Teach Them All: Effective and Efficient Class Pedagogy for Beginning Band

Beginning Brass Class, Jefferson JHS, Minneapolis MN, 1938

Phillip Hash
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Michigan Music Conference
Saturday, January 21
2:00pm – 2:45pm
Amway Grand Hotel – Governor’s Ballroom
Session Overview:

This session will focus on strategies for teaching beginning band that will help first year players become independent and self-sufficient learners.

Clinician Biography:

Phillip M. Hash is Associate Professor of Music Education at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He holds an Ed.D. in music education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, a M.M in wind conducting from Northwestern University, and a B.M. in music education from Millikin University.

Dr. Hash is an active scholar with articles published in leading journals including the *Journal of Research in Music Education*, the *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education*, the *Journal of Band Research*, and *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*. Conference presentations include research topics, as well as sessions on instrumental music education, mentoring student teachers, and music teacher evaluation. Dr. Hash currently serves on the editorial committees of the *Journal of Research in Music Education*, the *Journal of Music Therapy*, and the *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education*. He also sits on the board of the Michigan Music Education Association as the state research advisor, and is chair-elect for the Historical Special Research Interest Group of the National Association for Music Education.

Dr. Hash taught instrumental music in the Chicago area for 14 years and has received the Citation of Excellence from the National Band Association on two occasions as well as the Outstanding Chicagoland Music Educator Award. Bands under his direction have performed at the University of Illinois Superstate Concert Band Festival and the Illinois Music Educators Association All-State Conference. Dr. Hash regularly serves as a clinician and adjudicator, and publishes arrangements for bands, string orchestras, and small ensembles through Grand Mesa Music, Daehn Publications, and BRS Music.

*Special thank you to Meyer Music in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for providing instruments for today’s demonstration group.*
Find somewhere quiet and well lit where you can practice. Always sit correctly! Feet Flat, Fanny Front!

**MOUTHPIECE AND BARREL PRACTICE**

- Take just the mouthpiece, reed, ligature and barrel out of the case.
- Place the reed in your mouth (to wet it).
- Place the ligature on the mouthpiece (screws to the right).
- Slide the reed underneath the ligature until the tip of the reed lines up with the tip of the mouthpiece.
- Push the ligature down (you may need to loosen the screws).
- Make sure the reed is still lined up with the mouthpiece. Tighten the screws until they are firm. (The ligature screws do not need to be tightened all the way)

**REMEMBER:**
- Lower lip over bottom teeth (chin down and flat)
- Top lip tight against the teeth
- Top teeth touch the mouthpiece
- Make sure you have enough mouthpiece in your mouth
- Corners firm!
- Think “shhhhhhh” when you play

Play for 4 counts, rest for 4 counts (4 times)
Play for 8 counts, rest for 8 counts (4 times)

**BREATHING EXERCISES**

- Make sure you are sitting correctly (Sit Tall. Feet Flat, Fanny Front!)
- Put your hands on your head (I know it looks silly, but it’s important…it pushes the air to the bottom of your lungs).
- Practice as we did in band. Pat your foot slowly and evenly.

Breathe in for 8 counts, out for 8 counts (4 times)
Breathe in for 4 counts, out for 4 counts (4 times)
Breathe in for 2 counts, out for 2 counts (4 times)
Breathe in for 1 count, out for 1 count (4 times)

**SIZZLE EXERCISES**

- Do these exercises twice, once with your hands on your head and once with them not on your head.

Breathe in for 1 count, sizzle out for 7 counts (4 times)
Breathe in for 1 count, sizzle out for 15 counts (2 times)
**PUT THE CLARINET TOGETHER**

a) Grab the clarinet where there are no keys!!!! You don’t want to bend them.
b) Twist the parts together. Don’t rock them…you will damage them that way.
c) Remember, all the parts line up.

**YOUR FIRST NOTES**

a) Your left hand goes on top. Please don’t be the one kid who always shows up to the second lesson with the wrong hand on top. Please…don’t make my hair go gray.
b) Always play with your very best sound.
c) You are sitting correctly right?!? Use the following fingerings:

*play 4 counts – rest 4 counts – play 4 counts – rest 4 counts (2 times)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>B</td>
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</table>

**MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB**

Find somewhere quiet and well lit where you can practice. Always sit correctly! Feet Flat, Fanny Front!

**MOUTHPIECE PRACTICE**
- a) Take just the mouthpiece out of your case.
- b) Think “mmmmmmmmmm” before placing the mouthpiece.
- c) Put mouthpiece in the center of the lips (check in a mirror).

