

**The Professional Ski Instructors of America
Eastern Division**



**Nordic Downhill
Level III Exam Guide**

PSIA-E Nordic Downhill Level III Exam Guide

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Published by: Professional Ski Instructors of America – Eastern Division
1-A Lincoln Ave., Albany, NY 12205
Printed in the United States of America
Revised - September 2006

Introduction

This manuscript contains information about the Nordic Downhill Certification Program of the Professional Ski Instructors of America - Eastern Division. It outlines exam procedures, content, and standards. This manual also includes essential study material excerpted from the *PSIA Core Concepts Manual*, *ATS:Nordic*, *National Website*, and *the Eastern Nordic Website*.

The basic purpose of the PSIA-E Nordic Downhill Certification Program is to evaluate a candidate's knowledge and skills relative to established standards of professional ski teaching and other related information. PSIA-E, like other divisions, certifies ski teachers in the American Teaching System (ATS), our national model. Candidates are expected to demonstrate a comprehensive, working knowledge of ATS throughout the examination process. Certification is awarded to those who demonstrate the required level of proficiency in skiing, teaching, and professional knowledge during the examination and have met the prerequisite requirements. Training and continuing education in these three areas are acquired through PSIA-E educational programs, ski school clinics, personal study, and experience.

The PSIA-E certification pin identifies highly qualified instructors to the ski industry and the skiing public. It is an assurance that a specific level of knowledge and competency are present in such areas as skiing, teaching technology and methodology, guest service, and safety/risk awareness.

As a desirable credential, certification becomes an expressed goal for many ski teachers, thus raising the overall standards of professional ski teaching in the United States. Ongoing educational requirements for retaining certification assist in assuring that high standards of performance are maintained. Most professionals view certification as a foundation, rather than an end in itself, and continue to grow and develop far beyond the minimum standards.

PSIA offers certification events as a member benefit. Certification is encouraged but not required. Most of the organization's events are primarily educational in content. It is quite acceptable for members to attend only the required educational events. If you are interested in certification, be assured that PSIA-E strives to deliver fair, consistent, and relevant certification events. It is our goal to examine for success in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible within a structured and meaningful evaluation environment.

Preparing for Level III

Level III Certification is a two-day process. First you must obtain your Level II Certification in Nordic Downhill or transfer from Alpine Level III in order to register for the Nordic Level III exam. A prerequisite course must be taken in the season that you are taking your Level III Exam.

The prerequisites for the Level III Exam can be your choice of any of the upgrades/specialty events. There are diverse topics and areas for you to gain the necessary requirements to round out your training needs. Each season we do offer an Exam Prep Clinic. This will review situations and activities that will be used in the skiing, teaching, professional knowledge and written sections. It is a great place to ask questions about the standards and what will be expected of you. This clinic will give you a flavor of what the exam is like. You have the freedom to choose other clinics that may help you in movement analysis, teaching, personal skiing improvement and off-piste skiing. It is suggested to crossovers from other disciplines that the exam clinic would be the best for you if you have not participated in any Nordic Downhill event prior to this one. The Exam Prep Clinic is not a cram course before the exam. You should be prepared with questions and specific needs that will help you meet the standards. At the beginning of this event each individual is surveyed for their own needs and then the clinic outline for the two days is dictated by that. A broad overview of the exam is also included. Each season the Nordic Coordinator provides a detailed course listing and description of the events in the *Snow Pro* and on the psia-e.org website. Browse it and find out what your specific needs might be before participating in the exam.

Approximately half of your time will be in ungroomed snow in the woods so be prepared to ski and teach there. This is an area we find candidates not as comfortable. The other disciplines do not currently use the off-piste as much as we do at level III. It is up to you to get in there and learn to ski it. If your home area does not allow it, please make the time to go somewhere else or hike in your area (never alone) to prepare yourself. Ski many types of conditions and terrain from black to green. Practice skiing demos in the Level I and II standards section. These are like the compulsories in ice-skating. They allow the examiners to see the base of your technical skills, which will transfer to your situational skiing. Video yourself performing telemark, freestyle and classical Nordic movements. Remember Nordic Downhill encompasses all of Nordic skiing, just the basics of diagonal striding and skating.

Teach as many people as you can from first time to advanced telemarkers on green to black diamond terrain. Create activities and avenues for your students to progress. Practice the Teaching Model in many ways so you can be comfortable with many types of people. Level III encompasses all information from the previous levels but will focus primarily on advanced Nordic Downhill. At this level be prepared for beginner to expert teaching, activities and tasks, racing, free ride, jumping and basic Nordic movements of striding and skating.

Use the Telemark Components as a template for teaching and skiing. Use it also for movement analysis. Make a list of the types of telemark movements you see on the hill (good/bad) and be able to create some basic lesson plans for them. Utilize the website

and reference materials listed as well as the questions in this section to help you prepare. The best preparation is to teach and get as many people telemarking as possible. Learn from your successes and failures.

The National Standards

The National Standards (Education/Certification Outcomes) provide an extensive list of the exact things that a candidate is expected to be able to do and know to meet certification requirements. The standards have been written so that they give the member a picture of the skiing, teaching, and professional knowledge expectations of the examiner(s) conducting the exam. The standards are what examiners use to determine whether or not a candidate meets all criteria for the desired level of certification.

The current PSIA Education/Certification Standards are referenced to PSIA/AASI's Core Concepts, National and Eastern Websites and ATS Nordic Skiing; terminology consistent with these manuals is used throughout these documents. The standards provide a training focus, and represent a minimum competency for each level of certification.

