



Developing Individual Musicianship in Section Rehearsals

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**Texas Bandmasters Association
Presentation**

**Developing Individual Musicianship
In Section Rehearsals**

Sponsored by Phi Beta Mu

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Developing the Individual Musician In Section Rehearsals

Utilizing various pedagogical methods and performance opportunities with your students will improve the quality of the ensemble as well as develop a more confident, mature musician and ensemble member.

Evaluation and Assessment

- Determine ability of each player before the year begins through testing in the spring semester.
- Place students in an ensemble that is well within his/her ability
- Benchmark players to determine level and purpose of instruction

Sectional-”Like Instrument” Rehearsal:

- **Preparing and evaluating in a “like-instrument” setting is an absolute necessity.** This is where drill work specific to the instrument has more value. Have students vary sitting and standing while performing. Establish a standing posture apart from marching band. This is a great venue for perfecting the individual critical thinking and analysis skills.

Each Sectional is divided into Four areas of instruction/evaluation:

I Tone Refinement-Listening

- Establishing characteristic tone in the beginning years is very crucial. Performing with a beautiful tone in the center register of the instrument sets a baseline when extending range and maintaining tone quality. With brass players especially, extending range before players are physically ready will create compensation that is very difficult to rectify in high school.
- Establish a routine of tone building exercises as a daily reference for the performers. Long tones serve so many purposes-establishing and evaluating tone, consistency and pitch control in varying dynamics and ranges. They also serve in establishing and maintaining embouchure muscles and muscle memory.
- Take time in sectionals to use tone builders that are unique to the instruments in combination with the exercises used in full ensemble rehearsals. It is important to emphasize a pure, unforced, consistent tone quality. It is also important to emphasize the voicing and to keep it consistent throughout the group. **Be sure there is a model for the kind of tone you desire from each section.**

General-Tone Refinement Exercises: Using Long Tones

- Concert F-(or any middle range note)-energy, pitch and tone matching drill, level I and II listening exercises.
- Remington-established for trombonists, great tool for matching energy and tone in varying intervals
- Scales in long tones, extended ranges
- Flow Studies (Cichowicz)/lip slurs-can be written out for the entire ensemble.
- Utilize pitch charts with alternate fingerings
- Use Tuner, Tonal Energy App, etc for reference

Flute-Ascending and descending chromatics or scales, **covering full range**, varying dynamics, octaves, **harmonics**

Oboe/bassoon/saxophone-same as flute, excluding harmonics

Clarinet-same as flute, excluding harmonics, **register key exercises**

Brass-Remington in varying ranges, (F, Bb), Flow Studies, Interval Exercises, Ascending and descending scales

- Continue to stress voicing, tongue placement, embouchure, posture, hand position, soft body, breathing, use of air, and their effect on the tone.
- Make short assignments and evaluate them

II Ongoing Drill-Establishing a starting point with each student will aid in the improvement of technique. Never force a tempo that causes physical tension or breakdown of the embouchure or hand position. Technique refining involves a relaxed attitude, body and the development of muscle memory. In sectionals, more than full band, establish the quality of tone that you wish to maintain and accelerate tempos according to the ability of the group. Don't forget to challenge individuals to maximize what *they* can perform. At times, when you are preparing for marching or concert festivals, your time becomes limited during class to perform these drills.

- **Technique Builders:** (Vary articulations)
 - Scale and Technique Exercises-Including Scales, 3rds, Arpeggios
 - Extended Scales-Even patterns beyond range of scale in both directions
 - Chromatics-in small segments, ascending, descending
 - Clarke Studies, lip slurs, flow studies
 - Minor Scales and technique Exercises
 - Short excerpts from technical etude books
 - Alternate fingering charts and drills

- **Articulation**

- Work to improve articulation in daily drill-reminding players to keep the tongue placement correct and consistent
- Double, triple tonguing-can be improved in scale and technique exercises, every instrument except reed players-evaluate in band and sectionals
- Flutter tonguing is a must for flutes-teach and check in sectionals
- Releases are just as important as starts, be very clear about note values and releases. (No tongue stops, with the exception of clarinets in special circumstances)

Vibrato-is a must for every soloist, except Clarinet and F horn. Diaphragmatic vibrato is usually preferred with the exception of Saxophone. There is a variation of demand for vibrato in the ensemble. Flutes, double reeds and saxes use it the majority of the time. Many conductors ask brass players to use it only soloistically. Drilling a measured vibrato in sectional is useful in teaching performers to vary/control their vibrato with the tempo and interpretive demands of a music selection. Stress that a soloistic vibrato may be different from the ensemble vibrato. Ensemble vibrato is usually a little lighter and doesn't vary as much. It can't be stressed enough that all performers in an ensemble are soloists first and must learn vibrato.