BUZZ (low note) for 4 counts, rest for 4 counts (4 times)
BUZZ (high note) for 4 counts, rest for 4 counts (4 times)

then...

BUZZ (low note) for 8 counts, rest for 8 counts (4 times)
BUZZ (high note) for 8 counts, rest for 8 counts (4 times)

**BREATHING EXERCISES**
- a) Make sure you are sitting correctly (Sit Tall. Feet Flat, Fanny Front!)
- b) Put your hands on your head (I know it looks silly, but it’s important…it pushes the air to the bottom of your lungs).
- c) Practice as we did in band. Pat your foot slowly and evenly.

Breathe in for 8 counts, out for 8 counts (4 times)
Breathe in for 4 counts, out for 4 counts (4 times)
Breathe in for 2 counts, out for 2 counts (4 times)
Breathe in for 1 count, out for 1 count (4 times)

take a mini-break, then...

**SIZZLE EXERCISES**
- a) Do these exercises twice, once with your hands on your head and once with them not on your head.

Breathe in for 1 count, sizzle out for 7 counts (4 times)
Breathe in for 1 count, sizzle out for 15 counts (2 times)
PUT THE TROMBONE TOGETHER
a) Twist the mouthpiece in (otherwise it might get stuck)
b) Make an “L” with the slide and bell.
c) Hold the instrument correctly (like we discussed in your lesson).
d) Right hand goes on the slide.

YOUR FIRST NOTES
a) Make sure the trombone is straight when you play.
b) Always play with your very best sound. Blow warm air!
c) You are sitting correctly, right?!? Use the following positions:

1st Position (all the way in)
play 4 counts – rest 4 counts – play 4 counts – rest 4 counts (2 times)

2nd Position
play 4 counts – rest 4 counts – play 4 counts – rest 4 counts (2 times)

3rd Position (lined up with bell)
play 4 counts – rest 4 counts – play 4 counts – rest 4 counts (2 times)

4th Position (end of slide lined up with bell)
play 4 counts – rest 4 counts – play 4 counts – rest 4 counts (2 times)

5th Position
play 4 counts – rest 4 counts – play 4 counts – rest 4 counts (2 times)

6th Position (as far as you can reach)
play 4 counts – rest 4 counts – play 4 counts – rest 4 counts (2 times)

MORE MOUTHPIECE PRACTICE
List 3 songs that you know: ________________________________
______________________________
______________________________

Buzz each song on your mouthpiece

YOUR FIRST SCALE
a) Start low. Hold each note for 4 counts.
b) Each note gets higher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>note name</th>
<th>B flat</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E flat</th>
<th>F</th>
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<th>A</th>
<th>B flat</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>position</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
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</table>
Drum Pad Set Up

1. Place case long-ways on the floor with label facing up and zipper in front of you.

2. Unzip case.

3. Open the case.

4. Take 2 parts of instrument stand from center of case and set them on the floor beside you.

5. Open the legs on the bottom half. Tighten the screw so that the legs do not move.

6. Place the post of the top half into the bottom. Let the post go all the way down.

7. Remove the drum pad from the pocket on the top flap of the case.

8. Screw it onto the top of the stand. (You do not need to raise the arms that support the bells.)

9. Adjust stand so that it is just below (or at) your waist. Tighten the top screw on the bottom half of the stand.

10. Take sticks from the case when instructed to do so.
INTRODUCTION

• Analogy: a car needs gas to make it move just like instruments need air to make sound. The higher the quality of gas, the better the car performs. The same thing is true with air.

• **Breathing Gym** is designed to give control and efficiency of breath by developing proper breathing habits
  - Improves tone, stamina, and all-around performance
  - For ensembles, **Breathing Gym**:
    - Promotes calmer, quieter, and more focused rehearsals
    - Internalizes and improves group rhythm (always use a metronome)
    - Gives more confidence and security to group entrances/releases

• **Breathing Gym** can be used as part of a warm-up routine or a mid-rehearsal change of pace while addressing specific issues such as dynamics, articulation, and phrasing

• The **Breathing Gym** consists of five types of exercises:
  - Stretches
  - Flow Studies
  - Therapies
  - Strength and Flexibility
  - Breathing for the Brain

• Remember the **LAW OF ACCOMMODATION**:
  - What is difficult today will become easier if practiced
  - Work these exercises just past the point of ease and slightly into discomfort without overexertion

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

1. Maintaining a proper and consistent oral shape is essential for maximizing the benefits of these exercises
   a. During inhale/exhale, the inside of the mouth should feel like a big yawn
   b. The back of the throat is to remain open and unobstructed