The premise of the certification standards is based upon the concepts of "levels of understanding" which define stages of learning in degrees of understanding. As certification is a measure of understanding, levels of certification represent stages of understanding. Candidates will be held to the knowledge and performance standards of the level at which they are testing as well as the criteria for all preceding levels.

All references to skills and skill blending refer to balancing movements, rotary movements, edge-control movements, and pressure-control movements. In addition, references to telemark components and the mixing of them refer to standing and moving on tele skis, twisty turny rotational movements, release mechanisms and turn entry, lead changes, shaping, and poling/timing movements. The variety of turn shapes refers to short, medium, and long-radius turns. While specific trail difficulty designations are stated in the National Standards, it is important to note that trail difficulty is often designated relative to the other trails at a given area. Skiing activities during certification exams will be performed on terrain that is deemed appropriate for the task being evaluated. The PSIA-E Education/Certification Standards are based on the PSIA National Standards. Slight modifications from the National Standards exist to better meet the unique needs and job responsibilities of members in the Eastern Division. Candidates with disabilities, see "A.D.A. Considerations" elsewhere in this manual.

Certification Path

Nordic Downhill Certification is a linear path of three steps.

Becoming a new member: Take a Nordic Downhill Event that allows you to obtain Level I Certification and pay Level I dues to the Association. Due to the nature of Nordic Downhill you may not have a Ski School Director or a training program. If not, you still can participate in a Level I Event (review the Standards and come prepared) and place your name in the Ski School Directors' section. If you are part of a school please have your Director sign your card. PSIA-E allows any ski/snowboard instructor to pay dues and become a PSIA-E Registered member. To become certified you then follow the Level I steps.

Transferring from another Discipline: It is suggested you take one of the Nordic Downhill events that outlines the beginner/novice zones FIRST. If you are trained and have a background in telemarking you may pick any of the upgrade events.

Level II Exam Prerequisite: May be taken in the FIRST year of membership or transferring. Please see the Level II Exam Prerequisite explanation elsewhere in this guide for complete information on courses that qualify as exam prerequisites.

Level II Exam may be taken in the first year of becoming a new member in Nordic Downhill or in any other discipline. You first need to take a prerequisite upgrade. See level II for listings.

Level III Exam Prerequisite: May be taken your second year. See Level III for listings of events.

Level III Exam may be taken the next season after successful completion of the Level I and II Exam and after fulfilling the Level III prerequisite. If you are Level III Alpine you are allowed to challenge the Level III Nordic Downhill exam. First, you need to take a prerequisite prior to the exam that season. Further details are in the Level III section.

The Level III Exam Process

The Level III Exam is a two-day process. The terrain to be used will fit the tasks at hand. The candidate should be prepared to ski, teach and demo on green, blue, and black terrain. A significant portion is dedicated to skiing ungroomed terrain. We define this as bumps, crud, powder, conditions du jour, trees, steeps and drops. Review the website information on Levels I and II. The candidate is responsible for that info also, but on a smaller scale. Your equipment must be properly prepared and ready to use in any of these conditions. The exam is an **all mountain event**, so keep that in mind when choosing and preparing equipment. Also, two days skiing off-piste and teaching is a situation most may not be used to. Please prepare yourself mentally and physically to be at your best.

During registration on the first morning there will be a chart available with the number and names of people in each one of the exam groups. With normal participation we would have a total of 7 per group all trying for the same level exam. At times, we may need to add Divisional Clinic Leaders and Development Team candidates to the group. Currently we have one exam time and assess Level II, III, DCL, Development Team and Examiner Training Candidates.

Each group of candidates will be assessed by a different Nordic Downhill Examiner each day. Also during registration there will be a chart available that details the rotations of who and where you will be. During these sessions the examiners will be assessing the following:

Scoring Categories Explained

Refer to "Membership Level Standards" for more specific information

Skiing:

Candidates are evaluated on their ability to perform a variety of maneuvers in three different situations: Skiing, demonstrations and versatility. Technique, efficiency, adaptability, control, and precision are elements considered here.

SKIING. This evaluation is based upon the candidate's ability to adapt to terrain and to perform tasks assigned by the examiner or other candidates as part of the teaching segments. Assignments are varied; candidates may be asked to ski individually, in pairs, or as a group. Skiing tasks will be reviewed daily and shown by example by the examiner or participating Ed Staff person. 75% of the tasks will be the same every day (they may be reworded or explained differently but the performance we are looking at will be the same) with the other 25% being specific to that examiners focus or theme for the day

DEMONSTRATIONS. Many demonstrations occur as a natural component of ski teaching with the candidate, like leading a group in an exercise. The examiner may ask a candidate to perform a specific maneuver for evaluation or perhaps as part of a movement analysis exercise. The ability to demonstrate at regular and slower speeds is important. Demonstrations are specific movements that blend the telemark components to show proper usage of the skills.

VERSATILITY. This element is very specific to Nordic Downhill and for that reason it is a separate category. The ability to be able to demonstrate and ski in diverse conditions and terrain is paramount for a Nordic Downhill instructor. Being able to decide what tactical movement or type of turn is essential when skiing off-piste. We are looking for diversity, adaptability and a safe way down. Listed below are tasks we can choose from:

Teaching:

The evaluation is determined not only by how a candidate teaches, but also by what is taught. A candidate may explain a concept incorrectly, receiving a minus score, but may follow it with sound teaching principles, and receive a plus score. A variety of areas are considered for an overall evaluation of a person's teaching ability.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS. Verbal and non-verbal communication is important; feedback should be pertinent and positive. Communication as a two-way process must be emphasized, particularly checking for a student's understanding of concepts and tasks.

