IASI FREESTYLE COACH LEVEL 1 COURSE WORKBOOK

Contents:

About the Course:

Welcome to the IASI Freestyle Coach Level 1 Course. The Freestyle Coach Course is a specific module for training and certifying instructors to be able to teach safely in the environment of terrain parks. It is becoming an increasing requirement by ski and snowboard schools that instructors hold a certification to be able to teach freestyle skills in terrain parks. This course aims to provide that training and certification for the benefit of instructors and ski and snowboard schools alike.

The IASI Freestyle Coach certification is a module designed to complement your existing instructor qualifications with a "coaching element". Successful completion of the certification will represent a standard of skiing and teaching that will allow instructors to teach and demonstrate freestyle skiing and snowboarding in terrain parks in a safe manner.

Course remit:
Level 1 coach (Licensed)

Is able to operate independently in a closed or mountain environment with an additional supporting mountain instructor qualification recognised by local laws. (IASI Alpine Level 2 for example). Candidates should hold a valid first aid qualification and up to date DBS check for their license to be valid (see your awarding governing body for details).

Course Outline:

Equipment needed

Twin-tip skis or Snowboard
Helmet
Back protector (recommended)
Impact shorts (recommended)

Assessment Criteria

This course is an ongoing assessment over 3 days. During this time the educator will evaluate technical and teaching criteria. Candidates must be successful on both the technical and teaching elements in order to achieve a successful completion of the course and attain the IASI Freestyle Coach Certification.

During the 3 days candidates will receive ongoing feedback on both their skiing and teaching/coacing that will highlight both strengths and areas for improvement and how to make changes. Communication is two way and candidates are encouraged to ask questions and participate as much as possible.

Technical Assessment (Ski)

The following are reference maneuvers used to assess the required skill standard (see below for technical basis).

General skiing – Parallel on red terrain with a consistent round turn shape showing the ability to balance on the outside ski.

Switch skiing – Linked parallel on blue terrain with consistent round turn shape showing good special awareness maintaining control

Rails – Slide a basic rail and box at 90 degrees popping off forwards and switch showing good balance and control.

Airs – The ability to show a well-timed pop with control in the air and a balanced landing on the middle of the ski. Show a variety of basic grabs with basic movements timed well. Perform a basic rotation (minimum of 180) over a small jump showing good timing with movements in the correct sequence and ski away in control.

Technical Assessment (Snowboard)

The following are reference maneuvers used to assess the required skill standard (see below for technical basis).

General riding – Able to cleanly link carved turns on blue terrain

Switch riding – Able to ride switch cleanly linking turns on blue terrain

Rails – 50/50 a 3-5m and box and basic rail showing solid posture and control

Airs and tricks- Ollie to knee height showing clear and precise movements
Jump 180 degrees landing cleanly and accurately both clockwise and anti clockwise (without the use of a jump)
Jump straight air over a 5m kicker landing cleanly and accurately

Teaching/Coaching Assessment (Ski & Snowboard)

Safety – Perform a fun freestyle lesson safely with a basic progression.

Understanding – Show an understanding of basic freestyle movements with a good knowledge of technical progressions.

Communication – The ability to interact, engage and motivate when coaching. Uses a variety of tools to keep students engaged and maintain maximum class activity.

Course Overview

Day 1
Morning – Introduction to the terrain park. The educator will run through the layout of the park with an explanation of the features, general safety and park etiquette. They will then run through the structure of a basic training session. During this session candidates will have chance to work on their personal performance with feedback from the educator.

Day 1
Afternoon – Planning a training session. The educator will guide you through planning a training session with an aim of delivering it to the group. This is sometimes done in pairs or smaller groups depending on the number of candidates.

Day 1
Evening
Personal performance video reviews and skill analysis

Day 2
Morning – Working on personal performance with specific coaching from the educator.

Day 2
Afternoon– Planning a better training session. The educator will guide you through improving on the previous training session with any specific changes needed with the aim of delivering it to the group.

Day 2
Evening – Competition, judging and organisations and equipment info. Planning coaching sessions for day 3.

Day 3
Morning – Working on personal performance with specific coaching from the educator.

Day 3
Afternoon – Candidates delivering their training sessions.

Day 3
Evening – Course debrief and evaluation.