2. Monitoring each breath ensures correct execution
   a. Inhale
      i. Form the right hand like a karate chop, but fold the thumb flat against the palm
      ii. With the right hand in this position, place the index finger just under the tip of the nose (thumb should now be pointing forward)
      iii. Place top lip on the middle knuckle and the bottom lip on the big knuckle (approx.)
      iv. Remember the yawn analogy and take a deep breath quickly, letting the only resistance occur at the lips
      v. If executed correctly, the inhale will have a deep sound like a vacuum with one finger placed over the opening
   b. Exhale (remove right hand before exhale)
      i. Hold the left hand with palm facing the body at an arm’s length
      ii. Exhale and feel the constant flow of air on the palm
   c. The inhale and exhale are to be performed continuously with no break between, just like a pendulum swinging

3. Light-headedness may occur periodically. If this happens, the following method is prescribed: sit down, inhale slowly through the nose, and exhale slowly through the mouth; repeat.

4. All exercises are to be performed in a relaxed manner with no tension in the body
THE EXERCISES

1. Stretches – loosen up the body for better breathing flexibility
   a. Trunk Twist
   b. Flop Over – loose arms, neck, and upper body
   c. Two-Way Stretch
   d. Wrist Grab
   e. Whole Body Stretch
   f. Neck Roll – roll forward with chin touching chest, do not tilt head back

2. Flow Studies – stimulate regular breathing patterns used while playing—move air without resistance or tension. Monitor the air during these exercises to ensure that the air is constantly and consistently moving in and out (comfortably full to comfortably empty).
   a. 6-7-8-9-10 (11-12-etc.)
   b. Shorten the Inhalation (in 4 out 4, in 3 out 4, in 2 out 4, etc.)
   c. Shorten the Exhalation (4-4, 4-3, 4-2, etc.)
   d. Shorten the Inhalation Variation (4-4, 3-5, 2-6, etc.)
   e. Shorten the Exhalation Variation (4-4, 5-3, 6-2, etc.)
   f. Shorten the Inhalation and Exhalation [4-4 (2x), 3-3 (2x), 2-2 (2x), 1-1 (4x), 8th-8th (8x), 1-1 (4x), 16th-16th (8x), 1-1, 2-2, breathe through nose for 20 seconds]
   g. Quick Breath Exercise – inhale on the last beat of a measure (i.e. 4/4, 9/8, etc.)
   h. Bow & Arrow, Toss the Dart, Float the Paper Airplane

3. Therapies – a counterpart to flow studies, therapies are used to inspire better airflow by deliberately creating problems to overcome, such as resistance and suspension
   a. Inhale Therapy – fight for air with suction
      i. Exhale all air (sizzle)
      ii. Place the back of the hand against the lips
      iii. Fight for air by creating suction for 4-60 seconds, but do not allow any air in
      iv. After time is up, remove hand and inhale as much as air possible in one gasp (still maintaining the yawn shape)
      v. With lungs at full capacity, suspend the air while keeping the mouth and throat open for a predetermined duration (4-60 seconds) with shoulders relaxed
      vi. After time is up, expel air in one big chunk down to a sizzle
   b. Inhale Therapy Variations
      i. Expand in Two Areas – during suction, mentally feel your lungs expand toward your chest and back
      ii. Expand in Four Areas – during suction, mentally feel your lungs expand in 4 quadrants: abdomen, lower back, chest, and upper back
      iii. Slight Leak – during suction, allow some air to leak
   c. Oral Shape Therapy – inhale/exhale with the yawn feeling in rhythmic patterns (8th notes, quarter-note triplets, etc.) in a given meter to check consistency of air

4. Strength and Flexibility – focus on expanding and contracting the lungs to their extremes
   a. In, Sip, Sip—Out, Push, Push
      i. “In” – inhale to maximum capacity for one beat while lifting arms overhead
      ii. “Sip” – lift arms higher while sipping in more air
      iii. “Out” – exhale completely in one beat while pushing arms downward
      iv. “Push” – force the last little bit of air out
   b. Power Breaths
   c. Power Bow & Arrow

5. Breathing for the Brain
   a. Follow Your Breath – breath in through nose, out through mouth—no metronome
   b. In 6, Suspend 6, Out 6 (increase ratio: 1:1:1, 1:2:1, 1:4:1, etc.)
   c. Energizing Breath – 4 in through nose, 7 suspend, 8 out through mouth
Counting Challenge Sample Exercises

Count aloud or play a unison pitch on black numbers. Audiate (think) the grey numbers.