SAFETY EDUCATION/RISK AWARENESS. Important here is choice of appropriate terrain, safety awareness during class handling, and hill safety. The ability to orient skiers to their safety responsibilities during participation in the sport in on/off-piste situations is crucial

APPROPRIATE LESSON CONTENT/PROGRESSIONS. This is the foundation of ski teaching. Try to create effective lesson plans to broaden the student's education in skiing.

METHODOLOGY. Awareness and use of different learning styles is necessary. An understanding of goal-setting during the lesson and specific teaching tactics to reach those goals is also important.

CLASS HANDLING. These skills include leadership, group dynamics, student participation, and time management. Also, appropriate time frames for practice of newly acquired movements or concepts.

PROFESSIONALISM. Important here is a positive attitude, appearance, punctuality, and sincerity.

The candidates work with others in the group to improve their skiing, or they may be asked to lead the group in an exercise, which addresses some aspect of teaching. These individual assignments vary in length, but the emphasis is generally upon many shorter opportunities to demonstrate effective teaching. Less individual leading of the group is used during Level II exams. Still, be prepared to lead for a short time. Below is a sample of the types of teaching activities and time slots we utilize during the exam.

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*BYOL, Bring Your Own Lesson. In this session you can teach anything you want to. It could pertain to a student back home, linear improvement, lateral exploration, “how to lesson”, movement analysis approach, tactical, terrain or condition related anything. It must utilize ATS Teaching Model components (Intro, body, demos, feedback, practice time and summary) and in an environment that is being shared with your peers. Approximately, 15 minutes.

*HAT, Means you will pick a topic out of the hat in the morning. You may discuss it with the examiner and your peers so you are comfortable. We will direct answers towards the teaching of the topic. If you don't like the topic you can choose another (one time only). You will have at least a half hour to prepare your lesson and you will be asked to teach for approximately 5-7 minutes.

*SNAPSHOTS, are a teaching activity that allows the candidate to expand upon immediately with the knowledge they have without preparation. It must be moving and showing so the group understands the topic and gets an educational value out of it. Approximately 3-5 minute program with 2-3 minutes preparation.

Professional Knowledge:

Candidates will be evaluated on their knowledge and understanding of technical elements of the skiing discipline. Examiners will evaluate the level of technical knowledge by observing the candidate's skiing, teaching, analysis/feedback, participation in-group discussions, responses to direct questions, and written exam. The written exam will comprise 50% percent of the total professional knowledge score, with the balance being scored by the examiners on the hill.

Participants may be asked to evaluate the skiing of other candidates, passing skiers, and themselves. They are evaluated on what they say about technical topics and how they structure the development of skiing skills. There also is the possibility of using video/TV to discuss some of the following topics. A variety of areas will be considered:

TELEMARK COMPONENTS. Exercises, progressions, and overall lesson organization, which relate to the American Teaching System are important, including insights into the relative effectiveness of various approaches.

CHILD-CENTERED SKI TEACHING. Modifications of ATS skiing and teaching models for kids (CAP model) is important here. Everyone will at least have one segment focused on children's education.

TERMINOLOGY. Command of the skiing “language” is necessary, including knowledge of appropriate terms to use with students, as opposed to technical discussions among instructors. Semantics and wording that everyone can understand is (6-8 grade level) should be utilized when teaching. Be prepared for a more in depth knowledge with the written test and questioning.

CUSTOMER SERVICE. Customer satisfaction and generating return business is vital to our continuing education process. Understand the model and be ready to use or discuss it.

EQUIPMENT KNOWLEDGE. Design, function, performance, and safety maintenance are possible subjects for discussion, including how we help students select appropriate equipment.

BIOMECHANICS. Included here is knowledge of the physics of skiing and the effect of physical attributes and conditioning upon performance.

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MOVEMENT ANALYSIS. The ability to identify and discuss movement patterns, cause and effect relationships, and corrective exercises/activities is crucial. Description, prescription and content of the lesson are also part of this area. A thorough understanding and usage of the Telemark Components/Visual Cues as a template for analyzing skiers will assist you in the above explanation.

WRITTEN TEST. The test will be on line for you to answer and enjoy. If not on-line then it will be administered at the exam.

Typical Exam Schedule

Day One

8:00-8:30 AM	Registration/Turn in written exam
8:30-8:45 AM	Group assignments, introductions and general announcements
9:00-12:00 AM	On-Hill Assessment Lunch
1:00-4:00 PM	On-Hill Assessment
4:00 PM	Wrap-up and directions for the next day.

Day Two

8:30-8:45 AM	Group assignments, introductions and general announcements
9:00-12:00 AM	On-Hill Assessment Lunch
1:00-3:00 PM	On-Hill Assessment
4:00 PM	Summary/Score sheets and Awards Celebration

Exam Scoring

At times, you will notice examiners using worksheets to record their scores and comments for each of the three categories. Samples are shown on the following page. We use a P for pass and F for fail in each of the scoring boxes and write comments to remember specific performances. All candidates will receive their marks and written feedback from each examiner, along with their overall results on a scoring sheet at the end of the exam. It is our goal to try not to be seen when using the cards on the hill and most of the time we do it on the lift or out of sight to allow you the least stressful environment for you to perform.

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During small groups and pairings situations appropriate tasks will be explained so when scoring you do not feel that your partner or group have made a decision you do not agree with. These areas are more designed for warm-ups, creativity, delivery, spontaneity and organization.

Each examiner gives three marks per candidate (skiing, teaching and professional knowledge). Within each category, at least two examiners must determine that the required standards have been met in order for the candidate to attain the next level of certification. Each examiner provides a written evaluation/score card for each candidate in the three categories.

Examiners do not provide candidates with specific feedback during the exam, nor do they indicate whether candidates have “passed” or “failed” specific maneuvers or the entire exam while the exam is in progress.