Day 1 Overview

By the end of the first day, course candidates will have been exposed to skills and methodologies required for freestyle skiing and teaching. The Course Educator will begin by assessing the candidates' abilities and readiness for the course, while also creating an open and relaxed atmosphere to help establish a safe and fun learning environment.

The goals for the course will be established to ensure all candidates are clear on the required standard for the course with both the technical and teaching portions. Feel free to ask any questions you may have in order to ensure you are clear about the requirements at any point during the course.

Morning Outline:

Freestyle introduction. The educator will run through the layout of the park with an explanation of the features, general safety and park etiquette. They will then run through the structure of a basic training session. The educator will use the structure of a basic training session to start to evaluate the candidate's freestyle skiing level. By the end of the first morning the educator will have a good idea of what is needed for the candidate to pass the course in terms of their technical abilities and will relay this information.

Afternoon Outline:

Planning a training session. The educator will guide you through planning a training session with an aim of delivering it to the group the following day. They may ask you to run a specific session to address any strengths or weaknesses with in yourself or the group as a whole. Likewise they may decide to give you free reign to coach any session you like.

Evening outline:

Video reviews and skill analysis. Candidates will have chance to review their performance with feedback from the educator. They will also be shown a variety of athletes at different levels to go through the skill analysis process with the educator.

Day 2 Overview

By the end of the 2nd day, candidates will have a clear understanding of the terrain park, how it runs and the different types features within it. They will have learned basic terminology to describe tricks and have an idea of how to coach a basic training session with a safe progression.

Morning Outline:

Working on personal performance with specific coaching from the educator will give the candidate an idea of their freestyle level including strengths and any weaknesses that can be addressed. Parts of the training session will be videoed with the aim of delivering feedback through analysis that evening.

Afternoon Outline:

Candidates planning and delivering their training sessions will expose them to the coaching process first hand. The educator will provide feedback individually after each training session.

Evening Outline:

Planning a training session. The educator will guide you through improving on the previous training session with any specific changes needed. The educator will also go through basic judging formats, competition rules and where to find recourses on these as well as basic information about various freestyle organisations.

Day 3 Overview

By the 3rd day the candidate should be able to deliver a safe and fun freestyle training session with confidence showing a good understanding of a safe progression using a variety of coaching tools. They will be expected to perform good demonstrations with regards to the technical outcomes required.

Morning Outline:

Working on personal performance with specific coaching from the educator to continue improving. The educator will have made anything that needs to be addressed in order to pass the technical outcome standards clear.

Afternoon Outline:

Candidates delivering their planned training sessions will enable them to improve on the previous training session. The educator will have made anything that needs to be addressed in order to pass the teaching outcome standards clear.

Evening Outline:

Course debrief and evaluation. The educator will give both a group and individual debrief. The candidate will have a clear idea of how to keep on improving with both their freestyle skiing and coaching regardless of if they passed or failed.

TRAINING PLANNER SESSION 1

Date and time:
Training group:
Facilities needed:
Age of learners:
Number of learners:

Introduction, key messages and points to be made (safety points):

Warm up:

Main task:

Warm down:

Conclusion:

TRAINING PLANNER SESSION 2

Date and time:

Training group:

Facilities needed:

Age of learners:

Number of learners:

Introduction, key messages and points to be made (safety points):

Warm up:

Main task:

Warm down:

Conclusion:

TRAINING PLANNER SESSION 3

Date and time:
Training group:
Facilities needed:
Age of learners:

Number of learners:

Introduction, key messages and points to be made (safety points):

Warm up:

Main task:

Warm down:

Conclusion:

Introduction to coaching

Freestyle skiing is constantly evolving. To keep up with the names of all the latest tricks and styles as the sport progresses is nearly impossible. Only those that live and breathe freestyle skiing will be able to do this.

As a coach if you have an understanding of the movements required when performing basic tricks on a variety of features you can use it to work out what more complex tricks actually are and how skiers do them. This enables you to keep up with progressions often without actually knowing the name of a trick.

When coaching freestyle beginner's good demonstrations are needed. This gives the one being a coached a clear example of what to do. At the most basic level students don't know what movements to make so need to be shown as well as told. Performing a good demonstration generates trust between the coach and the student, a necessary ingredient for a good training session.

