

Engaging the Beginning Clarinet Student

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The trick is to make is feel easy Presented by Tye Ann Payne for the Texas Bandmaster's Association July 2014

- I. General concepts for instrumental teaching
 - A. Teach students how to think
 - B. Lead students to the result
 - C. Teach re-teach re-teach re-teach, etc.
 - D. Keep learning be willing to change!
- II. Equipment
 - A. Continue to research
 - B. Develop a standard for the instrument, mouthpiece and reed
- III. Posture Find a balance that is relaxed and comfortable

IV. Breathing

- A. Must be low, calm with no upper body movement
- B. Airs moves in and right back out
- C. Feels "circular"
- D. Learn about "follow through"
- E. Steps that lead to correct breathing and what to notice
- V. Definition of TONE
 - A. Center
 - B. Above center
 - C. Below center
 - D. Achieving resonance

VI. Assembly of the clarinet

- A. Order of assembly does not necessarily matter
- B. Delicate parts that needs the most attention
- 1. Connecting the bridge keys
- 2. Assembly of the ligature and reed
- VII. Clarinet Embouchure/first tones
 - A. Reed strength
 - 1. #2 (or maybe 1.5) very beginning
 - 2. 2.5 3 as needed.
 - B. Sequence for leading students to the clarinet embouchure (with relaxed face)
 - 1. OPEN the jaw slightly
 - 2. TOUCH the reed to the bottom lip
 - 3. Bring the top teeth DOWN to the mouthpiece
 - 4. Make a SEAL with the lips
 - 5. BREATHE in through the nose out through the mouth
 - a. Just free air no tone yet!
 - b. Learn what still face really means
 - c. Increase speed of air until tone occurs naturally with ease (follow through)
 - d. Using syllables

VIII. Hand position

- A. Lead students to natural hand position with no wasted energy
- B. Squeeze release action of fingers
- X. Articulation
 - A. Breathing and centered tone must be intact.
 - B. Using "Li Li" syllable
 - C. Learning to start with an articulation.