NAME:	#	LIII
TEACHING TASKS		
BYOL	_____	

HAT	_____	

SNAPSHOTS	_____	

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE		
DESCRIPTION	_____	

PRESCRIPTION	_____	

CONTENT	_____	

WRITTEN TEST	VIDEO TEST	

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Name: _____ # _____ Date: _____



TEACHING



SKIING



PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Written Test

Video Test

The Level III Assessment: What to Expect

Skiing

Skiing activities should be performed as if the candidate were leading a student down the slope and enjoying the terrain. You should practice and master the following activities before coming to the Level III event. These activities may be skied in teaching segments, in specific skiing tasks, in groups, pairs or other situations. Expect challenging conditions and terrain of New England.

Level III Skiing tasks

- *A constant flow and rhythm that seems mostly uninterrupted with the legs freely moving out and around without disrupting the dynamic flow down the hill is the goal. Skiing tasks will be chosen from the list below and skied on terrain appropriate to the task. Versatility of these tasks in varied snow conditions and terrain will be explored. Assume these are all on black terrain 50% on-piste and 50% off piste.
- *Anything listed in the level II Skiing Tasks
- *Carved telemark/parallel turns short medium and long @ varied speeds
- *Funnel turns short to long, visa versa
- *Slow open telemark or parallel turn with no convergence
- *Telemarking designated width corridors w/ consistent turn shape
- *Carved monomarks short, medium and long radius
- *Linked reverse telemark short, medium and long
- *Retraction turns varied radius w/ w/o hop
- *Extension turns varied radius w/ w/o hop
- *Linked short turn in anticipatory position w/ lower body doing the turning only
- *Varied turn types w/ no poles
- *Telemark/parallel in diverse ungroomed conditions
- *Free ride turns (wt distribute over rear foot, low and move from inside to inside of turn)
- *Telemark/Parallel backwards
- *Hop turns from fall line to fall line, beginning to beginning and end to end of turn
- *V1, diagonal skate, marathon skate, double pole, diagonal stride

Versatility

*Bumps

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| *condition du jour | *blocking pole |
| *retraction/suction turns | *Light pole touch |
| *extension w/ level head | *corridor |
| *Any jump turn | *pain in the S |
| *Sequential | |
| *Skidded | |
| *GS, Medium, Short mix or funnel | |
| *Ski only tops, troughs, shoulders and mix | |

*Race Courses

- *Nastar/GS
- *ski it in pairs one gate behind
- *0 angle jump to gate

*Trees

- *tight, open, steep, mild
- *continual linking no stopping
- *w/ limited number of parallel or braking turns

*Chutes

*Air

- *w/o maneuver off-piste

*Park/Pipe

- *ride basic low –intermediate rail
- *ramp jump w/ maneuver
- *air for distance or height
- *Pipe out of or at the top

Teaching

The Level III Exam will focus on the candidate being able to exhibit teaching behavior that shows a sound knowledge and usage of the major parts of the ATS Model. The teaching activities listed above in the Exam Process will focus on diverse groups of people who might come for a telemark lesson. They will range from a first timer (beginner zone) to skiing improvement (intermediate zone) through advanced. You should be prepared to teach bumps, ungroomed snow, jumping, trees/steeps and racing.

Skiers today come from many different backgrounds, sports and areas of the country, being able to capitalize on their previous experiences will be advantageous for them to learn another sport better or for the first time. Be prepared to show ways you have utilized a student's background. A level III candidate should be able to target the area needing additional practice or able to teach someone a new skill of advanced maneuvers efficiently, simply, safe and fun.

It is expected that the ATS teaching model and the Telemark Components be the basis of your teaching activities.

The teaching segments may be interwoven with skiing tasks and professional knowledge or they may all be separated out or combinations there of.

Our goal is to make this fun and create the environment that is easy for you to show us what you know in order to meet the standard for Level III being able to answer the what's, how's and why's are essential to show a working knowledge of a Nordic lesson.

Professional Knowledge

The topics in the Outcomes for Level II will be interwoven into the skiing tasks and teaching activities. There will be questions thrown out to the group also on some of those topics. Expect specific sessions with movement analysis, cause and effect relationships, description/prescription on the hill and possibly with video and television. Approximately 50% of the professional knowledge will be assessed through the written exam.

Certified Level III – Prerequisites

The Certified Level III member is one who has demonstrated commitment and dedication to the ski teaching profession and to his/her own personal development. Level III members have proven their competency by passing a Level III exam, and are considered the highest qualified coaches to provide valuable instruction to a majority of ski school patrons. The Level III member is required to meet the following prerequisites:

- Be 18 years of age or older at time of application.
- Be a Certified Level II member of PSIA-E, and be in at least the third year of membership.
- Fill out a registration form on line. Note, if you do not have a ski school director or major organizer due to the uniqueness of your group, you may sign your name in the ski school director's section. It is strongly suggested that the candidate has been teaching in the beginner to advanced zone and has had some training relative to Nordic Downhill Also include a check (PSIA-E), credit card or money order for the proper amount by the deadline on the event schedule. The event schedule can also be found on the website or call (518) 452-6095.
- Attend a PSIA-E Level III prerequisite the season of their exam.
- Pass the PSIA-E Certified Level III exam criteria as stated in the National Level III Standards, and evaluated by the Association.

Certified Level III members must maintain their membership by attending an educational credit event at least once every two seasons (unsuccessful exam attempts do not count as educational re-ups) and by paying dues to the Association on an annual basis. They may hold committee seats, and after two years as Level II members, may hold a seat on the Board of Directors. They are entitled to full voting rights.