Mouthpiece-To buzz or not to buzz...-

- If this technique is used, stress the importance of producing a clear, consistent tone on the mouthpiece. Tone will not be as clear on the low brass mouthpiece.
- Individual can check for pitch consistency and air fluctuation in drills and music.

III Music Related-Many elements of musicality can be taught in ensemble and in sectionals. Emphasis, phrasing, rubato, etc., can be taught and reinforced in long tones, scales, chorales, etudes, etc.

- Long tones-teach intensification through dynamic contrast, volume control and variation in vibrato. Never let the quality of tone change.
- Tapered releases-check voicing, intensity, air column, embouchure and aperture, pitch should not change. Don't be afraid to use a tuner.
- When ascending into extreme upper register-"float" the sound
- When descending into extreme lower register, intensify the sound unless otherwise stated
- Don't be a barline breather!! Understand the phrases and mark the breathing opportunities into the music at first
- Watch for internal pick-ups and rubato opportunities. It is best to cover these in sectionals on assigned lyrical etudes. Evaluate every student.

- Stress/Release-Understand how to intensify and relax- volume control, vibrato, tempo changes
- Students must have an understanding of all basic styles and articulations and be able to integrate them into the music from the beginning. This is especially important when sightreading.

IV Provide Individual Performance Opportunities

Most successful band programs require solo performance opportunities. There should be some kind of requirement on varying levels for every student in the program. The following are examples of individual performances whether being graded, a competition or festival, or just for the sake of educational experience. Many students enjoy the opportunity to perform for others. Hopefully, the director will provide them with all of the tools necessary to make the experience worthwhile.

- Passing off music from memory or chair tests-even when just testing, the student needs to view this as a performance worthy of skilled preparation.
- All-Region/All-State Auditions-All students in the program can learn at least a portion of the etudes assigned. Many performance skills can be taught in a small portion of the music. Being responsible for more than the full ensemble music is important and usually improves upon some aspect characteristic to that particular instrument.
- Audition music with in the program-(spring or fall auditions)
- Solo and Ensemble Festival-Have all students prepare some level of solo for this event. Evaluate their performance several times before they actually perform. They can perform in sectionals or record.

Sightreading-is a skill that can be mastered as long as it is practiced. Sightreading can be practiced in sectionals as well as full ensemble rehearsal.

- Unison lines and duets with metronome in varying tempos.
- Reinforce the musical aspects of sightreading, reading “around” the notes.

Always think of sightreading as an unplanned performance.

Flute Harmonics

Flute

Flute

Clarinet Register Key Exercises

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10

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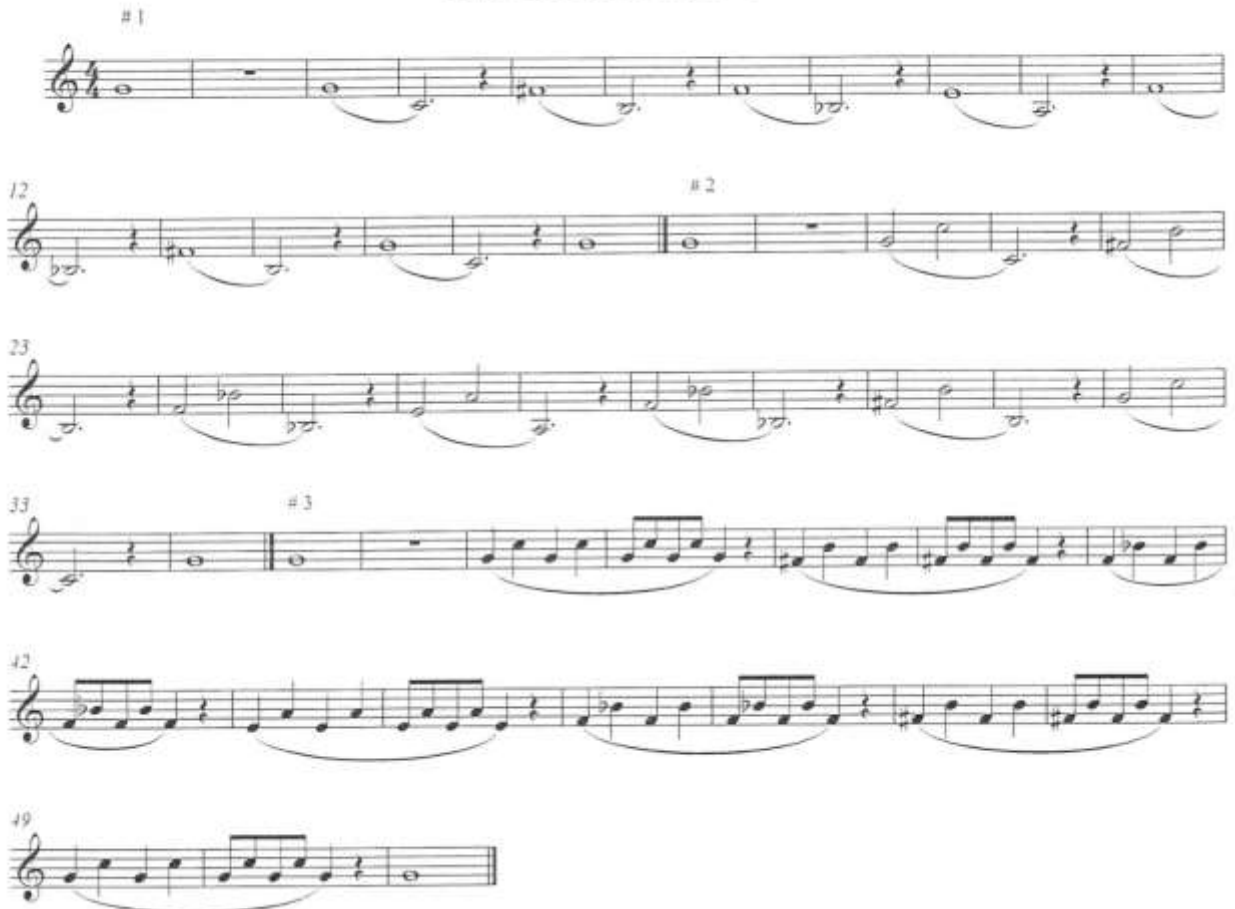
Saxophone Octave Studies



