

## **The music analogy for teaching/learning to ski**

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### **Playing to the Bottom of the Action**

There are more than 40 moving parts between one piano key and the hammer which actually strikes the string. I learned from a very wise piano teacher in college that too much force on the key causes a chain reaction through this series of moving parts that is not positive for creating good tone. The purpose of the piano action as a whole is to accurately translate every nuance of the player's finger and hand movements into a musical note that reflects the exact intentions of the player. This teacher put it to me very simply: "Play to the bottom of the action."

I think what she was really saying to me was play within the limitations of the instrument. There are no two pianos alike in any way, and this includes the action of the instrument. When a pianist moves from one instrument to another, he has to realize its limitations. Playing to that particular instrument's limitations or strengths will enable the instrument to speak properly and with full voice.

This is so with all instruments. When one puts too much, or not enough, air into a wind instrument, there is a negative affect on the tone. Too much, or too little pressure on the reed of a saxophone will directly affect the tone of that instrument. Drum heads react in much the same way when they are struck too hard or too soft. Strings on a guitar.....the list goes on.