Certified Level III Standards: Nordic Downhill

All references to ATS refer to "*American Teaching System; Nordic Skiing*". Terminology consistent with the ATS is used throughout the Level I Outcomes. Additional sources of reference are the *Core Concepts Manual*, *Nordic Technical Manual*, *Nordic Website from National and the East*. All references to class level refer to class levels of beginner, intermediate and advanced. All references to skills and skill blending refer to balancing, rotary, edge control and pressure control movements (including poling for propulsion). There are also references to the Telemark Components, which blend the skills concept into specific movements for Nordic Downhill. The variety of turn shapes refers to short, medium and long radius turns.

The Level III member is one whose high levels of skill and knowledge allow him or her to make an uncompromised contribution to the customer, the Association, and the ski industry. A Level III member has the ability to assess all variables with regard to student personality traits, goals, abilities, needs, the learning environment, conditions of the day, available terrain, equipment, etc. and to synthesize these parts into a viable lesson plan. A Level III instructor can make adjustments to lesson goals and is able to appropriately adjust or modify lesson content as required by any situation.

Category I: Skiing

Level III certified teachers must be able to ski all green to black terrain, including bumps and off-piste conditions. Demonstrating consistent balance and control of speed through turn shape on groomed terrain and a dynamic balance and control in the bumps and off-piste. Demonstrations must display an "accurate picture" of the technical elements of Beginner/Advanced zone skiing. Versatility and consistency of efficient movements when skiing and ability to effectively communicate information that will make a positive effect with the skiers they teach is the criteria for a Level III Nordic Downhill Instructor.

Level III teachers should have the skills to make short, medium, and long radius turns with little or no skidding. The skis describe two well-defined arcs from before the fall line to turn completion. Terrain and snow conditions should have a minimal effect on skill application, movement accuracy, and turn outcome. Turn dynamics should represent the terrain, speed, and snow conditions common to advanced zone skiing. A Level III teacher has the ability to maintain dynamics and movement accuracy through most conditions, on any terrain on most mountains.

The instructor is able to...

1. General Characteristics

- a. Ski dynamic-telemark and parallel turns on any terrain on most mountains
- b. Reduce, maintain and generate speed without interrupting overall flow and rhythm
 - Consciously affect the movements of the body with pole movements to complement turn outcome

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- Actively and accurately move the center of mass from turn to turn with little interruption of rhythm and flow
- Applies appropriate poling movements to specific turn shapes/tactics
- c. Ski a variety of turn sizes and shapes and apply them to different mountain situations
- d. Demonstrate different types of skill blends and movement patterns in exercises, tasks, and turns upon request, and as applied in different mountain situations
- e. Maintain control over turn shape and speed while skiing most conditions on any terrain on most mountains Demonstrate the *visual cues to effective telemark skiing** relative to edging, rotary and pressure control movements in demonstrations and tasks common to Advanced zone skiers

**Visual Cues Effective Telemark Skiing*, from the *Nordic Technical Manual* do not address alpine stances. For these please refer to the *Visual Cues to Effective and Ineffective Skiing in the Alpine Technical Manual*, (PSIA, 2002).

The instructor is able to...

2. Telemark Certification Skiing Standards

- a. Balance & Stance
 - Maintain lateral and fore-aft balance with hips between the feet through turn transitions in all terrain and snow conditions
 - Utilize fine motor adjustments to anticipate ski reaction and create balance adjustments, minimizing the interruption of rhythm and flow
 - Employ any skill with either leg at any point during the turn
- b. Lead Change
 - Blend simultaneous lead change and edge change with rotary and pressuring movements
 - Vary lead change and timing to adapt to changing terrain and conditions
- c. Edging Movements
 - Demonstrate progressive tipping of the skis from the feet up while simultaneously engaging both edges in the initiation phase
 - Utilize ski design as the major component controlling turn shape in most conditions in most situations
 - Move the center of mass inside the turn in the initiation phase
- d. Rotary Movements
 - Use rotational movements of the lower body in conjunction with edging and pressure control movements through the turn *unless* required by terrain or task
 - Maintain a parallel relationship with the skis and consistent width track throughout the turn and turn transitions
- e. Pressure Control
 - Actively manage pressure and turn forces throughout the turn and through turn transitions while maintaining turn shape and accuracy
 - Regulate pressure distribution between both feet throughout the turn in all conditions

Category II: Teaching

Level III teachers must demonstrate an in depth understanding of basic learning theory, communication and people skills, and human development issues. Display a mastery of human development issues for all skiing populations (i.e., age, gender). Application of these concepts must produce a clear and concise delivery of information, and an uncomplicated learning environment through advanced zone lessons.

The instructor is able to...

1. Awareness, Understanding, and Knowledge

- a. Consider safety concerns as students move beyond the intermediate zone learning environment
- b. Make specific lesson plan decisions based upon accurate interpretation of student behavior and performance
- c. Adjust the depth and pacing of information and feedback to address the needs, motivation, and interest level of the students
- d. Address a variety of learning styles and utilize various feedback systems to facilitate an experiential learning environment
- e. Identify the elements of multiple intelligence theory and relate these concepts to sensory preferences in communication and information exchange
- f. Describe, in depth, the skier services and activities available at one's home area as well as within the ski industry
- g. Display a strong ability to answer the "How do I get there?" question regarding movement analysis
- h. Display an in-depth understanding of cause-and-effect relationships relative to skill references and specific movement issues
- i. Create unique lesson plans through a strong understanding of people and ski technique

2. Application

- a. Teach the skiing public through the advanced zone
- b. Account for the mental, emotional, social, and physical cues encountered with students in most lesson situations
- c. Creatively utilize the conditions of the day to ensure safety and create unique experiences for students
- d. Make technical lesson content decisions based upon specific movement analysis observations, as well as non-movement factors (mental, emotional, physical)
- e. Demonstrate an ability to encourage students to become responsible for their own learning
- f. Lessons are characterized by a continuously developing lesson plan based on observations and the development and adjustment of guest goals; rather than a preconceived lesson plan based upon initial perceptions

Category III: Professional Knowledge

Professional Knowledge for Level III teachers reflects a strong accurate understanding of skiing terminology and concepts beyond the scope of ski teaching manuals. Related industry sources, ski coaching, and familiarity with various peripheral resources promote well-rounded teaching with the capacity to create exceptional experiences for most students, in most conditions on any terrain at most mountains.

