Lesson Plan 3 & 4

Content Area: P.E.- Cross Country Skiing

Classic Basics- No Poles

**Time Estimate:** 2x 60 -90 minutes sessions

**Summary:** Kids will learn the basic movements of classic skiing without poles in order to focus on leg movements and limit amount of coordination needed while still working on balance. Poles will be added in, at earliest, in the second of these two lessons.

**Goals/Objectives:**

Athletes will be able to:

* stride on the flats without poles
* have weight transfer from one ski to another
* swing arms as if they were holding poles

+ stride uphill

+ vary the length of the stride

* stride using poles, planting them with proper timing
* stride up steep terrain

**Assessment:** Watch for weight transfer as kids ski around. Look for timing with opposite arm swinging forward with opposite leg.

**Equipment/Tools/Terrain:**

Gym

Flat packed out area

Gradual hill

**Get the Jitters Out:**

Session 1: Run two laps of the gym, do 10 single leg hops, and take a seat

Session 2: Bound across gym. One time with as few bounds as possible and one time as fast as possible. Take a seat

**Instructional Input**: It’s not important to read this word by word to students, but to have a few phrases picked out to cue kids on technique. Starting with the modeling section with the students will make more less instruction time. This section is more for coach preparation.

Session 1: Show World Cup footage of classic skiing. Discuss basics. Start in an athletic stance with weight over balls of feet, soft knees and ankles, hands slightly forward. Shift weight to one leg. Then, using a small compression with hips, knees, and ankles, step forward shifting all your weight onto the other leg, releasing the opposite leg behind. Keep upper body forward and joints soft. One way to make sure body position is forward and joints are at correct angles is to make sure your nose, knees, and toes line up when all weight is on front leg. From hips to shoulders, the back should remain in natural position. Arms swing opposite of legs as in walking or running. Arms should be relaxed and the swing should simply help the forward momentum and timing. The phase in which the weight is dropped onto one ski in order to propel the other ski forward is often referred to as the “kick.” This is a bit misleading because never is the ski actually being kicked backward. The body weight is simply being dropped onto that ski in order to create traction from the fishscales or wax. Because the term “kick” is embedded in our terminology now, it is best to think about it like the weight is being dropped onto the ski to create power and traction for the opposite leg to “kick” forward. It is always a good idea to think about any movement as a movement that will help to create forward glide and movement down the track as opposed to any sort of movement backwards.

Session 2: Review classic stride basics and show more World Cup video. If kids are ready, add in poles. For younger kids, going without poles is almost always better, but older kids will really want poles so if they have “earned” it by demonstrating good striding, they can add in poles. This is also a good time to review herring bone technique because it is used in classic skiing on hills that are too steep to stride up.

**Modeling:**

Session 1: Model classic skiing on foot across the gym being sure to emphasize your body weight moving completely from one foot to the other with the body in a forward position. Next model what happens when more power is applied by bounding or creating “air time” between strides.

Session 2: Get out on skis for more practice time. Demonstrate a pass or two of skiing without poles and with poles so skiers can see the motions are the same.

**Guided Practice:**

Session 1: First have kids spread out and get into an athletic body position. Transfer weight onto one foot and swing the other leg back and forth from the hip. Add in the arms, swinging freely from the shoulder, opposite arm with opposite leg as in running. Next, add in the impulse. When the opposite arm swing forward and the unweighted leg is in extension, drop your body weight quickly onto your weighted foot. Switch feet. Next, try the whole sequence as described above. It will be hard to keep them from just running. One method to do this is to set up cones and have them see how few strides they can make between cones. Bounds need to be continuous however, so only jump as far as you can land, balance, and quickly move to the next stride. Just like running, we don’t want to heel strike, so we want to be sure we are landing with the foot underneath us, and the ankle and knee joints soft. This will require them to put quite a bit of force into the leap or bound. This motion is much like many animals make. Relate it to moose or caribou that are often seen effortlessly bounding, that is what we are looking for. As they catch on, have them add the arm swing in if they aren’t naturally doing that already. View the classic drills video to learn the full progression.

Session 2: Have kids take a pass or two without poles, swinging their arms as if they had poles. Those that are ready can then take a pass or two with poles. Next, work through different drills. First, keeping short strides, then move to short strides with a strong impulse creating more “air time”, then moving into more of a bound, lengthening the stride length but keeping, the feet underneath the body and the ankles and knees soft.

**Independent/Group Practice and Differentiation:**

Session 1: Pick up skis, no poles, and head outside. Classic skiing is a fairly natural movement so kids will pick up the basics quickly, if they haven’t already. Remind kids the importance of a good warm up. Give them 10 or so minutes of free ski to warm up and get comfortable on the skis, exploring the motion of their own.

For skiers that are struggling to shift weight between skis, have them take a ski off and do what we call the scooter drill, pushing with one leg and balancing on one ski. Then switch feet. You can do relay races or tag-type games using this drill as well.

More advanced skiers can work on going up steeper climbs, which requires more power and coordination to get the timing of the stride right. Skiers should always work on a downhill skill and uphill skill together. On the descent have the try to balance on one ski as long as possible.