Coaching however is different to instruction. Quite often a coach can be coaching someone who is a higher level or technically better than them. With a good knowledge of progressions and an eye for the technical details involved in freestyle movements coaching someone over a higher level shouldn't be a problem. The coach should be able to get the student to perform and improve whatever their level.

To coach someone of a higher level the coach will have to use a wide range of coaching tools to get performance from the student. We will look at these tools later in this workbook.

Planning and implementing a training session

As a coach you need to be able to use your technical understanding of freestyle skiing along with various coaching tools to run a safe and fun training session with maximum performance. Your educator will run through these tools and how they can be applied on the slope. See below for more information on coaching tools.

Before we can give feedback or even begin to plan what to do during a freestyle session firstly we need to know whom we are coaching, how long we have and what we have with regards to the facilities available. When planning your training session you may want to ask yourself the following questions.

1. Number of learners?
2. Age?
3. Previous freestyle skiing experience?

4. Any experience in disciplines similar to freestyle skiing?
5. Injuries/illnesses?
6. Are they enthusiastic? Confident? Scared?
7. What equipment do they have?
8. What is the emergency action plan in case of an accident?
9. Viewing angles?
10. Lift or lap, turn around time?
11. Facilities available?

All of the above and more can have a drastic effect on how you might want to structure and run your training session. Your educator will go through each of these in more detail with you.

1.Once you have a plan of what you want to do you need to make sure that your learners agree. Freestyle skiing can be especially daunting to a beginner and your learners need to be able to trust you. Most things involved in freestyle skiing need to be done with confidence. Being scared and trying a trick in a defensive position or even frame of mind can increase the risk of a crash or injury. Agree some goals with your learners. These need to be challenging yet realistic.

2. General warm up. This increases blood flow, allowing the body to prepare for exercise and prevent injury to muscles or joints. There is also a psychological aspect to this making the body becomes alert. Increasing blood flow is achieved by raising the heart rate. It's important to make your learners want to do this warm up. With younger people it is often best to do this through a series of controlled games.

3. Specific warm up. This is a sport specific part of a warm up. It's a crucial part of a training session as it allows learners to focus and prepare themselves appropriately for tasks ahead. Your educator will elaborate and give examples of a specific warm up.

4. Main task. Plan a range of activities that will progressively challenge the athletes around a theme relevant to their development needs. Activities should be appropriate based on the agreed goals.

5. Cool down. The cool down is important for snow sports training, more so than many other sports. Allowing the learners some free time to play, experiment often leads to an increase in performance. The intensity should be dropped but this can often be at the learner's own choice. This gives the

learner space and time, an opportunity for cognitive breakthroughs and ensures they leave the slope happy. The warm down is the start of the recovery period for the athletes. Stretching, particularly with growing athletes, is an important routine to integrate at the end of any sport.

6. Conclusion. Recap on key outcomes from the training session whilst also giving the learners the opportunity for feedback. Coaches should try to make sure the training session ends on a positive and friendly note. Necessary information about future training sessions can be given at this point.

TTPPEE

When we ask the athlete to execute a certain skill the Coach has to analyse that skill. The first step involves **OBSERVING**. You can observe the athlete from a number of different angles:

From below, above, behind, side on, stationary, following, skiing backwards, from the lift. What are you looking at? The task? Overall picture? The skis/board? Upper body?

In the second step we **ASSESS**. At this point you are determining the difference between the actual and desired performance. In the third step of our analysis we **DIAGNOSE**. We use the acronym **TTPPEE** as our Skill Development tool.

Below are some examples of TTPPEE that we might use to diagnose why a skill- execution is not as we had asked

Technical	Eg. Too much edge angle? Applying force too late? Skidding too much?
Tactical	Eg. Too fast? Too straight down the hill? Have they gone the wrong way? Turn shape too big or small?
Physical	Eg. Are they strong enough? Are they healthy? Are they tired? Are they carrying an injury?
Psychological	Eg. Lazy? Scared? Bored? Pumped up? Uninterested?
Equipment	Eg. Boots too tight/stiff/unbuckled? Skis/board not prepared properly? Goggles steamed up? Clothing not appropriate?
Environment	Eg. Too cold? Too steep or bumpy? Too many people? Intimidating? Mum and Dad watching? Too easy?

Once we have diagnosed we have to **PRESCRIBE** our analysis to the athlete. Again we can use our Skill Development tool to prescribe. The most creative Coaches are able to use the widest range of communication methods to get

the message across.