The instructor is able to...

1. **Terminology**
 - a. Demonstrate a strong understanding of industry-wide terminology
 - b. Display an ability to compare and contrast various types of information regarding skiing and ski teaching from a variety of resources
 - c. Demonstrate the ability to describe translate most skiing without jargon
2. **Equipment**
 - a. Describe changing equipment needs as skiers move through the intermediate and advanced ability zones
 - b. Tailor lesson plans to fit student equipment capabilities
 - c. Serve as an industry ambassador, shop liaison, and general authority for equipment questions and advice
3. **Skills Concept**
 - a. Understand appropriate application of the skills concept (as a tool to communicate, organize and assist the teaching of movements)
 - b. Understand and utilize the controlling elements of skiing movements (duration, intensity, rate, and timing) relative to skill blending
 - c. Apply skill blending to tactical choices in a variety of conditions
4. **Movement Analysis**
 - a. Incorporate all aspects of student-teacher communication as a part of movement analysis, utilizing personality traits such as motivation and emotion in addition to actual skiing performance
 - b. Understand the *visual cues of effective telemark skiing* relative to Advanced zone skiing applications
 - c. Understand cause-and-effect relationships and resultant ski performance in advanced zone skiing situations
 - d. Utilize informal movement analysis (in addition to formal situations) to constantly monitor all aspect of movement and movement patterns as an ongoing process throughout a lesson
 - e. Evaluate the effectiveness and performance of practice activities, and continuously adjust lesson plans accordingly
5. **Personal Mastery**
 - a. Seek outside education options to promote a broad understanding of the sport
 - b. Seek involvement in helping less experienced teachers

Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) Considerations for PSIA-E Certification Exams

The A.D.A. requires testing entities such as PSIA-E to make “*reasonable modifications*” in testing procedures for candidates with disabilities who need such modifications in order to take the test. Only certain types of modifications are “*reasonable.*” **Under the A.D.A., PSIA-E is not required to make any change to testing procedures that would “*fundamentally alter*” the test; that is, to change what is being tested.**

It is imperative that members with disabilities, who are considering applying for a certification exam, contact the Albany office to discuss their situations.

What is being tested is clearly presented in this guide. The standards are national in scope and their maintenance is necessary in the interests of public safety, effectiveness, value for the consumer, and guest/employer expectations.

As examples, PSIA-E certification tests a candidate’s ability to “Telemark consistently with appropriate blending of the components through a series of turns” and “Demonstrate matching of the skis in a variety of places in the turn, depending on speed, terrain or intention. Matching should be accomplished by steering the inside ski.”

These test requirements cannot be modified without changing what is being tested. All candidates will, therefore, be tested on their ability to perform these and other stated standards. PSIA-E recognizes that these specific standards, and others similar to them, require candidates to ski upright, on two skis, and that this is not possible for some skiers with disabilities. While PSIA-E cannot fundamentally alter what is being tested by removing or modifying these standards, it does offer two alternatives to candidates who are unable to meet these standards due to disability.

First, candidates may consider PSIA-E/EF Adaptive certification. While there are still physical standards to meet, and the required level of professional knowledge is high, the Adaptive process and the Adaptive examining staff are geared to accommodate most disabilities. In 2004/5 we will have a specific Nordic/Adaptive Level I Certification.

Second, candidates unable to meet the skiing skill requirements of the exam due to disability, may take the non-skiing skill portions of the PSIA-E certification exams along with other candidates, and be tested on their teaching ability and professional knowledge. If successful in these two categories, they will receive a Certificate of Accreditation.

The Teaching and Professional Knowledge portions of PSIA-E certification exams test candidates on their ability to observe students skiing and advise them accordingly. PSIA-E recognizes that such observation may not be possible for visually impaired candidates. PSIA-E is not required to change what is being tested by removing or modifying this requirement.

Candidates who are deaf, or otherwise hearing or speaking impaired, such that they are not able to hear and/or speak independently to students, are not necessarily precluded from taking an exam, and may meet the communication requirements through the use of an interpreter.

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Of course, all candidates, including those with hearing or speaking disabilities will be held to the same standard of substantive knowledge, and their ability to “get the point across” with maximum accuracy and clarity.

See the “PSIA-E/EF Adaptive Education Workbook and Exam Guide” for further information about Adaptive Certification standards and format.

Study Questions for Exam Preparation

Below there are sample questions that will be asked on the exam. The questions below and suggested activities will help prepare you for the exam. Try not to wait to the last minute but prepare early and thoroughly. The exam is composed of objective questions and you circle the right answer.

