

## 66: Zen & the noble art of chook-footing

### suggested answers

- 1) X is more stable because it has wider bases of support than Y (and therefore a lower centre of gravity, given equal mass).
- 2) Skiers will be more stable if their skis are apart and their knees are bent.
- 3) Friction slows an object (e.g. wind through trees versus wind across open plains). By “planning,” skiers reduce friction and go faster. By “edging,” skiers increase friction and go slower.

### teachers' notes

1) This and the next worksheet are very busy, probably too busy, given that there is key information that needs to be digested in **small chunks**. Ideally, the worksheet should be broken up. The pattern might go like this: read a chunk – demonstrate (the skills bits) – discuss – give students a small task – read another chunk, etc.

2) The author (moi) is pretty much intermediate at almost all outdoor pursuits, but has taught many beginners. After indifferent results over time, I discarded most of the pedagogy I had been taught and tried instead to make it all as *simple as possible*. Precisely what you teach depend on the venue and snow conditions.

If you can find somewhere level and the snow is firm, start with teaching falling over and getting up. (No poles yet.) Fall on a big cheek **with arms up**. Demonstration followed by practice. Everyone has to demonstrate that they can do it. Get up with your skis parallel, below you and across the fall-line. Demonstration followed by practice. Everyone has to demonstrate that they can do it.

Then teach going forwards (on the flat, no poles.) Don't worry about terms like “diagonal striding.” Just say, “Shuffle along like this.” Demonstration followed by practice. You can work your way through a skills progression, most commonly: falling – getting up – shuffling – gliding without poles – gliding with poles – snow ploughing on nursery slopes, etc. before you look for steeper hills.

Lots of the above skills are best acquired through discovery learning *within strict parameters*. Don't let students make jumps as soon as they get on to the snow, or do stoopid stuff like throw snowballs at each other or go tobogganing on their japaras.

3) At night, back in cosy warmth of the lodge, after a sumptuous feed of spaghetti bolognese and frog in the pond, show some Warren Miller or Dr Telemark.



This student only got a 7 for this stack. If he wanted a higher score, he had to do a face plant.