First Time Experience Goals

The First Time Experience should be based on mutually established learning outcomes and goals, where activities support these. The goals outlined below may be used in a stepping stones approach dependent on the learner.

For example, some students may need to know how to control their speed and come to a complete stop so they feel most confident in proceeding in their learning. Other students may be natural sliders and have previous experiences that allow them to progress to a slope more quickly. Age plays a major roll on stamina, coordination and attention - be sure activities are aligned with the students' mental, social and physical state. Most beginner experiences will have most or all of these goals during a progression from novice to green level skiers.

It is important to also note that the suggested activities need to be student specific. Let's not slip into a prescribed method to teach a beginner lesson. Yes, we need to provide a logical "progression" of goals and outcomes for our newest instructors to provide structure to their experiences, but let's avoid prescribing "the way" to reach a goal, and focus on student observables and suggested activities to move toward the goal(s).

Establishing Connection

Goal: Make connection, establish rapport and develop trust with guests. Develop the sense of belonging and of self esteem in the group setting for both kids and adults.

Suggested Activities: Get to know individual names; Why are they here today; Have they done anything like this before; Other activities or sports, etc.; What is important to you that you learn during your first time skiing/riding? What are your expectations? Do you have any questions before we begin? Find or develop ways that the group members are the same. Develop common goals. Have you taken sport lessons or coaching before, what did you like/dislike?

Play, Drill, Adventure: What did you have for breakfast?; Did you start your trip when it was still dark?; What's your favorite color; Do you have a pet?; Do you have a brother or sister?; Do you go to a big school or little school?; What is your favorite thing to do at recess?; Do you play an instrument?; What's your favorite game?

Look for: emotional state of guest (happy, sad, frustrated, scared); Observe guest's clothing (suitable for environment, pant cuffs, etc.); Evaluate physical stamina when possible as it related to age and physical condition.

Next Goal(s): Moving in the Flats or Moving on a Slope

Moving in the Flats

Goal: Comfortable moving in the flats in all directions with skis on.

Suggested Activities: Putting on and taking off skis, Walking and sliding around with just boots on; Walking and sliding around with one ski on; Walking and sliding around with two skis on. Using ski poles to push off and slide; Stepping in a circle; Sliding and rotating skis on the snow; Ideally these activities will take place in “The Flats” but any area that is near flat will suffice.

Play, Drill, Adventure: Marching; Walking like a penguin; Sneaking up on … promotes slower movements; Make a pattern in the snow - ladder or bowtie or bicycle wheel spokes; Riding a scooter (one ski slides); Jumping - can you get your skis off the snow?;

Look for: Ankles flexed, pressing into tongue of boots; Able to balance on one foot; able to shift weight from foot to foot and ski to ski; Able to rotate/pivot skis on snow; Flexion/extension movements (age specific).

Next Goal(s): Moving on a slope or Controlling Speed

Moving on a Slope

Goal: Comfortable moving in all directions (up, down, across) on a gentle incline

Suggested Activities: Sidestepping up and down a small incline; Herringbone/Duck Walk up a small incline; Straight glides down a small incline; wedge glides down a small incline; slide on the smaller and larger roller features on the Ballroom Carpet Fun Zone.

Play, Drill, Adventure: Gliding or stationary: tall like a tree, small like a mouse (flex/extend); Gliding or stationary: reach for the sky, touch your toes (flex/extend); Wedge glides: sharp pencil (narrow wedge), dull crayon (wider wedge); Hopping/Olies; Zooming on the roller coaster (rollers); Up the roller return wall, then switch skiing back down;

Look for: Flexion and extension; Balance and stance; Ability to edge skis with lower leg; awareness of skis’ edges and their purpose; Knees apart (not close together or touching) while in a wedge; Skis on similar edge angles when side stepping and herringbone/duck walking.

Next Goal(s): Sliding Direction Changes or Controlling Speed

Sliding Direction Changes

Goal: Able to change directions while sliding

Suggested Activities: Small stepping turns on a short incline; a single gliding turn in one direction (small wedge or parallel); linked gliding turns in more than one direction (small wedge or parallel); Use the small banked turns on Ballroom Carpet Fun Zone; Use the “Perfect Pitch” to allow free practice of turning; Set poles or cones as visual turning points.

Play, Drill, Adventure: Aim your arrow this way; Race course; Obstacles course; How many turns can you do? Count them!; Let’s do the banked turns!

Look for: Ankles flexed, pressing into tongue of boots; Able to balance on one foot; able to shift weight from foot to foot and ski to ski; Able to rotate/pivot skis on snow without using upper body focussing on femur rotation.

Next Goal(s): Controlling Speed or Riding a Lift

Controlling Speed

Goal: Able to control and adjust speed in all situations

Suggested Activities: Vary turn shape and size; Make turns across the fall line to stop; Use the smaller and larger roller features on the Ballroom Carpet Fun Zone; Use a wedge of varying size to demonstrate slowing option without turning; Use larger wedge in confined space to stop (i.e. lift lines); Use the larger banked turn on the Buttercup Fun Zone; Use the “Perfect Pitch” to allow free practice of turning in the Buttercup Fun Zone.

Play, Drill, Adventure: Loud skis, quiet skis; Red light, green light;

Look for: Ankles flexed, pressing into tongue of boots; Able to vary the size of the wedge to control speed or stop; Balanced stance with even pressure from foot to foot.

Next Goal(s): Sliding Direction Changes or Riding a Lift

Riding a Lift

Goal: Be able to load, ride and unload a carpet and/or a chairlift (and navigate associated terrain).

Suggested Activities: Pull skis/board so person feels the sensation of the grip and pull of the carpet; Ride the Ballroom carpet or Kids Fun Zone carpet; Use the practice chair to simulate getting on, riding and unloading the chair; ride Buttercup chairlift.

Play, Drill, Adventure: Let's go on the ride! Let's go on the ride again! Going up is sometimes as much fun as going down - don't forget this!

Look for: Poles in one hand, look over shoulder for chair; Sit down / sit back / hold on; Lower comfort bar; Unloading: stand up and lean forward, glide straight without a wedge until off the ramp;

Next Goal(s): Practice time on Sliding Direction Changes by varying turn size and shape; varying ways of Controlling Speed via turn shape, terrain selection, etc.