Sample Questions

TEACHING

1. What is Motor learning?
 - a. Movements learned by practice or experience that lead to permanent gain in performance.
 - b. Repetitive information memorized.
 - c. Reading and writing of material needed to understand.
 - d. Doing something once and remembering for life.
2. What is lateral learning?
 - a. Where students focus on a broad range of activities within an ability level where they gain experience before progressing to the next level.
 - b. Moving off the slope and learning on the side away from the main slope.
 - c. Trying to grasp as much info as one can in the shortest period of time.
 - d. Focusing on one topic until you can perform it and understand it, before learning anything else.
3. What is teaching for transfer?
 - a. Drawing on a students previous learning to help with present learning. This is usually done by pointing out similarities between familiar movements and new movements.
 - b. Switching textbooks because you cannot learn from just one.
 - c. Taking what you learned in the morning and using it in the afternoon.
 - d. Focusing on the sports movement and no other so as not to confuse the learner.
4. Describe the learning process
 - a. Readiness, Reception, Processing, Reaction
 - b. Listen, Question, Conflict, Compromise
 - c. Storming, Norming, Performing
 - d. Watch, Do, Ask
5. List four types of learners.
6. List Howard Gardner's 7 intelligences
7. What are the two learning styles?
8. Which learning style Do each of these learners fit under
 - a. Big picture
 - b. Parts learners
 - c. Reflective observers
 - d. Active experimenters

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9. A young child's CM is lower than that of an adult. T or F
10. What are the 4 major joints of importance related to telemark skiing and snow sports in general?
11. What is the Q angle?
12. List three essential skills to help instructors interpret behaviors of their students.
13. List three categories for observation for movement assessment.
14. List 4 key considerations when assessing the movements of children.
15. Feedback should be Judgmental or Objective?
16. What is PSIA motto?
17. The onset of frostbite is frost nip. What are those indicators?
18. What is hypothermia?
19. What is meant by "Stepping Stones" to success?
20. What is Maslow's hierarchy?
21. Examine the differences between several teaching styles. How do the roles of instructor and student change in each style?
22. How do you relax your students? Why is this important?
23. How do you increase a student's safety awareness? A child's awareness?
24. What adjustments can you make for students who have poor physical conditioning?
25. Describe your teaching style and its relationship to different learning styles. Discuss the conditions under which you alter your teaching style.
26. Choose a skill or maneuver and describe different visual, auditory, and kinesthetic methods to help the student develop it.
27. Practice teaching a particular move without speaking.
28. How do snow conditions alter your lesson plan?
29. Describe your obligations to a client who pays for your instructional services. Choose your primary obligation and state why it is more important than other choices.
30. How do you convey your excitement about Nordic skiing?
31. What is the philosophy of the PSIA Teaching Model? What are the main components of the model?
32. What does "teaching to all senses" imply?
33. What are some ways to increase the student's observation of demonstrations?
34. How can a teacher effectively check for understanding?
35. List several different types of feedback. Explain each and give situations where each would be most effective. What about kids?
36. What is pacing?
37. What does it mean to use strategies/tactics while skiing?
38. Explain the concept of reinforcement. Why is it important? Give examples.
39. What are metaphors? How can they be used in ski teaching?
40. What are the advantages of working with one or two clear, concise goals or objectives rather than a large number of goals?
41. List the important ingredients of a good lesson plan.
42. In order of importance, list 4 factors you consider in terrain selection.
43. Give some examples of how terrain can aid an exercise or maneuver.
44. Mental rehearsal/imagery/visualization. How might these concepts help one's performance?
45. Outline the steps you follow in analyzing another skier's performance.
46. How can you determine the correct starting point for beginning a lesson?
47. Why is it advisable to stop an activity at the highest point of excitement or success?
48. What are the advantages and disadvantages of competition within the context of a ski class? With kids?

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49. What is the purpose of warm-up exercises and stretching?
50. What symptoms may become apparent when a student is pushed too fast?
51. List the points of the Skier's Responsibility Code.
52. Describe the shape and color of the signs that comprise the International Trail Marking System. Briefly describe how one should interpret the signs.
53. List several factors that might contribute to fatigue.
54. List some potentially dangerous stopping places, which should be avoided.
55. Describe successful methods used for motivating children to affect learning.
56. What are laterality (left and right) and directionality, and how can they be confusing to a child in a class situation?
57. What are important communication techniques when teaching children?
58. Give an example of an activity or game, what skills it develops, and for what age it is appropriate.
59. What is animism?
60. What are the Telemark Components?
61. How can you use the Telemark Components in your lessons?
62. What are the Visual Cues of telemark skiing? How can they be used?

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

1. Describe the essential skills, which are the foundation of a wedge turn. In what order do you develop these skills? Which exercises might you use to develop each skill? How are wedges and half wedges helpful in teaching the telemark turn? How are they not helpful?
2. Explain how grip and glide waxes work.
3. Describe the difference between skating and classical skis or lift-serviced and backcountry telemark skis.
4. How do you size a skating pole? A classical pole? A downhill pole?
5. Explain and give an example of each of the following:
 - a. Skill progression
 - b. Terrain progression
 - c. Speed progression
 - d. Snow condition progression
 - e. Activity Based
6. What are common problems that confront the beginner learning to diagonal stride?
7. What are common problems that confront the beginner learning a telemark turn? Identify Solutions for each problem.
8. What are common problems that confront the beginner learning to skate?
9. A beginner / novice tele skier exhibiting a defensive posture might exhibit
10. A low rider stance generally appears to have
11. A tele Skier that has arms constantly flailing about probably needs
 - a. To work on timing movements
 - b. To work on twisty turny movements
 - c. To work on a balanced flexed stance
 - d. All of the above

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12. A tele skier that appears to ski mostly on the outside ski or lead ski and has little trouble skiing groomed slopes.
 - a. Might not do well in race gates
 - b. Might not do so well in the bumps
 - c. Might not ski off piste conditions well
 - d. Might make great face plants in challenging conditions

