

# **Assessment and Correction: Developing the Critical Eye**

## **Solo and / or Tandem Canoe**

Observe for the following, then provide specific, positive, skill-related feedback:

- Hand placement on paddle (e.g., too far apart, too close, at throat).
- Body position (e.g., facing work, posture and balance)
- Arm extension, where appropriate
- Shoulder safety (paddler's box)
- Correct stroke form:
  - Catch (pushing water? blade orientation/control thumb?)
  - Power or propulsion (shaft and blade angle)
  - Exit, where appropriate (lifting water?)
  - Recovery (neutral? power-recovery confusion?)
- Stroke placement (location)
- Shaft angle (inefficient?)
- Equipment (appropriate for student size and skill level?)
- Life jacket and other safety concerns (immediate corrective action needed)
- Torso rotation (or all arms?)

### **Teaching Tips:**

Do clean transitions. Students should see the end product modeled (introduce and sell the stroke), then explain the pieces, then do in slow motion (don't talk a lot through this part), then ask: Can you see the pieces? Go through the parts—What are the parts? The catch is? The initiation is? .....Any questions? Let students explore the stroke for about 3 minutes.

### **Assessment and Correction:**

1. Know the model and its key points
2. Carry a checklist mentally and physically
3. Mental snapshots
4. Break it down into C-P-R
5. Look at the boat, paddle, person
6. Ask for a second look
7. Weigh body V. paddle, paddle V. boat efficiency
8. Look at body alignment—nose over tail

### **Correction:**

1. Should be descriptive vs evaluative
2. Specific v. general....I like the way you .....
3. Directed toward a behavior that the receiver can change
4. Is well timed, right then
5. Check for understanding—they repeat it back to you
6. Provide reasons and rewards of feedback—sound reason and how it will help the stroke
7. Be balanced and use diversity of feedback styles –hamburger—more bun in the beginning—tell what they do well, what they need to correct so that x happens, and can do things like put magic marker on thumb to teach rotation of thumb out and in
8. Show empathy
9. Recognize change in behavior

Be concise—do it in 20 words, then 10 words, then 3 words, key words

Give quality over amount of content

### **How to Hold a Paddle**

Top hand gently holds grip to avoid tension and tendonitis. Bottom hand gently and loosely holds the shaft. Think: link the paddle to the shoulders using the arms as struts. Bend over and it makes a box. Keep that box shape in strokes—move the box, not the arms.

# TEACHING A TOPIC: WHOLE-PART-WHOLE PARADIGM

## CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

### BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF TOPIC PRESENTATION:

**Group Organization:** Physical orientation of group—rafted, within a boundary, orientation to sun, ability of group to see demo, nearby distractions or deterrents to learning, use of 90 degree rule for group safety and effectiveness

**Voice Related:** Specific directions, speaking distinctly, clearly, and with enough projection; checking to make sure students can hear (not—"Can you hear me?"); adequate voice modulation

**Visual Engagement:** Maintains eye contact with group and individuals during teaching, demo, assessment and correction; doesn't have to refer to notes frequently

**Enthusiasm, Motivation:** Makes students want to be there; animated when appropriate; use of humor when appropriate, maintains student interest in topic presentation

**Command of Topic Content:** Confident presentation, smooth flow of material presented with logical progression of content or concepts

**Technical Knowledge:** Topic information presented is accurate and up to date. Concepts conveyed in understandable language geared to student age, skills, and prior knowledge of the topic; appropriate analogies used as needed to enhance understanding of concept or skill

### APPLICATION OF WHOLE-PART-WHOLE TO SSDUS MODEL:

**Sell It:** Introduced skill or topic, briefly told what it is, what it does, why useful to learn it

**Show It:** Demo technically accurate, modeled from several angles so students could see, modeled at slow pace so parts of skill could be seen, precise and elegant demo, modeled clean paddle placement and good body mechanics, silent demo where appropriate

**Describe It:** KISS, linked to previous skill if appropriate (finding commonalities), short and easy to remember key words or bullet points used, small simple words, used analogy with something familiar if appropriate

**Use It (Critical Eye):** All practice v. one at a time (group involvement /engagement), specific assessment and correction of student performance of skill, specific positive and constructive individual feedback, correction of most critical part of skill first to most impact performance, correction of one thing at a time, use of Socratic method to enlist student feedback /self assessment of performance (what did you notice the boat doing?, etc.)