Below are examples of how you could use the Skill Development tool to communicate a change in execution for a desired task.

Why don't you...	
Technical	Eg Increase your edge angle at the start of the turn. Keep your arms out in front of you. Keep your weight forward.
Tactical	Try slowing it all down. Bigger turns will give you more time. Speed it up! Follow Johnny's tracks.
Physical	Pump it up! Move more! Try harder – let's see you get out of breath! More up and down movements!
Psychological	Calm everything down. Go to a happy place. Let's get going! Get aggressive! Rip it up! Come on!
Equipment	Try it holding your poles like this. Undo your boots. Switchedges around. Have my goggles. Tighten your helmet up
Environment	Let's have a go on the flat over here. Now try down the bumpier section. Stay well away from

	other people. Try it down over this ridge.

Even at National Team level, the language used to describe skiing is often fairly simple. Pictures are painted or feelings are asked for. (For example, “Really stand on it coming into the pitch” or “Give it welly” or “Attack the combination exit, make sure you’re aggressive” or “Smash it”) TTPPEE is an excellent addition to a Coach’s armoury. If something is not working, using TTPPEE to find another way to express yourself is a very useful method.

Be aware that technical information does not work well with younger athletes – they are often unaware of nuances of technique and the information tends to have little impact.

Skill Acquisition

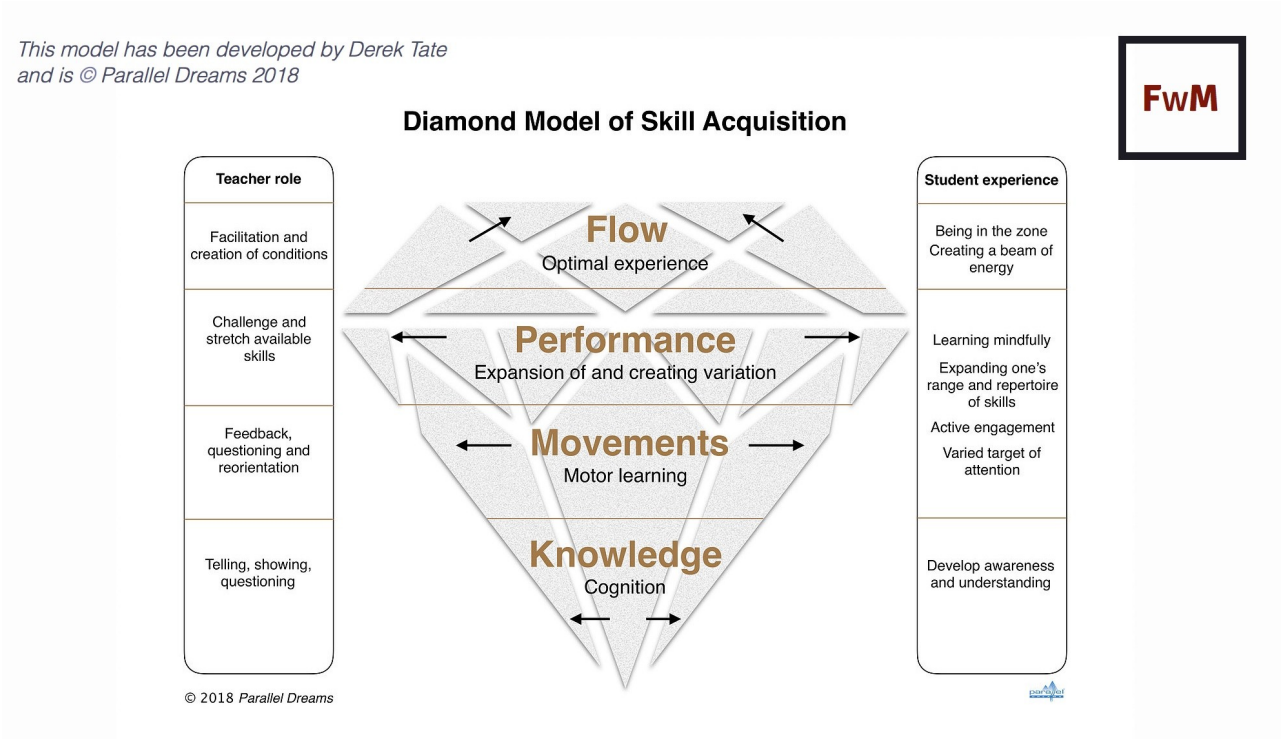
Developing your skill with mindfulness and flow