Vary the tempo. (Slower tempi will be more challenging)

Create additional exercises in various meters (e.g., 2/4, 3/4, 6/8 and even 5/4 or other complex meters)

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RHYTHM PATTERNS (CHANT W/ RHYTHMIC SOLFEGE, COUNT, OR PLAY)
An Introduction to

**The Simple Rhythmatician**

by David Newell

Rhythmatician

(rith-ma-TISH-un)

-- an expert in the mathematics of musical rhythm --

*The Simple Rhythmatician* is essentially a music theory book, but one with a very narrow focus and a unique format. No part of the book deals with clefs, note names, key signatures, scales, intervals, and the like. The focus of the book is entirely on rhythm. The book is a *rhythm theory book*, but one with a significant difference. **This is a theory book that students play.**

- Students *read* rhythm theory, and they demonstrate their cognitive understandings as they complete worksheets and *write* both melodic and rhythmic compositions. But unlike other music theory books, this one goes a step beyond reading and writing. Young band students using this particular book also pick up their instruments and they *play* the theory as they are learning it. **The theory comes alive through sound.** This unison band method approach allows all of the students to immediately *put theory into practice*. Generally speaking, students learn what they *do* more profoundly than they learn what they *read and write*. The learning is in the doing.

The following topics are summarized in this Introduction. For a more thorough discussion, see the *Annotated Conductor Score* to *The Simple Rhythmatician* (Kjos Ed. W38F).

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**Whole Notes**

Whole Notes

**O** is a **whole note**. It is the head of an entire *Family of Notes* and is the most important of all the notes in music. Notice that whole notes are not perfectly round circles. They are drawn as egg-shaped ovals.

Correct: \[ \text{O} \]  
Incorrect: \[ \text{O} \]

There are two important things to know about whole notes.

- They are *always* called whole notes. That will *never* change.
- No matter how many counts they get, the name stays the same.
- Whole notes can receive *any number of counts*.

Although you are probably most familiar with four-count whole notes, much music is written in which whole notes do not get four counts. To introduce you to this kind of music, we are going to have some fun. In the exercises that follow, look inside the big blue whole note to see how many counts to give the notes in each exercise.

Play with a steady beat. Make sure that you give the whole notes the correct number of counts.

1. \[ \text{O} = 7 \]

2. \[ \text{O} = 1 \]

3. \[ \text{O} = 5 \]

4. \[ \text{O} = 2 \]

You should not do too many exercises from this book at one time. They are very easy to play, but you will learn more if you don’t do too many at once. Play two or three of them after you warm up each day, and then go on to practice your other music.
### How Many Ways Can You Play a Line from a Method Book?

Phillip Hash, Calvin College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assess</th>
<th>Begin with one section/student and add sections/students as line is repeated.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assess</td>
<td>Every student plays one measure, perhaps while percussion maintain steady beat.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assess</td>
<td>Some students play, others evaluate using criteria teacher give them before hand (“Listen for the dynamic change – did they do it?” “Listen for intonation – do all the cornets sound the same?”).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assess</td>
<td>Alternate (measures, phrases, etc.) between soloist(s) and band.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assess</td>
<td>Repeat several times calling on another group to play in every repetition (a section, just boys, everyone with a summer birthday, etc.).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assess/E</td>
<td>Alternate phrases between brass/woodwinds, or other arrangement. Have percussion maintain steady pulse or play on mallets. Students not playing should finger along.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assess/T</td>
<td>Play line from memory.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create</td>
<td>Ask students to put various instruments together on the tune. (“Which tone colors do teacher like together? Which works the best?”). Example of basic arranging.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create</td>
<td>Have students improvise or compose a new last measure (perhaps using same pitches but different rhythm or visa versa).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create</td>
<td>Add/change dynamics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create</td>
<td>Have students compose a rhythmic ostinato to accompany the exercise. Students can perform on body percussion or assign to specific percussion instruments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Differentiate</td>
<td>Have some students play and octave higher or lower if it is possible and they are able to play the line as is (Give an advanced clarinetist a tenor sax book to practice upper register).</td>
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<td>Differentiate</td>
<td>Allow students who can play the line well to try an auxiliary percussion part. (Be careful – teacher may not need anyone else back in the perc section or to inadvertently “recruit” more percussionists.).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>Blow rhythm with a too or doo articulation (can also think toe, tah, dah, doe, etc. depending on desired articulation and register or instrument).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>Play exercise on one pitch to practice articulation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>Woodwinds play, brass buzz tune on mouthpiece.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive/N</td>
<td>Teacher play, students finger along.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive/N</td>
<td>Some students play while others finger along [drums “air play” while mallets turn play with lightly w/ handles].</td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive/N</td>
<td>Have percussion play while band fingers along.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>Teacher play, students listen.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notation</td>
<td>Play the line backwards (can they read something new and unfamiliar?).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notation/Rhythm</td>
<td>Students clap rhythm and say the counting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notation/Rhythm</td>
<td>Play through the line leaving out a portion of each measure. (&quot;Substitute a rest on beat 4 of every measure.&quot; &quot;Leave out the eighth note that follows every dotted quarter note.&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notation/Tonal Rhythm</td>
<td>Sing using note names, solfege, or counting while perhaps fingering along</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>Teacher play, students clap the beat.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>Students alternate playing and “thinking” the tune. (Can they maintain a steady pulse and come in at the right time?).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>Have some students play while others conduct (teacher teach the pattern) - then switch.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>If percussionists are having difficulty on their independent part, have them play the rhythm off the mallet percussion part, which will be in unison with the woodwinds and brass. This is a practical solution for when inaccurate percussion playing is making it difficult for the rest of the band to maintain a steady pulse.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhythm/Create</td>
<td>Write melodic or rhythmic (body percussion?) ostinato on board to accompany line. Have students create their own ostinati.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhythm/Notation</td>
<td>Change 4/4 to cut-time. Discuss how it would be counted in new meter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhythm/Notation</td>
<td>Subdivide longer notes into shorter durations (e.g., quarters into eights, dotted eight/sixteenth patterns into sixteenths, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tonal</td>
<td>Teach the tune by rote. Students find first note on instrument. teacher play small “chunks” then they imitate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tonal</td>
<td>Write a bass melody with the tonic, dominant, and subdominant chord roots. Use sustained notes or create and ostinato rhythm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tonal</td>
<td>Play 1 or more measures and “audiate” (think) the next measure (or more) while fingering.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tonal/Rhythm</td>
<td>Play with accompaniment recordings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tonal/Rhythm/Notation</td>
<td>Have students listen to the teacher (or another student) play the line with one or more mistakes and then identify the errors.</td>
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Wind Instrument Rubric
Based on: Pennsbury School District
Fallsington, Pennsylvania