**Summarize It:** Checked for understanding via questions, reviewed or reiterated key points

Try for the goal of 2 minutes from the Sell It to the Critical Eye / practice phase of teaching a skill to students. Keep it short and concise and use bullet points for the skill that can be remembered by the students

**Learn To Paddle, Basic Canoeing, Beyond Basic Teaching Points for  
Tandem Strokes  
by Bob and Elaine Mravetz**

**STROKES**

Think: quiet boat, quiet paddle; C,P,R: catch, propulsion, recovery

**\*For a 2 hour or so short course in learning to paddle:**

**FORWARD STROKE**

**Teaching points:**

- Blade enters water about 45 degrees on catch-reach and torso rotate
- Hands over the water (hands stacked)
- Body aligned nose over navel
- Vertical blade on power phase
- Power to the knee (when kneeling)
- Blade follows centerline, not hull line on power (pull) phase
- Recovery: control thumb forward, feather blade on out of water recovery
- Bow focus on smooth and slow movement so stern can keep up

**STOP:** (when moving forward, both bow and stern)

Think: Erect body, quick stop

**Teaching points:**

1. Stack hands on paddle, hands out over the water
2. Vertical paddle
3. Thumb out on control hand
4. Push forward with shaft hand

**REVERSE**

**Teaching Points:**

1. Stack hands/ paddle over the water
2. Rotate torso
3. Thumb out on control hand
4. Paddle enters water behind you
5. Use large muscles to move the boat
6. Unwind torso
7. Push forward w/ shaft hand to between hip and knee

**STOP:** (when moving backward, both bow and stern)

**Draw- Both Bow and Stern (Turns the boat if both partners do a draw)**

**Teaching points:**

1. Rotate torso; face your work
2. Hands stacked; hands over the water
3. Vertical paddle shaft; control thumb pointing back toward stern
4. Start stroke away from boat
5. Pull the paddle gently toward the boat
6. Slice out perpendicular to boat; vertical blade; control thumb out
7. Relaxed arms
8. Pull the boat to the paddle, not the paddle to the boat
9. Think small subtle strokes that maintain vertical paddle
10. Quiet boat; quiet paddle

(Common errors: stroke too long or fast, lose paddle verticality, push down)

**PUSH AWAY—both Bow and Stern (pushes your part of the boat away from the paddle—if both do it, the boat turns)**

**Teaching points:**

1. Rotate torso to face your work
2. Hands over the water (stacked)
3. Vertical paddle shaft; control thumb faces stern
4. Erect body; nose over navel
5. Start stroke close to boat
6. Push away from boat
7. Slice back to boat, control thumb out

Think small and subtle strokes; quiet boat and paddle

**RUDDER:** (to correct in the stern and make the boat go straighter—Use this only if stern is having a lot of trouble making the boat go straight)

**Teaching points:**

1. Forward stroke with power to the knee
2. After forward stroke, continue stroke & turn control thumb up

3. Shaft arm 6-8 inches behind you
4. Torso rotate—can watch paddle blade to get torso to rotate
5. Slice to the stern with hands over the water, control thumb still up
6. Paddle blade by stern--practice wagging the boat from the stern

**SWEEP:** when spinning tandem boats: both sweep tip to hip or hip to tip)

**Teaching points:**

1. Torso rotation; face your work; wind up
  2. Erect posture; nose over navel
  3. Control hand drops toward centerline (PFD), control thumb up
  4. Eyes follow the paddle blade as it traces an arc: bow to hip, stern to hip or hip to bow, hip to stern
  5. Blade submerged in the water, not partially in the water
- (Common error: using arms and not torso, not tracing an arc)