Learning new skills is one of life’s greatest joys. This new integrated model of skill acquisition that draws upon the work of Ellen Langer (1998, 2000) and her approach to mindfulness andmindful learning and also the work of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1975, 1990, 1997) and his constructof flow or optimal experience. These ideas are combined with Fitts and Posner’s (1967) original

stages of skill acquisition to provide an innovative approach to acquiring skill that will lead to enhanced learning and enjoyment. The **Diamond Model of Skill Acquisition** (DMSA; see the model above) is noteworthy because it places importance on fostering the student's well-being alongside the acquisition of skill.

This model is an update on the KMPF model previously developed by Derek Tate and adopted by the Irish Association of Snowsports Instructors(IASI) as part of its overall teaching philosophy; Irish Snowsports Teaching Methodology (ISTM).

The significance of the diamond shape is an important step in the development of this conceptual model which emphasises that as the learner moves through the first three stages of skill acquisition there is an increase in mental and physical abilities in relation to knowledge, movements and performance. During the third stage performance is honed and if conditions are optimal then the performer may enter the flow state and hence narrow their focus towards the desired goal. By using a mindful learning approach throughout a retraining of the learner's attention takes place allowing for better focus on the task in hand.



Knowledge: This is the cognitive learning phase of skill acquisition. The brain begins to acquire knowledge and thebreadth and depth of that understanding gradually expands. The mechanisms for learning here are through reading, seeingand hearing. Itis vital, therefore, that the learnerseesvisual demonstrations (showing) and receives clear explanations (telling) in order to build up a mental picture and assist with early attempts. In effect, the brain is being warmed up to new activity in preparation for learning new movement patterns.

Movements: During the second stage, the learner develops a range and repertoire of movement patterns, that gradually become more complex, allowing the required skills to be executed both efficiently and effectively. This is where **motor learning** takes place requiring exploration, repetition and practice of the movements needed to perform (see the articlePurposeful Practice; Tate, 2017b). In the original Fitts and Posner model this is called the **associative phase** however, the mindful learning approach suggests that the

learner should keep their mind actively involved in the present noticing new and novel distinctions as they practice. This will promote greater adaptability of the skill, which, for sports that take place in an open environment is an essential quality for coping with the ever changing conditions.

Performance: This is the stage where the skills become autonomous and thinking becomes more effortless. The brain, at this stage, could be said to be quieter or less busy than the previous stage. The training focus now moves to creating variation in the execution of the skills. As in the previous stage, from a mindful learning perspective, it is important for the learner to remain present moment focused, noticing new and novel distinctions as they perform. A more external focus is beneficial in terms of the activities chosen by the teacher and this is the stage where the learner can be challenged in order to make the performance more robust and set up the likelihood of moving into the next phase of achieving optimal experience (see the article Challenge Yourself; Tate, 2017c).

Flow: Optimal experience is the more accurate terminology for the 'mental state' that performers enter when some or all of the nine dimensions are met (see the section on; What is flow? for more info on each of these dimensions). Flow has become a more popular, mainstream, name for this experience. One of the most important dimensions of flow is the ability, of the learner, to focus attention **effortlessly** so that there is full engagement on the task or performance in hand. Csikszentmihalyi describes attention as being a kind of 'psychic energy' that helps bring order to consciousness. The concept of this model is that as the learner enters the flow state their attention flows in the direction of the intended goal **narrowing** towards that target. One question that is often asked is; does flow = **peak performance**? The answer is; maybe and in many cases yes. However, **optimal experience** is a pleasurable experience, both during and after the activity, and leads to

greater enjoyment of the overall learning process thus it is a desirable state in its own right in that it can lead to greater well being of the individual concerned.

