

Creative Class Handling Skills

It takes many seasons to have your class handling skills totally dialed. But if you come to this PAID clinic you'll get some ideas on how to be successful with those challenging kids and adult lessons the next time you are faced with the challenge! The clinic is open to skiers and snowboarders, as class handling is a cross discipline skill.

Creative class handling for kids includes:

- **Play – it's what kids do best:** Why are kids in lessons? To save the world? To make a difference in someone else's lives? No - silly! They are there to have fun. What can you do to make a lesson MORE FUN? How about some play time?
- **Rules – kids need them:** like in school and like at home, rules rule. Establishing clear rules of play and conduct are important. If the instructor does not establish rules, the kids don't know what to do. This is a critical part of the lesson structure. Usually as adults we know a general code of conduct and how we should behave in different public or private situations. Children do NOT necessarily have developed these skills yet.
- **Competition & Games:** Depending on the age group, competition can be one way to foster attention and develop skills. This does not need to be too formal; It can be as simple as, "Who can do this? (demo a movement or task)" Then up the ante, "OK, now that you can do that, how about this? (next task or skill)"

How to handle a split – Every Lesson is a split! Embrace this!

- **Celebrate success – verbal rewards – kids want to please their teacher:** "Hey Sarah, you are making a small wedge when making your turns. That's exactly what we want to do! Hey Rachel, can you try to make your wedge small and narrow like Sarah's?"
- **If kids aren't getting "it" try the next thing:** It's OK! If they can't do a side step perfectly it is OK. Kids get bored doing the same thing all the time. MOVE ON!
- **If kids aren't doing it, is it because they don't want to?** Why would I want to do that side step any way? "Let's make a ladder up the hill. Can everyone side step up the hill in each other tracks so we can make a ladder up the hill?"
- **What are you doing to inspire them to want to do it?** Sometimes the rules and motivation are tied together. "Who wants to go on the ride (chairlift)? OK, before we are allowed to go on the ride, everyone needs to make 4 turns and stop without crashing or running into each other. Once we can do this we can ALL go to the ride!"

Engagement

- **Engaged kids are attentive kids.** If you are boring, they are bored. If all you teach is skiing or snowboarding - you are boring! How about some fun facts about the mountain? Did you know that there are Pine Martins that live up here in the snow? Sometimes they run out of the woods in search of food - like french fries! Pine Martins are just a little bit bigger than a squirrel and have a long body. Have you seen one? When we are skiing let's look for one. Or look for their tracks when riding the lift!
- **Props are fun! Bring your favorite stuffy!** Whoever can make 4 turns and a stop can ski with my pet squirrel named Nibbles! Blowing bubbles in the cold is very cool. Bubble form, float away then pop! Some instructors have frogs, army men and even a paratropper that they toss off the Buttercup lift, then the students have to ski down and find them - what an adventure!
- **Choose your own adventure or make up a fun mountain story.** Start the story like this: "One day I was riding the chairlift and saw a great big (have students say a word like - banana) ... Banana skiing down the hill. It was one of those kind of soft bananas that is a little brown and soft, and all of a sudden it crashed into a ... (have students choose a word) ... giant penguin ... a giant penguin that loves to eat bananas. Who likes to eat brown bananas? Not me! But apparently that penguin does!

Want to know more?