Musical score for Saxophone Octave Studies, consisting of five staves of music. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a common time signature. The music features a series of half notes and quarter notes, often beamed together, with various accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) and slurs. The second staff begins at measure 12, the third at 22, the fourth at 31, and the fifth at 37. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Trumpet in B \flat

LIP FLEXIBILITY



Musical score for Lip Flexibility, consisting of six staves of music. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The music features a series of half notes and quarter notes, often beamed together, with various accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) and slurs. The second staff begins at measure 12, the third at 23, the fourth at 33, the fifth at 42, and the sixth at 49. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

LEGATO WARM-UP

EXERCISE 1.

Object- To obtain utmost legato smoothness, largest possible unforced tone, and absolute evenness of volume throughout three octaves.

Procedure- Play with very full volume, but ration breath so that there will be enough to enlarge high notes to the same full, free volume as the middle notes. Tone should be full and round but not loud to the point of brassiness. (Because of their difficulty, written high C and B might be permitted on the B flat horn). Keep breath steady - do not "huff" notes into place. Do all slurring with the lips.

(♩ = 72)

On open F Horn

Two staves of music for the open F Horn. The first staff is in treble clef and the second in bass clef. The music consists of a series of eighth notes slurred together, ascending and then descending across three octaves. A circled '3' is written below the final note of the second staff.

2nd Valve

Two staves of music for the 2nd Valve. The first staff is in treble clef and the second in bass clef. The music consists of a series of eighth notes slurred together, ascending and then descending across three octaves. A circled '3' is written below the final note of the second staff.

TROMBONE

LIP SLURS

1

First staff of music for Trombone Lip Slurs, measures 1-4. It shows four pairs of notes (half notes) slurred together, with a horizontal line underneath each pair. The notes are in the bass clef.

Second staff of music for Trombone Lip Slurs, measures 5-7. It shows three pairs of notes (half notes) slurred together, with a horizontal line underneath each pair. The notes are in the bass clef.

2

Third staff of music for Trombone Lip Slurs, measures 1-4. It shows four pairs of notes (half notes) slurred together, with a horizontal line underneath each pair. The notes are in the bass clef.

Fourth staff of music for Trombone Lip Slurs, measures 5-7. It shows three pairs of notes (half notes) slurred together, with a horizontal line underneath each pair. The notes are in the bass clef.

Trumpet Key and Technique Studies

Concert Ab--Your Bb

Major Scale

Arpeggio



The first staff contains two musical exercises. The first is a Major Scale in Ab major, starting on Ab and ascending to Ab. The second is an Arpeggio exercise, starting on Ab and moving through the notes of the Ab major triad (Ab, C, Eb) in an ascending and then descending sequence.

Thirds



The second staff contains a Thirds exercise in Ab major, starting on Ab and ascending through the notes of the scale in a series of third intervals.

Clarx--Lower



The third staff contains a Clarx--Lower exercise in Ab major, consisting of a continuous eighth-note scale starting on Ab and ascending to Ab.

Clarx--Upper



The fourth staff contains a Clarx--Upper exercise in Ab major, consisting of a continuous eighth-note scale starting on Ab and ascending to Ab.