



# Critical Thinking Skills Ambulation

This lesson plan is designed to foster critical thinking skills linking impairments to functional limitations in ambulation.

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this activity, the successful student will:

1. Hypothesize possible impairments that are causing deficits in static standing position.
2. Document the level of assistance, assistive and supportive devices, and amount of verbal cueing and facilitation for the tasks using professional terms.
3. Determine possible impairments causing deficits in the swing and stance phase of gait in a neurologically impaired individual.
4. Discuss how the environment and the task contribute to the individual's presentation.

*This activity supports the requirements for:*

- *The Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy (ACOTE) standards (2018):*
  - *OT: B.3.6., B.4.2.*
  - *OTA: B.3.6., B.4.2.*
- *The Commission on Education for Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) standards:*
  - *PT: 7D19, 7D20, 7D21*
  - *PTA: 7D9, 7D16, 7D24*

## Watch

Assign the following video for students to watch:

- **Early Gait Training: Patient Observations Inside the Parallel Bars**

# Critical Thinking Skills: Ambulation

## Discuss

1. Review guidelines for grading level of assistance including independent/supervision/contact guard/minimal assist/moderate assist/maximal assist/dependent.
2. What level of assist does the patient in the video require for static standing? How much verbal cueing does the patient require for the task? Is facilitation the same as level of assistance?
3. What level of assist does the patient require for ambulation? Do you notice differences in assist needed for swing versus stance phase of gait? Defend your answer with examples.
4. Why is the patient wearing a left ankle foot orthosis? Can you identify the type of AFO they are using right now? What are some considerations for using an AFO in a patient like Henry who has diabetes mellitus?
5. From a motor control standpoint, where on the mobility>stability>controlled (dynamic) mobility>skill continuum does this activity fall? Defend your answer.
6. Discuss with your peers the many challenges of guarding patients safely during ambulation. What would you have done differently than the therapist in the video if anything?
7. Comment on the use of a gait belt with this patient and how it does or does not provide cues to the patient for muscle facilitation.
8. Generate a list of possible impairments that you feel are contributing to this individual's inability to ambulate independently. Be detailed (ie. not simply 'decreased strength', but 'decreased strength of left hip extensors').
9. What examination strategies would you use to determine if the impairments are present or not?
10. Work with your instructor to determine a mutually agreed upon and specific list of impairments.
11. Review how the environment and the task influence motor behavior. Comment on issues like verbal and tactile cueing, feedback, and task breakdown.

## Watch More

Suggested additional video:

- **Mobility: Ambulation in acute care** (Ben)