The **student experience** helps clarify what should actually be happening, for the learner, at each stage of the model. During the first stage; knowledge, the learner is engaged in developing awareness and beginning to execute and understand how a skill is to be performed. When learning a new skill this means starting from zero or unconscious incompetence. In the second stage; movements, the learner's brain is busy. Engagement should be active and full while remaining present moment focused. Attention should be focused in such a way that it is not 'fixed' on the stimulus but rather a varied target of attention so that the learner notices every detail. This is what Langer describes as mindful learning. In stage three;performance, the learner should experience the opportunity to expand their repertoire of skills while retaining the mindful learning approach of the previous stage. During the final stage; flow, the learner may experience a number of things (as described in the section on, What is flow?) but one of the most common expressions relating to this stage is "being in the zone". Attention is so focused, yet effortless, it is like a beam of energy.

Understanding the **role of the teacher** is crucial for helping students to progress through this model when learning and acquiring skill. During the knowledge stage the learner needs to gather and process information as they attempt the task, hence the teacher needs to use a good mix of showing, telling and questioning. The latter is vital for checking understanding, while depending on the student's learning style, the mix of explanation and demonstration may need to vary. The movement stage is all about doing, from the learners perspective, but the teacher needs to ensure that the learner receives sufficient feedback through a variety of sources aided by the

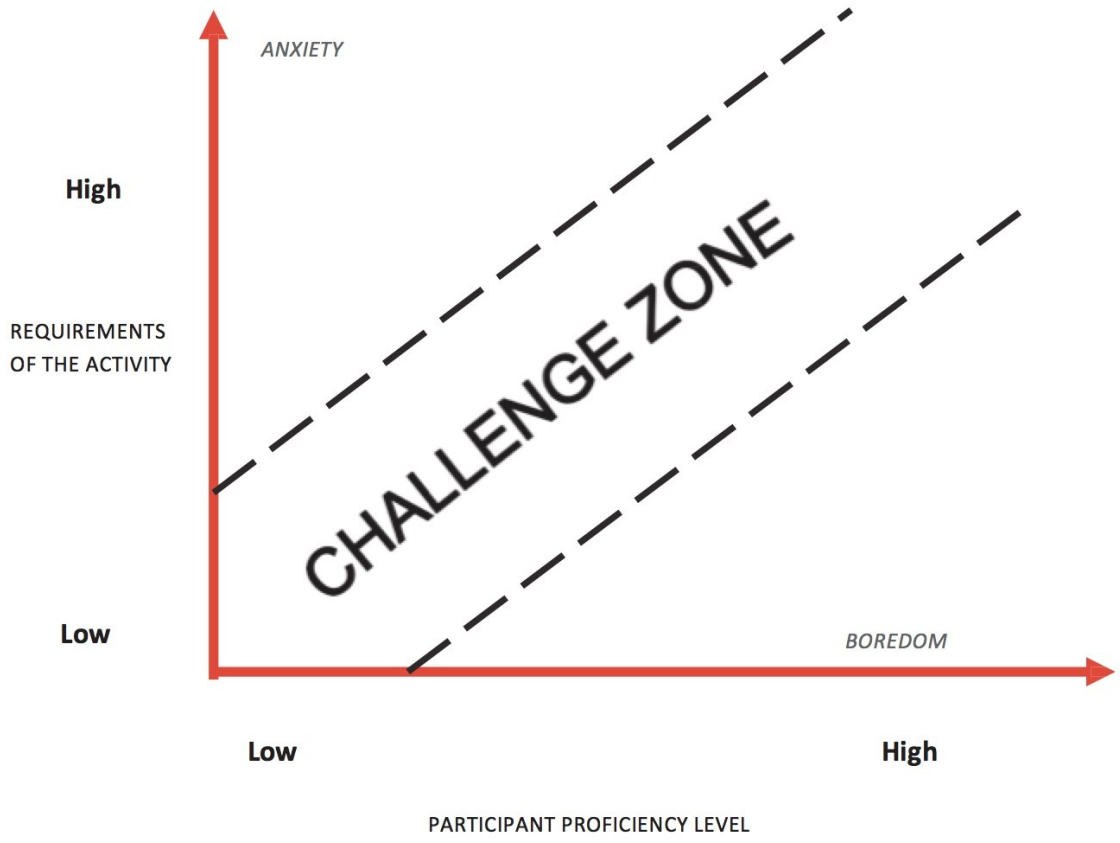
use of different teaching styles (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002). Questioning is again an important part of the process and an integral part of successfully using teaching styles such as reciprocal, self check and the discovery styles. If the practice goes 'off course' at this point then the teacher needs to reorientate the learner to the desired movement pattern. The teachers main task, during the performance stage, is to provide sufficient challenge for the learner so as to really consolidate their learning while also getting them to use their available skills. This is referred to as the challenge/skills balance within the flow construct and leads nicely to the final stage. It is not possible to teach someone to experience flow or for a learner to experience it at will but if the right conditions are created, or facilitated, by the teacher, then the chances of the learner experiencing it go up considerably.

