



Cross-Country Skiing

History:

This particular event was included at the very first Paralympic Winter Games in 1976, at Ornskoldsvik. The word “ski” is a Norwegian word which comes from the Old Norse word, “skid,” a split length of wood.

Competition:

Competitions are open to athletes with a physical disability and blindness/visual impairment. A competitor may or may not use a sit-ski, a chair equipped with a pair of skis. Athletes with visual impairment compete in the event with a sighted guide.

Events:

Male and female athletes compete in short distance, middle distance, and long distance (ranging from 2.5km to 20km) events or participate in a team relay across three categories: standing, sitting, and visual impairments.

Description:

In cross-country skiing, racers use two basic techniques: classical (the skis move parallel to each other through machine tracks in the snow) and free (the skiers propel themselves in a manner similar to speed-skating, pushing off the edge of their skis).



Photo courtesy of Paralympic Athlete, Cindy Ouellet



For the Classroom

- ✚ Create a cross-country ski course using cones, poly-dots, mats, jump ropes, or any other object that might help create boundaries.
- ✚ Use your creativity to include turns, elevation, and obstacles to your course. Allow the students to design the course.
- ✚ Use paper plates, scarves, or allow the students to slide around the course while wearing socks.
- ✚ Use scooter boards or a trash can dolly as sledges and toilet plungers as ski poles.
- ✚ Students can lie on their stomach on the scooter board and use their arms to propel themselves instead of the toilet plungers.
- ✚ Make sure that students are familiar with the ski course by marking it with bright colors and providing visual and voice cues to direct the students.
- ✚ Decorate the classroom with a winter theme and encourage the students to wear winter accessories such as hats, goggles, scarves, and gloves.