13. Creating angles in ones body creates a greater ability to
 - a. Have a balanced stance in motion
 - b. Create necessary tipping tilting movements
 - c. Carve turns
 - d. All of the above

14. Which joint create the greatest range of angulation
 - a. The ankles
 - b. The knees
 - c. The hips
 - d. The Spine

15. A beginner/ novice tele skier that has joints flexed well but still has to use poles as out riggers from time to time might need to
 - a. Lengthen their stance fore & aft
 - b. Shorten their stance fore & aft
 - c. Narrow their stance Side by side
 - d. Widen their stance side by side

16. When performing movement assessment of a skier from the side view
 - a. To see alignment of body for proper angulation at joints
 - b. To see stance & balance fore & aft
 - c. To see stance balance side by side
 - d. All of the above

17. When performing a movement assessment with a frontal view might best disclose
 - a. To see alignment of body for proper angulation at joints
 - b. To see stance & balance fore & aft
 - c. To see stance balance side by side
 - d. All of the above

18. When performing a movement assessment snow spray that is low and off the tail of the ski indicates
 - a. Excessive skidding
 - b. Moderate skidding
 - c. Little skidding
 - d. No skidding

19. When performing a movement assessment and checking the tracks in the snow that show twin lines
 - a. Excessive skidding
 - b. Moderate skidding
 - c. Little skidding
 - d. No skidding

20. When performing a movement assessment of a skier that is skiing the bumps and appears their head is starring at their ski tips
 - a. They are always playing a game of catch up
 - b. They are struggling with timing issues
 - c. They see more snow snakes and mogul monsters than other skiers
 - d. All of the above

21. An open joint is best described as a angle created at a joint that is very close to 90 degrees or a right angle
True or False

22. A low rider type tele skier one that has a low to the ground and long for aft usually exhibits closed joints
True or False

23. A Beginner / Novice tele skier that has a very fast lead change is likely to
 - a. Exhibit a balanced stance that is mostly over the front leg
 - b. Exhibit a balanced stance that is mostly over the rear leg
 - c. Exhibit an unbalanced stance that is mostly over the front leg
 - d. Exhibit an unbalanced stance that is mostly over the rear leg
24. How does the Visual Cues of Effective and Ineffective Telemark skiing aid us in movement analysis? Explain the difference between each for each category.
25. What movement analysis model or plan do you like to use? Explain.
26. List the types of shaped skis and some of their dimensions and categories.
27. List the different types of boots and bindings and what they might be good for.
28. Explain waxing for telemark skiing.
29. List 15 major historical plateaus starting from the very earliest of time in telemarking.
30. What are the major concerns one should be aware of in the Backcountry?

MOVEMENT ANALYSIS & LESSON PREPARATION

In the following scenarios, create activities or lesson plans on how you might approach this type of skier.

- A. Skier has all their weight and body mass forward on the lead ski, depicted by a J-shaped turn or lack of speed control.
- B. The inside ski is consistently in a wedge or stemmed throughout the turn.
- C. The front leg is pushed or slid forward drastically to initiate the turn.
- D. The body seems to be aligned vertically over the skis and a lot of skidding occurs.

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- E. Skier lacks coordinated movements; no turn is the same as the last.
- F. Skier refuses to get into telemark position and skis stay mostly parallel, plus they over flex their knees to feel as if they are doing it.
- G. Cannot ski intermediate bumps.
- H. Has a stiff outside leg through the turn.
- I. Skier has an excessively low position all the time.
- J. During transition, skier seems to bounce up and down as they proceed down the hill.
- K. Tactical ways to ski the bumps. Beginner to advanced
- L. Technique suggestions for skiing the bumps. Beginner to advanced
- M. Breakable crust
- N. Off-piste, off-piste and trees, off-piste with drops
- O. Crud
- P. Steep and firm
- Q. No lower/upper body separation
- R. Carved telemark turns
- S. Monomarks in the bumps and trees
- T. Short turns on the steep

These are just samples for you to practice with. Expect in the exam to have more than one way to teach a topic. Be prepared for all the tasks in the Level III assessment section.

Nordic Downhill Recommended Reading List

Additional Reading

The following list of books that are directly related to ATS and information for instructor training.

PSIA/AASI Core Concepts For Snow sports Instructors Manual (2001)
Alpine Technical Manual, Skiing and Teaching Skills. PSIA
Nordic Technical Manual 2005
ATS: Nordic Skiing 1st ed. PSIA
ATS: Nordic Handbook. Vail Associates: PSIA 1991
Telemark Skiing Video (2001)
PSIA/AASI Children's Instruction Handbook
PSIA Children's Instruction Manual
Snow Pro Newsletter PSIA-E
The Professional Skier PSIA Journal
PSIA-E Website Nordic Section

Additional Reading

The following books are suggested as additional resources for working ski instructors and exam candidates.

Paul Parker Free Heel Skiing 2nd edition 1995 Mountaineer
Allen O'Bannon & Mike Clelland Really Cool Telemark Tips, 1998 Falcon Press
Allen & Mike's Really Cool Backcountry Tips, 1998, Falcon Press
John Dunn, Winterwise, AMC, 1996
Steve Barnett, Cross Country Downhill 3rd edition, 1987 Globe Pequot Press
Skiing & the Art of Carving - E. Foster 2nd Ed.
Skiing & the Art of Carving - Video
Backcountry Magazine and Website
Telemarking Magazine
Couloir Magazine and Website
Telemarktips.com

Having the skills and knowledge to be a competent, well-rounded skier and snow sports teacher requires a diverse, broad base of education. Using the reading and video resources listed above should provide substantial help in developing that foundation of knowledge.

Enjoy the QUEST!

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