**SIT AND SWITCH:** (Forward travel) Useful during strong winds or long paddles

On switch: grip hand moves below shaft hand, and shaft hand moves to the grip, and paddle moves across to opposite side of boat—can say “Hut” as signal to switch

**Teaching points:**

1. Nose over navel
2. Power to the knee (since most will naturally bring paddle further back toward hip)
3. Hands over the water (hands stacked)
4. Vertical paddle shaft
5. Take 2 or 3 short forward strokes
6. Stern paddler counts strokes down—3, 2, 1, Hut.
7. On Hut, both tandem partners switch paddling sides using switch method noted above
8. Stern counts 3 more strokes and calls Hut for another switch, etc.

**\*\*Beyond this point, add these strokes for a 4 hour or more course:**

**STERN PRY:** (Stern stroke to initiate turn, or correct to go straight)

**Teaching points:**

1. Nose over navel
2. Torso rotates
3. At end of forward stroke, turn control thumb up
4. Slide paddle blade toward stern

5. Shaft hand moves 6-8 inches behind you
  6. Control hand starts over the water, (blade close to boat)
  7. Control hand pulls about 4" toward centerline; drop shaft
  8. Quick and short pop (blade pushes out small and quick: one 1,000ths of a second)
  9. Shaft hand remains out over the water
  10. Take paddle out of water at end
- (Common problems: control hand over centerline too far, blade pushed out too far)

**STERN DRAW**—for forward travel with correction, maneuvering  
**Teaching points:**

1. At end of forward stroke:
2. Rotate torso
3. Paddle moves 6-8 inches behind you
4. Control hand drops toward center line; blade slices out
5. Push with control hand; control hand ends over water
6. Blade stays in the water

**BOW DRAW:** Bow Correction Stroke (to initiate a turn toward the bow paddler's side or make a slight correction to bow paddler's side)

**Teaching points:**

1. Hands stacked and out over the water
2. Reach as for forward stroke catch but:
3. Control thumb faces shoulder (blade about 45 degrees to bow)
4. Pull blade toward bow

**CROSS BOW DRAW – Bow Correction Stroke**

**Teaching points:**

1. Bring paddle blade low and slow across bow to offside, thumb forward & thumb continues to sweep til pointing to offside
2. Torso rotates to offside
3. Paddle vertical and plant with control thumb pointing diagonally to offside (choke up some on shaft if needed)
4. Draw paddle blade toward bow (control thumb forward; not pointing back toward stern)
5. Pull boat to paddle

**J STROKE:** (Stern stroke to correct & make the boat go straight or maneuver)

**Teaching points:**

1. Commonalities = do forward stroke to the transition point

2. Transition starts at the knee
3. Then thumb down on control hand
4. Torso rotates
5. Paddle vertical and close to the boat—6-8” behind
6. Paddle blade moves slightly out—only as much as you need
7. Blade vertical in water
8. Hands over the water
9. Grip should be light
10. (Common problems—thumb up, too long a stroke, lift water, not vertical paddle, too much correction, death grip on paddle)

### Some Optional Extra Strokes and Fun Stuff:

#### SCULLING DRAW – Both Bow and Stern

(Teaches you about blade control and angle)

#### Teaching points:

1. Vertical paddle shaft
  2. Blade in the water (power face of blade is the one facing boat)
  3. Torso rotation—face your work
  4. Hands over the water
  5. Draw an arc, rainbow, spread peanut butter, draw frown (slice from bow toward stern, stern toward bow)
  6. Even constant pressure on power face of blade ( power face loaded all the time)
  7. Think small and subtle: slow it down if needed
- (Common errors: too fast; lose pressure on paddle face closest to boat; too much blade or shaft angle)