Instructor may use decimals (e.g., 4.5) to indicate aspects of multiple descriptors.

5 – Student plays with clear and supported tone, steady beat, correct pitches, rhythm, articulation, and perhaps an isolated error.

4 – Student plays with mostly clear and supported tone, steady beat, correct pitches, rhythm, and articulation, but perhaps a few errors.

3 – Student plays with sometimes clear and supported tone, inconsistent beat, and several mistakes in pitches, rhythm, or articulation.

2 – Student plays with developing tone, unsteady beat, and many mistakes in pitches, rhythm, and/or fingering a particular note, and/or articulation.

1 – Student plays with underdeveloped tone, many stops and starts, mostly incorrect pitches and rhythm, seems very unsure of fingerings, and/or does not articulate.
Each quarter note gets 1 count in 4 time. Each quarter rest gets 1 count in 4 time.

A phrase is a musical thought or sentence. Phrases are usually four or eight measures long.

15 A QUARTER’S WORTH

Write in the counting and clap the rhythm before you play.

16 HOT CROSS BUNS

English Folk Song

17 AU CLAIRE DE LA LUNE

French Folk Song

Draw in a breath mark at the end of each phrase.

18 DOWN BY THE STATION

Traditional

19 EASY STREET

English Folk Song

20 COUNTRY WALK

21 GETTIN’ IT TOGETHER

22 FOR CLARINETSONLY

FOR CLARINETSONLY
**REPEAT SIGN**
Repeat from the beginning.

**COMMON TIME**
- **C**
  - Common time means the same as \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) time.

**FERMATA**
- Hold the note or rest longer than its usual value.

**SOLO**
- One person plays.

**SOLI**
- Whole section plays.

**TUTTI**
- Everyone plays.

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### 23 MERRILY WE ROLL ALONG
- Traditional
- Write in the note names before you play.

### 24 LIGHTLY ROW - Duet
- Traditional
- Write in the counting and clap the rhythm before you play.

### 25 ONE STEP AT A TIME
- Write in the counting and clap the rhythm before you play.

### 26 GOOD KING WENCESLAS
- Traditional English Carol
- Solo/Soli, Tutti
- Solo/Soli, Tutti

### 27 SONG OF THE FJORDS
- Norwegian Folk Song
- Solo/Soli, Tutti
- Solo/Soli, Tutti

### 28 Composer
- [Your name]
- Fill in the rest of the measures using the given rhythms and any notes you know. Title and play your composition.

### 29 GO FOR EXCELLENCE!
- [Diagram]
- [Instructions]