



Beginning Trombone

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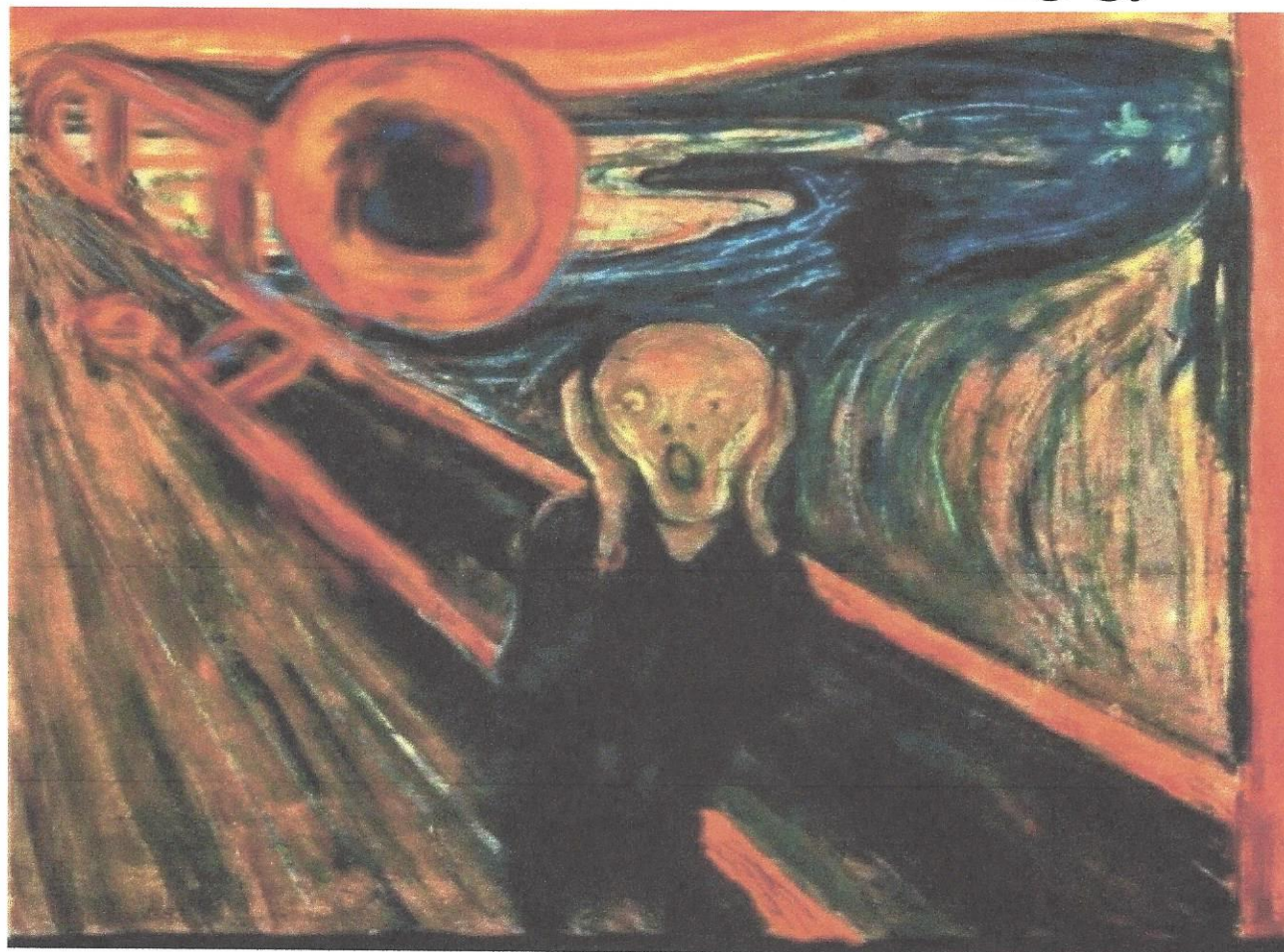
George Little, James McNair, Chris Meredith

Texas Bandmasters Association 2017 Convention/Clinic

**JULY 20 – 22, 2017
HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS**

Beginning Trombone

A Panel Discussion on Trombone Pedagogy



2017 Texas Bandmasters Association Convention

Friday, July 21, 2017 – 8:00 a.m. CC206

Presented by:

George Little – Lufkin ISD

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The Beginners

What To Look For In Potential Trombone Students

- ✓ Tall/Physically fit due to the physical nature of playing the instrument, not to mention having to “lug it around” from home to school.
- ✓ Students who demonstrate being “particular” about things...”OCD Attitude”
- ✓ Longer arms
- ✓ Medium to full lips - save thin lips for horn and trumpet
- ✓ Straight teeth – if possible
- ✓ Good ears. If you give a musical aptitude test (Selmer), you can determine this ahead of time to some degree. You could also check this in the instrument “fitting” or “interview” with simple singing/matching exercises.
- ✓ Ability to think sequentially
- ✓ Hand/eye coordination

Scheduling the Beginning Trombone Class

- ✓ The ultimate scenario would be to schedule the trombone class in its own class period since it is a “specialty” brass instrument. Monitoring slide placement, balance of the instrument, slide care, etc...
- ✓ The second best scenario is to schedule your low brass during its own period and split the class with an assistant. The next best scenario would be a brass only class that you could split with an assistant (low brass and high brass).
- ✓ If you have the entire beginning band meeting at the same time, do not hesitate to put the trombones on the front row of your set up in the first several weeks of the class – for the sake of slide room as well as discipline. Seating will be discussed later in this session.

- ✓ Start an appropriate number of beginning trombones that is in balance with the rest of your brass classes. Remember that actually supervising more than 12-15 beginning trombone players can be quite a task.

When The Instruments Arrive

- ✓ Have the music dealer deliver the instruments directly to your school. Avoid having the students pick up their own.
- ✓ Do not let the students near the instruments. If you have students who make their own arrangements for instruments, make a plea for them not to experiment with the instrument (for the safety of the instrument and to avoid any premature bad habits or "hand-me-down" pedagogy). Have them bring the instrument to you for inspection so you can recommend any repairs or upgrades and persuade them to let you keep it until the first day.
- ✓ Inspect each one **BEFORE** the first day of class. New trombones are shipped in plastic and often times without lubricant on the tuning slide and hand slide. Take the time to do this for the students before they get their instruments.
- ✓ Check the remaining contents of the case (bell section, mouthpiece, cleaning cloth, other accessories).

The First Day of Class

- ✓ **YOU** set the mood for the class the first day they walk into the room by your actions and demeanor. Be aware of tone of voice and facial expressions. Create an inviting, organized environment. Have music playing as they enter.
- ✓ Remember that this is a totally new experience for the students. They may be a little afraid or intimidated. Trombone students have an especially awkward instrument with which to operate. Go slow and **DO NOT assume ANYTHING!** (i.e. "Which hand do you move the slide with?")
- ✓ As much as possible, be enthusiastic and encouraging to students. Praise even the smallest success!
- ✓ Be aware of short attention spans. In the early stages, (when the class is only able to play a couple of notes), be sure to supplement the classroom instruction with solo trombone recordings, band recordings that feature the trombone, jazz recordings,

YouTube videos (Chris Bill, Trombone Shorty, Bonearama, Maniacal Four, Minozil Brass), theory reinforcement, historical information, etc...

Instrument Assembly

- ✓ Be sure (before you prepare to assemble the instruments) that you have properly identified all instrument parts and that they can identify them as well. Have Instrument ID Tests!
- ✓ When preparing to uncase for the first time, make sure you have the students spread out and remove all chairs and stands from the immediate area. You want the students sitting on the floor far enough away from each other that they will not clang instrument parts together.
- ✓ Have an instrument case that you will use to demonstrate. Often times, a visual demonstration will save you lots of explanation time.
- ✓ The uncasing process always begins with the student on the floor. Do not allow them (EVER) to put cases in chairs, on tables, etc...
- ✓ Explain how to identify the top section of the case and show them the latches and how they work.
- ✓ Slowly open the case and rest the top section gently on the floor.....getting exciting, isn't it?!!!!!! Remember, **BE ENTHUSIASTIC!**
- ✓ Have students remove the bell section from the case first with the left hand and hold it with the bell parallel to the floor and the gooseneck facing right. Encourage a firm grip on the bell section. Practice removing and replacing the bell section several times. **CLOSELY MONITOR THIS.**
- ✓ Remove **ONLY** the slide section with the right hand. Allow the slide to rest on the rubber stopper and wrap the hand around both braces. The longer end of the slide section should be closest to you. It is important that they know how to lock their slides and are aware that the slide is capable of coming completely off of the instrument. Allow them to work slides briefly, slowly, and at a great distance away from each other. **CLOSELY MONITOR THIS.**
- ✓ Put the slide section back in the case and practice removal and replacement several times. Do not allow students to force any part into the case. If they must push on the

slide section to get it into the newer cases, they must only put pressure on the ends of the slide and not the middle. **CLOSELY MONITOR THIS.**

- ