the sports of skiing and riding. You will also have a better ability to improve riders' and skiers' movements and help them achieve fun and freedom on the slopes.

Turning Phases



You will learn proper timing of movements and skills within turns by referencing Turning Phases or the different parts of the turn.

Initiation Phase: This phase happens as the skier or snowboarder is changing direction and moving into the new turn. For skiers, it coincides with one or both skis changing edges. For snowboarders it may correspond with the edge change or the preparation (flattening of the board) for the edge change.

Shaping Phase: This phase happens as the skis or snowboard approach, enter, and move through the fall line (the imaginary line pointing down the hill).

Finishing Phase: This phase happens as the board or skis come across the hill. They are guided across, and perhaps up, the hill appropriately for the amount of speed control required by the skier or boarder.

Student Assessments

This starts as the student comes through the door and continues through-out the entire lesson. Reading the student profile gives a basic understanding of the challenges facing the student, however, asking questions of the student and/or caregiver will give you more information. Watch your student, have him/her do specific movements for you, determine goals, and develop a plan. Determine the **Red Flags** for your student. Red Flags are areas of concern with your particular student which may result in a situation where safety is a concern during your lesson.

DSES has developed a plan for performing your Student Assessment. This is:

1. Understand the **overall** nature or characteristics of the disability you are dealing with including how it occurs, how it manifests and the RED FLAGS.
2. Discover how the disability affects your particular student's **cognition** or understanding.
3. Discover how the disability affects your student's **emotions**, (what's funny, frustrating, etc).
4. Discover how the disability affects your student's **movements** or ability to move.
5. Discover the **Red Flags** for this particular student.
6. Discover the student's **goals**.

Progressions

Within the framework of the Teaching Model, we teach and explore different movements to improve our student's skiing or riding skills. Typically, we do this through the use of progressions.

A progression is a series of steps starting with the easiest movements needed and moves, (or progresses) toward more complex or combined movements. It is the model from which we *adapt* to our students and their unique needs.

It is important to understand that the term "progression" can mean different things. For example, progressions can have different time frames, (a one hour lesson or a season long plan). Progressions can be very specific, (how to stop) or more extended, (how to move from a wedge turn to a parallel turn). For our purposes we will explore progressions in the Beginning, Novice and Intermediate Zones here. The use of a progression will typically occur during step 4 of the Teaching Model.

It is important to remember the priority of Safety, Fun and Learning! When a student acquires a new skill (whether through a progression or not), it is vital that they be provided with mileage in order to solidify and master that skill. This is the perfect time to have FUN skiing or riding!

Some students will have specialized equipment, some will need to repeat steps in a progression and some will not be capable of all the steps and will need to bypass them. You will need to be creative to make progressions your own and find alternatives to make them work for different people. The following progressions are the "what" you teach – remember to always follow the teaching model.

First Time Progression

Skiers	Snowboarders
<p>Flat Land</p> <p>Introduce the Equipment – make sure that your student understands how to buckle boots, get in and out of bindings and carry skis. Use games and analogies for kids (like putting your foot in the alligator’s mouth)</p> <p>Skis Off – have your student move around in boots. Go through all of the movements they may need with their skis on. Wedge, sidestepping, flexing, jumping, stepping from foot to foot, etc.</p> <p>One Ski On – continue exploring the same movements with one ski on and one off – this allows students to get a feel for sliding while they still have the “emergency break” of their other foot. You can: spin in a circle using small steps, touch the tip and then the tail to the snow, sidestep, glide like on a skateboard, etc. Make sure that you do this with the other ski as well.</p> <p>Two Skis on Flats – Make sure you do this on a <i>flat</i> area. You may be surprised at how many areas that you thought were flat, in fact are not. Stay with the same movements here: step in a circle using small steps, step from ski to ski, roll knees in/out to engage edge, practice wedge, hop, hop into wedge, etc.</p> <p>Slight Hill</p> <p>The best terrain offers a flat area transitioning to a slight (down) hill and then to a counter (up) slope. Safety First! Never choose a slope where a student who cannot stop could run into another person or an object. To get students positioned facing downhill when no</p>	<p>Flat Land</p> <p>Introduce the Equipment – make sure boots fit snug and are tied properly. Go with rental shop expertise for sizing of board (around chin height). Regular or goofy set-up should be assessed as you walk your student to the rentals and take into consideration special circumstances (AFO’s, weak limbs, etc.) Make sure the student can manipulate the buckles and help as needed.</p> <p>One-footed – strap on the front foot and pick the board up to feel its weight and length. Practice moving around on flat ground. Push from in front of the board, push from behind. Push and glide placing back foot on stomp pad or against rear binding. Have the student do the drills with a flat board and with an edged board. Never have student travel in direction of rear foot with only one-foot strapped in. Demonstrate all the skills you ask your student to perform.</p> <p>Slight Hill</p> <p>Straight Run - find a slight hill with a flat run-out or counter slope. Then have student place back foot on board, stand tall and glide down the slope. The flat run-out should stop the student. Make sure the student is relaxed and has their hips centered in between their feet. Ideally, the student’s upper and lower body should be in alignment with head looking in the direction of travel. You can assist or walk with the student to provide comfort as well as a stopping mechanism if necessary. Emphasize that the student should not step off a moving board!</p>

flat starting point is available; show them how to step into a wedge.

Two skis climbing a small hill – Explain the “fall line”. Show side stepping by rolling knees and ankles into the hill. If your student is capable of learning to side step show them how to do it – it provides knowledge of the fall line that is indispensable when moving to lift accessed terrain.

Straight Runs – Balanced stance is key here – do as many as needed to achieve a balanced, upright stance with hips over the feet as much as possible.. Students will struggle to wedge properly if they are not in a comfortable, balanced stance. Remind students to stand tall and keep shins touching front of boots.

Gliding Wedge – Show your students how to steer their skis into a wedge shape. Show them how to spread their feet apart and turn their toes inward. Suggest that they “spread” their feet into a wedge or “open” into a wedge. A gliding wedge gives students a wide base of support and “pre-edges” their skis so they can learn to turn without changing edges. Using the word “push” is generally confusing, especially for a student that may take everything you say literally. You don’t want your student bending down and pushing on his foot with his hand.

Braking Wedge – Once your student can make a wedge in balance without crossing the tips or any other problems, show your student how to open the wedge larger to control speed and stop. If your student is capable of learning to stop on his own this is the essential movement required before taking a student up the chair lift. If your student is not capable of independent speed control, you must use a retention device before taking that person onto a chair lift.

Chairlift Procedures – Remember that your

Up-hill walk or skate – demonstrate the two ways to proceed uphill, skating or walking using board as a platform to push against. This helps teach what the edges are all about.

Straight Run to J-turn – Have the student do a straight run while placing back foot half way on the board (toe or heel hanging off). When the student has travelled 10-15 feet down the hill, look, point and turn in the direction they want to travel. By pointing in the direction of the turn the student is using upper body rotation which at this stage is appropriate.

Alternatively, you can teach the student lower body rotation by pushing the front foot toes down (toe side turn) or pulling up on the front foot toes (heel side turn) to initiate the turn. Again the student may feel more comfortable dragging the back foot toes or heel to assist in balance and speed control.

Chairlift Procedures – once the student feels relatively comfortable with the straight run and straight run with turns to a stop (both sides) he/she may be ready to ride the lifts. The bottom line is can they stop themselves, (or can you stop them)? Students who have no way of controlling themselves, and if you have no way of controlling their speed for them, should not go up the chairlift.

Watch and discuss loading procedures. Explain the exit procedures as a straight run off the lift. You should determine a count for the exit and talk the student off the lift. Place board on ramp, put back foot on board, stand-up strong and glide off the ramp. Once off the chairlift all subsequent exercises are performed with both feet strapped in.

The following exercises need to be practiced on both heel and toe sides.

Side-slip – ideally, a side slip is a key way to develop edging skills and is usually taught in

<p>student must be able to stop either independently or with a retention device before riding the chairlift. Give your student the opportunity to watch others load and explain that once at the front of the lift line you will follow a chair to the loading area, (the plastic board in the snow), turn away from each other and look, then reach for the approaching chair. As the chair approaches, sit down, sit back and hold on. Unloading should be explained on the chair. Tell your student you will count down to unload and when your skis touch the ground you should “stand up and lean forward”. Make sure you clear the unloading ramp, then stop to get organized for the run.</p> <p>Wedge Turns – This is the best method to teach students speed control. Once your student can wedge to a stop, show him how to “point” his skis in the direction he wants to go. Using cones or flags to turn around are helpful. Use words like “twist your legs” or “turn your feet”. Unless your student has a physical limitation that prevents it, you should always introduce students to direction changes by turning their legs – NOT by pressuring the outside ski, (this can be added later as an enhancement).</p>	<p>the beginning of the lesson. But it requires a fairly steep slope which is not present on the Discovery Chairlift. However, it is not necessary to complete this step before moving into a falling-leaf. When you can introduce the side slip, be sure to emphasize smooth, subtle edging movements and a flexed and centered stance.</p> <p>Falling leaf – this exercise develops all four skills; tilting, pressure, pivoting and torsional flex. By adjusting pressure from the forward foot to centered on the board, the student can adjust his/her speed. Additionally, by increasing and decreasing the edge angle, speed control by friction is learned. When slowing down and looking (rotating) in the desired direction the student is using pivoting to steer the board down or across the hill. Alternatively, by slightly twisting the board (by pushing front toes down or pulling them up), the student can also steer the board thus improving his/her control. Depending on what particular skill needs work the instructor can adapt the focus of the falling leaf to improve individual skills.</p>
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Novice Progression

Novice skiers are learning how to use turn shape, as opposed to wedge size, to control speed. Novice snowboarders are learning to turn in both directions and to link turns with confidence. All novice students should continue to ski/ride on beginning terrain until they have mastered the skills to allow them to safely and confidently negotiate easier intermediate terrain. Avoid taking students to intermediate terrain too soon. Creatively use beginning terrain to keep your students engaged and challenged.

<p>Linking Wedge Turns – The main skill focus is on rotary movements. Show your students how to continuously steer their feet through the turn and into the next turn. Demonstrating is essential here. The “follow me” approach</p>	<p>Garlands – similar to the falling leaf, this exercise can be adapted to work on any of the skills. The goal of the garland is to direct the board all the way into the fall line, thus simulating the beginning or end of a turn.</p>
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works well for most students. If your student is on tethers, try to have one instructor in front to demonstrate movements and turn shape at the student's skill level. Other approaches include: drawing a line in the snow, turning around cones or flags or using a corridor of groomer tracks.

Varying Turn Shape and Size – Continuing with a rotary focus, show your student how to make large and small turns. Use obstacles to turn around or make a game/analogy where you are the leader and vary the size/shape of the turns.

Improving Wedge Turns with Pressure Control – Once your student can link turns in balance with leg steering, introduce shifting their weight from foot to foot. Show them how to move their center of mass over their outside foot through the end of the turn. You may also show them how to extend as they start the turn by extending both legs. As they finish the turn, show them how to flex their ankles smoothly through the rest of the turn. Tasks that help with this are: tapping the inside foot, hand on the outside knee, hopping at the beginning of the turn, using two different colors of flagging, etc. Make sure to give students lots of mileage!!

Wedge Christy – This turn combines the wedge at the initiation and shaping phase with a parallel position and skid during the finishing phase. For many students you will be successful with a “spontaneous wedge christie”. On comfortable terrain, have your student ski in a slightly smaller wedge, at a slightly higher speed. Look for small rolls on which to complete the turns. These cues may promote a spontaneous release of the inside ski, and you may find that your student discovers how to make the skis go parallel without much coaching. With other students, you may want to use a step by step approach.

Start on one edge, steer the board across and then into the fall line. This will build speed. When the board is directly in the fall line have student return to starting edge. This allows the student to recognize when the board is flat and can be pivoted to the new edge. After several repetitions from each edge, proceed to patience turns.

Patience Turn – as implied, this turn develops slowly as the students' comfort with speed will be low. Start by completing a garland and when the board is flat in the fall line have student change edges. As the instructor you should be able to recognize and coach the student when it is appropriate to change edges. Most likely the student will initiate the turn too early and catch the downhill edge. By focusing on the actions of the front foot only, twisting of the board comes naturally and will help reduce the probability of catching the downhill edge. Make one turn at a time, slowing down or stopping prior to initiating a new turn.

Key instruction points:

Focus on front foot only. Pull-up on toes or press down on toes.

Look and point in the direction of travel.

Focus on making smooth edge angle adjustments, jerky motions will result in a slam.

The back foot should follow along naturally; however, making a smooth spreading motion when slowing down is helpful.

Continually assess student's stance; slight bend in knees, athletic stance, head up.

Holding hands may be helpful to the student.

Keep instructions simple. Have a single focus at a time. Once that focus is achieved, move

<p>From a small stationary wedge, show them how to pivot the inside (uphill) ski to match the outside (downhill) ski. Where it is safe, practice this movement in a traverse – both directions. Then use the above movement at the end of one turn to a stop – both directions. Try this for several turns and have your student turn to a stop in a parallel position by turning both skis uphill.</p>	<p>onto the next single focus.</p> <p>Linked Turns – once single turns are achieved to both edges, link turns by maintaining movement across the hill and preparing for the next turn before coming to a stop. Work on fore-aft pressure as well as standing tall through the turn and flexing at the end of the turn. Look in the direction of travel and make smooth edge adjustments.</p>
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Intermediate Level Progressions

Intermediate skiers and snowboarders can confidently negotiate easy intermediate terrain while moving down the hill at a moderate speed. Inching your way down an intermediate run does not make someone an intermediate skier or rider. To improve an intermediate skier or rider's skills, they should learn new skills on terrain that is easy for them (this may be easier intermediate terrain OR even beginning terrain) before moving to more difficult terrain.

<p>Advanced Wedge Christy – Once students can match their skis at the end of the turn, show them how to match their skis earlier in the turn. Both rotary and pressure control movements are important here. Show students how to shift their weight to the outside foot during the shaping phase, gradually making this move earlier in the turn. You can also show them how to turn their skis together with particular focus on steering the inside leg and ski. The inside ski/foot should be pivoted around the center of the foot as opposed to sliding the tail of the ski/heel of the foot towards the outside ski.</p> <p>Basic Parallel – Showing people how to make a parallel turn requires lots of mileage. The focus is on the initiation phase of the turn. Show your students how to turn both feet at the start of the turn. This is similar to the wedge christie progression with the focus on the inside foot. Show them how to extend both legs and pressure the outside leg as they</p>	<p>Dynamic Linked Turns – once the student can make linked turns, work on student becoming dynamic. This means adjusting to the terrain, controlling speed and absorbing bumps. As the student becomes more comfortable with his/her speed control, turns can be initiated just prior to the board entering the fall line. This can be achieved by active flexion and extension movements plus a twisting of the board. Steering the board with the front leg will give shape and speed control to the turn.</p> <p>Park – many of our students want to experience the park and on chair 11 there is ample opportunity to play. Using the pipe generally helps with turn initiation. Charging the rollers towards the bottom of the park can work on retracting the legs to absorb bumps, another form of pressure adjustment. And, jumping will work on balance, steering, and pressure control. Have student line-up the jump by pointing the board straight down the hill. As the student hits the lip of the jump,</p>
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initiate the turn. Tasks that help with this movement include: long drawn out “patience” turns on comfortable terrain or using a slight hop at the start of the turn.

retract the legs and stay relaxed in the air. Look at the landing area and set the board down, slightly nose first, and keep knees soft to absorb the landing. Once the board is down and balance is achieved, use a speed control movement to slow down. There is much trial and error when in the park, however, it is a great way to enhance skills and have fun!

Again, these progressions are just a skeleton of what you can teach. Of course, many of our students will be unable to complete certain steps or will have equipment that requires a modification of these progressions. However, this is the model from which *adaptive* skiing *adapts* and is the foundation for your lessons.

How to Do It Well



All lessons should follow the priority of: Safety, Fun, Learning. Setting a safe, fun environment optimizes learning.

SAFETY: Above all, you must follow DSES safety guidelines and protocols and make your student feel comfortable. Students that are scared or uncomfortable cannot learn new skills, and they certainly won't have a good time.

FUN: We're in the guest service business. Our goal is to provide our guests with superior service and invite them back.

Show them a good time. Make them want more. Also, when people are relaxed and having a good time, they are more able to learn new skills.

LEARNING: When you have established a safe, comfortable, relaxing and fun experience, you have set the stage for an optimal learning environment.

Your Responsibility Code

1. Always stay in control and be able to stop or avoid other people or objects
2. People ahead of you have the right of way. It is your responsibility to avoid them
3. You must not stop where you are not visible from above or obstruct a trail
4. Whenever starting downhill or merging into a trail, look uphill and yield to others
5. Always use devices to help prevent runaway equipment
6. Observe all posted signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails and out of closed areas
7. Prior to using any lift, you must have the knowledge and ability to load, ride and unload safely

Riding Chair Lifts

Before you bring a student to the chair lift make sure that he or she can stop on their own OR that you have the appropriate speed control equipment with you – always err on the side of caution!

Make sure your student understands how to load, ride and unload before you enter the lift line. Remember: Sit Back, Sit Still, Hold On, Look Ahead. Be sure to follow all safety protocols associated with adaptive equipment. Use the chair lift bar with caution – its use has pros and cons. Call it the “bar” or nothing at all – never call it the “safety bar”.

Tools of the Trade

Trail Map, Writing tool (a Sharpie is great) and paper, scraper, wax, toys. Err on the side of caution with equipment. Always bring an edgie-wedgie just to be sure. Having tethers with you is also a good idea, if you’re not sure that your student can stop.

Terrain Selection

Follow “Safety, Fun, Learning”. Teach your students on terrain where they are comfortable and can learn new skills. Move students to new terrain when they have mastered the terrain they are on. Always err on the side of caution and remember time management. At the end of the lesson, students are tired and may have more difficulty coping with the demands of using new skills on more challenging terrain. Try to introduce more difficult terrain towards the middle of the lesson. Finish the lesson back on easier and familiar terrain to end on a high note. Terrain is only one measure of success and not the best.

Measures of Success

Keeping track of trails that you skied and “graduating” to new terrain is only one measure – arguably, not the best. Better measures may be: new skills – learning to stop in a wedge or linking turns; Increased independence – stopping without the edgie-wedgie; controlling speed without tethers. For many of our students, putting on equipment and going outside is a great measure of success. Find out what your students want to accomplish – **it may be totally different from your goals!**

If your students are having trouble with any of the steps in the progression, reevaluate their original goals. You may want to spend more time on a specific skill, present the information in a different way or consider alternative adaptive equipment.

Pacing

Pace your lesson appropriately. Spend time developing foundation skills (Rotary and Balance). Make sure your student has lots of mileage and practice time. Some students take longer than others. Never rush a student through steps or to more difficult terrain. Spending time helping a student master a skill gives that person a sense of accomplishment AND makes it easier to teach him/her new skills.

Remember that many of our students are not used to weather or altitude and can tire easily. Look for signs of fatigue: deterioration of skills, change in behavior, lethargy, decreased attention, yawning. Take a break! Ideally, you should rest before your student gets tired. Students are more likely to get injured or have a meltdown if signs of fatigue are ignored.

Good Luck!

Good luck and have fun during your time as an instructor for DSES. We really appreciate your commitment to the program. We have an “open door” policy and encourage you to ask questions or come to us if you encounter a problem with your lesson. We all have the same goal – to help students enjoy skiing and snowboarding as much as we do!

Resources

Alpine Technical Manual – Skiing and Teaching Skills. 2002. Professional Ski Instructors of America Education Foundation. Lakewood, CO.

Core Concepts for Snowsports Instructors. 2001. Professional Ski Instructors of America Education Foundation. Lakewood, CO.

Adaptive Snowsports Instruction. 2003. Professional Ski Instructors of America Education Foundation. Lakewood, CO.

Childrens Instruction Manual. 1997. Professional Ski Instructors of America Education Foundation. Lakewood, CO.

Alpine Technical Manual. 1996. Professional Ski Instructors of America Education Foundation. Lakewood, CO.