#### Possible Drills:

- a. Use hand in water to trace arc and feel correct pressure on hand, then transfer concept to paddle
- b. Demo air scull and have them do air sculls with paddle
- c. Have students scull with blade partly out of water to check their blade angle and feel the pressure on power face, then immerse blade fully and scull.
- d. Hold paddle shaft with one hand only, near paddle throat, and move paddle in small arc, frown, subtly to feel paddle blade pressure, then add control hand to paddle

## **SCULLING PRY—Both Bow and Stern**

### **Teaching points:**

1. Paddle starts close to boat
2. Face your work
3. Vertical paddle with hands over the water
4. Paddle blade may pass slightly under the boat
5. Pressure on paddle face that is away from boat
6. Subtle even pressure; draw smiley face; use pendulum motion

Common problem=blade angle

## **STATIC BOW DRAW—Lead up to Sideslip and FreeStyle Maneuvers**

### **Teaching points:**

1. Vertical paddle as possible
2. Control thumb faces shoulder
3. Hands stacked on paddle and over water
4. Open blade face slowly
5. Stern paddler does forward strokes while bow maintains static bow draw position and gently initiates a boat turn
6. Bow can gradually and gently open the blade more to keep the turn going
7. Bow can then finish to a regular bow draw (draw to the bow) and then a forward stroke

## **DRAWING SIDESLIP OR SHIFT—(keys off the Bow Paddler)**

### **Teaching points:**

1. Move diagonally or sideways abeam, a non-torquing movement
2. Static draw (bow) or pry (stern) applied out from the hip
3. Initiation: going straight forward
4. At end of forward stroke, slice blade forward with pendulum motion until about out from hip
5. Blade slice is neutral (no pressure felt on either paddle face)
6. Paddle shaft vertical throughout
7. Placement: Bow paddler slowly and gently opens paddle blade while stern paddler slowly and gently closes paddle blade—do this in sync
8. As the slip stalls, bow opens blade more; stern closes blade more to hold and ride the sideslip

Points: Show this first before you teach it.

Leading blade edge angles in direction of travel of boat.

**No pitch of boat  
Vertical paddle shaft throughout maneuver**

**Practice Drill:**

**Take one forward stroke and do a slice recovery to hip with paddle blade neutral—no blade angle.**

**Do it again and watch your paddle blade—helps you face your work**

**Drawing sideslip: Try to do this with only one forward stroke and slice slowly and open gently until you feel pressure on the part of the paddle blade that is facing the boat, while stern slices and closes gently until feeling pressure on the part of the paddle blade away from the boat**

**Hints: Make the boat do the work, not you. You want it to be fun.**

**PRYING SIDESLIP**

**Repeat above sequence but change the angle of the blade after recovery so that bow slices neutral and gently closes the paddle blade angle while stern slices neutral and gently opens the paddle blade angle**

Teaching a Skill:  
Whole-Part-Whole

Steps	Points to consider
<p>Arrange the class for maximum instructional <b>effectiveness and safety.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sunlight, wind, break time?</li> <li>● Are students ready for this skill?</li> <li>● Can they all see and hear you?</li> <li>● Are they able to watch and listen, or are they struggling to maneuver?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Name and sell</b> the skill.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Or, announce the skill and let your modeling sell it.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Demonstrate the whole</b> skill.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Remember the power of silence!</li> </ul>
<p><b>Describe and demonstrate the parts</b> of the skill.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parts can be steps in a sequence (CPR), important “bullets” of the stroke, an air stroke, or a walk-through.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Demonstrate the whole</b> skill again.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Don’t forget to orient your students!</li> </ul>
<p>Give students the opportunity to <b>practice.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Depending on the skill and conditions, consider giving a concrete task for practice.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assess and correct</b> student performance by providing appropriate <b>feedback.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Try to give every student positive, skill-related feedback, and then encourage them to become more efficient by pointing out a specific are for improvement.</li> </ul>