



Sample Pre-Ski and Snowboard Lesson Plan
Ski Utah 4th Grade Ski and Snowboard Program
Lesson Time: 30-40 min.

Main Objectives of This Session

- ❖ Increase excitement and motivation for the ski and snowboard trip
- ❖ Enhance basic fundamental skills that are required for any sport
- ❖ Introduce more specific sport related skills to increase success during the two-hour on-snow session and possibly decrease learning time for easier on-snow skills

Introduction

- ❖ If the children do not know you, be sure to introduce yourself and let them know what you will be doing for the session; give them a brief preview of the activities and why you'll do them
- ❖ Ask them if they have been preparing for the ski day and what drills and exercises they have practiced; if you think they can handle it, have one or two children lead several repetitions of one of the exercise they have practiced
- ❖ It is very helpful to bring equipment with you so that you can review getting in and out of bindings, how to scrape snow off ski and snowboard boots (use the binding as a scraper and balance on one leg). Snowboards are easier to figure out, but if you have one, bring it. If you don't just bring ski equipment.
- ❖ Teachers have plenty of clothing info, but if you have time to review how to dress – do it! Relate to a weather lesson if possible.
- ❖ Our You Tube Video, accessible from the Ski Utah website, covers clothing, equipment, nutrition and pre-ski exercises
- ❖ The Fitness Curriculum, a downloadable document under “Stuff for Teachers,” includes several fitness games, exercises and activities that may be helpful to you

Warm-up

- ❖ Start with a quick and easy game that gets them moving. Downhill racer is always fun; lead students in a downhill run; begin in a tuck and lead them

through low tucks, high tucks, turns, jumps, spins, crashes, absorption movements etc. and then let one of the children lead for 30-60 seconds; repeat 2-3 times.

- ❖ Move on to several ski-team agility and balance drills from the activities listed and demonstrated on the website; they include balance squats, one-leg balance activities, skier's jumps etc.
- ❖ Add variations - if you think the students can handle it - like single leg balance w/eyes open and closed, single leg squats w/foot in front or in back, two-footed hops in a box shape; single foot side to side hops, carioca or any other agility drill with familiarity
- ❖ Move from one to the other with about 10-20 sec. rest between each
- ❖ Alternate easy drills with harder more physical ones

Main Body of the Lesson (this is just one way to do it; feel free to do what works for you)

- ❖ Assess their knowledge of important body parts by asking them to show you their hips, knees, torso, arches, heels, ball of the foot (they should know this – it's below grade level- but some do not!)
- ❖ Start with a balanced stance – here's a sample method
 - o Ask children what balance means
 - o Answer should be something like “it means that you are not falling down and that you are able to remain steady”.
 - o Ask children to show you an athletic stance – i.e. something where they are ready for movement
 - o Test it by nudging several children to see if they are solid
 - o Ask them to make the balance even steadier and then ask if this is their most balanced position – do they know why (slightly flexed legs, wider hip-width stance, arms out front, chest slightly forward)
 - o Now ask them to show you how to change their balance to make it less steady – just for fun!
 - o Ask them to be even less steady
 - o Ask them for their least balanced position
- ❖ You can also teach them a balanced stance by simply asking them to show you a “ready position” from another sport and then fine tuning it.

Eventually, you want children to realize that the most balanced position is slightly lower and wider – not too low, or their legs won't last the entire two hours on the hill! Knees and ankles should be slightly flexed - knees over their toes – and spaced

about hip width apart; chest should be slightly forward. Hands should be out front and about hip level.

- ❖ Move on to wedge movements – aim the toes in and the heels out as you move your legs away from each other; or, turn your toes in and heels out as you open your legs; use hopping movements to practice the movement pattern, explaining that on snow, their skis will slide into that position more easily; practice going from straight run to wedge to straight run.
- ❖ Practice sidestep and herringbone movements – that’s how they will move back uphill until the instructor feels that they can stop and turn well enough to ride the lift. Make sure that they keep their feet straight ahead in railroad tracks or a parallel position when sidestepping– remind them that with skis, their feet will grow to 3-4 feet long
- ❖ It may also be beneficial to point out that while side-stepping, the downhill foot is standing on the arch and uphill foot will be on the little toe side of the foot; in a herring-bone, they stand on the arch side of both feet; most kids really don’t know where their arch is, so work on this.
- ❖ Practice wedge and straight run movements on a piece of paper or paper plate – stress that they must move legs apart as they guide their toes in and heels out; otherwise they will cross tips; one instructor used cardboard skis, but cheap paper plates or scrap paper works well. Put one foot on each plate; practice walking movements as well with a focus on keeping feet parallel when walking or sidestepping).
- ❖ Try partnering children and give them coaching cues for each other. Did your partner open their legs as they turned their toes in and heels out? Did your partner keep his/her feet straight while sidestepping?
- ❖ Practice getting up – tucking legs under hips and walking forward with hands or roll to front/stomach with skis in “V” on the ground and do a push-up. This is applicable for snowboarding as well – keep feet in the air and turn over. Then put feet down (V for skiers, feet straight ahead for snowboarders) and push-up.
- ❖ Encourage children to practice these movements again, especially if they get their boots and skis the night before the field trip. Start by practicing with boots on and then add the skis. Caution them to stay on an old piece of carpet or the grass as the equipment does not belong to them and should not be on pavement or mud.
- ❖ Have fun with freestyle! Practice jumps with “old-school” tricks like splits, spread eagles and tucks. Try 180’s and 360’s with feet parallel to each other.

- ❖ Once they are worn out, have children sit while you show them a ski and boot and how it attaches to the ski. Tell them to practice when they get their equipment. They should also have watched this in the video.
- ❖ Remind them about proper dress – it's on the You Tube video, but ***if time***, you can stress that they dress in layers, wear only one pair of ski socks, bring a hat, mittens etc. Goggles, glasses and helmets are optional.
- ❖ You can finish with a few questions about skiing/snowboarding if you feel comfortable with that. Don't let them ask questions about the trip itself that their teachers can answer – only questions about skiing, equipment, clothing etc.
- ❖ Skier's Responsibility Code – review or finds ways to address it during the class – add a safety question between drills and exercises.

Snowboard Specific Skills

- ❖ Heel-toe rollers – rock from heels to toes to heels without sticking your “butt” out; keep some flex in knees and ankles as they roll from heel to toe
- ❖ Toe-raise exercises are very important – practice double and then single calf raises onto their toes.
- ❖ Leg squats and wall sits also important.
- ❖ Move around the gym or room in a “crab walk” position
- ❖ Play crab soccer!
- ❖ Have them practice getting up from heel and toe side without crossing their feet, i.e. they must maintain the side-by-side relationship of their feet at all times. This is the position of the feet on a snowboard when heading downhill – locked into a side by side position. However, students will begin their lesson with only one foot in a binding; the other foot will be sitting on the board when gliding downhill or used for propulsion similar to a scooter. Push up from a “crab walk” position for heel side practice and from a prone/push-up position on the toe side. Need core strength for this so emphasize curl-ups etc.
- ❖ For a better feel for getting up with a snowboard clipped to both feet, try tying a bungee cord or tubing around their ankles and tell them to keep their feet apart at all times, i.e. keep the tension on the cord or tubing. That way, they can't cheat.
- ❖ Practice 180's and 360's with feet in snowboarding position.

In schools where children will choose either snowboarding or skiing, simply go through the dry-land skills in both sports with all the children. It won't hurt them to work on both. It's all balance and agility anyway.