Skiers can also work on stride length. Have them see how many strides they can get from one cone to the next and how few. Which is faster? Which is easier? Stand up tall when striding, sink down lower, Which is easier? Faster? Have them try to stride with their hands behind their backs. This requires more balance. Then have them exaggerate the arm swing, which will help momentum and weight transfer.

Session 2: All the above activities can be repeated with poles. If skiers are bored repeating activities, there are a number of games that can be used. Relay races are a good thing to turn to. Remember the goal is to keep skiers skiing so keep team sizes small and distances short. Also be aware of people who are uncomfortable or feel embarrassed. This always provides a good time to talk about teammates, supporting others, being positive, and the goal being to learn not to perform. For younger kids, divide them up into small groups and have them race each other holding hands with everyone in their group. They have to help each other up if someone falls down and they can only move at the speed everyone is comfortable with. Another variation is to have a Le Mons start, where skiers start with their skis off. This allows them to work on getting skis on and off. Berries on a plate is another variation where kids ski into the berry patch, pick a berry (ball) and put it on the plate (Frisbee) and return it to their teammate without dropping the berries. If the berries spill the team must start over.

**Group Game**:

Red light green light can be used regardless if skiers choose to use poles or not.

Duck, Duck, Goose is a good game as well, but is better is small groups so more people get to ski more frequently. This game can also be played on a hill, requiring skiers to herring bone and practice downhills. The goose chases the head bopper to the top of the hill instead of around the circle.

Tag games are always good options, however, should never to played with poles for safety reasons.

Caribou and Wolves (sharks and minnows) is also a good option

**Indoor Option:**

Most of this lesson can be done indoors with bounding. Spend more time working on bounding by challenging kids in the same way you would if they had skis on. How few bounds to get from one side to the other? How many? How high can you bound? How far? You can always pretend to have poles as well to work on timing and arm swing. Do relay races with bounding. It will always be tempting for kids just to run so make sure to emphasize the bound, maybe even placing cones far enough apart that kids can’t just run to get to the next one. If someone on your team runs, the team must start over. Spend more time on the muscle groups and nutrition if stuck inside.

**Wrap Up**

What are the keys to striding? What makes you go faster? What did you notice about different muscles? Have you noticed feeling different depending on what or when you eat? Do you feel better when you eat a good breakfast and lunch? Why do you get hungry so quickly when skiing? Why does skiing burn so many calories? Record these thoughts. Have kids record their activity in their logs and write what they did to reach their daily goal or help them reach a weekly or longer term goal.

Standards

Grades K-2

**Standard A**  
Demonstrate competency in motor and movement skills needed to perform a variety of physical activities:  
  
1.    Perform various forms of loco-motor movement such as walk, run, slide, gallop, jump, hop, leap, and skip.

6.    Demonstrate balance on the ground and on objects, using bases of support other than both feet.

**Standard C**   
Participate regularly in physical activity:  
  
1.    Participate in physical activity outside of physical education class.  
  
2.    Identify appropriate physical activities for recess and outside of school.  
  
3.    Attempt to perform new movement skills and activities.

18.    Move with effort, time, force, and flow.

**Standard D**   
Apply fitness concepts to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of personal fitness:

6.    Discuss the benefits of healthy food and beverage choices.

**Standard E**

Exhibit personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings:  
  
2.    Apply established class rules, procedures, and safe practices.  
  
3.    Participate cooperatively in a variety of group settings (e.g., partners, small groups, large groups) without interfering or excluding others.

**Standard F**   
Value physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction:

4.    Identify feelings resulting from challenges, successes, and failures in physical activity (i.e., happy, scared, angry, sad).   
  
5.    Attempt new activities.  
  
6.    Continue to participate when not successful on first try.   
  
7.    Try new movements and skills willingly.

Grades 3-5

**Standard B**    
Apply movement concepts to the learning and performance of physical activities  
  
1.    Select and practice a skill in which improvement is needed.  
5.    Use specific feedback to improve performance.

**Standard C**   
Participate regularly in physical activity:  
  
1.    Consciously choose to participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity outside of physical education class on a regular basis.  
  
2.    Participate in local physical activity opportunities.  
  
3.    Choose to participate in structured and purposeful activity.  
  
4.    Monitor his or her physical activity using a variety of tracking tools (e.g. fitness logs, pedometers).

**Standard D**   
Apply fitness concepts to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of personal fitness:  
  
1.    Participate in selected activities that develop and maintain the health-related components of fitness: muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, body composition and cardiovascular endurance.

4.    Engage in appropriate physical activity that results in the development of cardiovascular endurance.

6.    Choose to participate in activities to increase muscular strength and endurance.

**Standard F**   
Value physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction:  
  
1.    Develop self-confidence and a positive self-image in physical activity settings.  
  
3.    Participate in physical activities which will allow students to set and achieve individual and team goals.

Grades 6-8

**Standard C**  
Participate regularly in physical activity:  
  
1.    Recognize and understand the significance of physical activity in the maintenance of a healthy lifestyle.

3.    Maintain a physical activity log for a designated period of time (e.g., weight training charts, steps during the day, time engaged in physical activity).