The 'CHALLENGE' Zone

Matching activity complexity with athlete skill level

When the complexity or difficulty of an activity is too high for an athlete's ability level, they may demonstrate anxiety or nervousness and resultantly have difficulty learning. However should a task not be sufficiently challenging, the athlete may quickly lose interest or show signs of boredom. There is therefore a level of task complexity that could be considered optimal for motivating an athlete to rise to the challenge of succeeding in accomplishing the task set. By rising to a challenge, it would be expected that the athlete would not achieve the task first time out. In this situation activities can become great motivators to encouraging young athletes to learn if the challenge level is at an appropriate level.

As a general rule, where an athletes' success rate is around 2 out of 3 attempts, then the activity represents a suitable challenge.



LTAD – Long Term Athlete Development

LTAD is a model created by Dr. Istvan Balyi to guide the athletic development process from pre-puberty through retirement. An LTAD approach emphasizes age-appropriate skill acquisition to maximize the athlete's potential and builds progressively throughout an athlete's career moving to more detailed instruction as he reaches the next level. Children progress through different developmental stages; the LTAD model reconciles

athletic development with natural development.

As a Coach you are in charge of developing and improving your athletes. You will need to consider what to develop. For young athletes it is important that specific skills are developed at certain times as they grow in order to achieve full potential later in life.

Discuss in groups and list below what you consider to be the fundamentals of skiing/riding for young athletes. Can you add any from other sports that might be appropriate?

ABC's of Physical Literacy

Agility Balance Coordination Speed

The core of training for pre-pubescent athletes is exposure to a whole range of motor skills. At the younger end of the spectrum it is important that gross motor skills are learnt and then practised in a wide range of environments. As the athlete nears puberty, the execution of the skills should be more refined and challenged in a much wider context.

As the body grows it is possible to stress the bones and joints to a greater degree. This relies on the body being developed and able to cope with these loads. The skeleton is not developed enough to be able to cope with high weight loads until later stages of puberty. Likewise the cardio-vascular system and joints do not cope well with extensive endurance training until the body is further developed.

Inter- and intra-muscular coordination training allows the athlete to develop their body, improve their speed, strength and stamina as a result of more efficient movement. It is possible to train coordination skills from a very young age. Indeed we try to teach children how to use their body from an early age (help them walk, throw a ball, ride a bike). This development needs to continue and become broader so that a young athlete can have a much wider repertoire of movement when they are older (physical literacy).

The FUNdamentals of athleticism are often referred to as the ABCS:

Agility training is the ability to change the direction of the body in an efficient and effective manner. This requires good balance, coordination and speed

Balance is the ability to stay on your feet and not fall over based on a series of constant adjustments on three planes of motion. We use our eyes, ears and proprioception in our joints to remain in balance.

Coordination is the skill of making the exact movement as desired. **Speed** is the ability to move all or part of the body very quickly.

Stamina and **Strength** are also vital components of a great athlete but it is harder to train these components until the body is ready.

Suppleness or **stretching** is an important aspect of training as this will allow the athlete a greater range of movement thereby increasing speed, agility and strength. This skill should be introduced at a young age for the reason of good habits. Stretching becomes even more important during growth spurts and after

intense training sessions. There are many different types of stretching and Coaches should be aware of the

many various techniques.

In summary: Before puberty – emphasis is on ABCS, during puberty – emphasis is on conditioning and strength training technique.

Notes:

Self-reflection and evaluation:

It's important to reflect upon previous coaching sessions to continue to improve as a coach. Have a think about the coaching sessions you delivered on this course and then fill out the table below.

	What I did	Things to improve
Safety		
Maximum class activity		

Enjoyment		
Communication		
Creativity		
Learner engagement		
Viewing angles		
Technical progression		
Feedback		

Action Plan for future development:

Strengths	Priority areas for further development

Action plan for future development	

Signed by educator _____Date_____

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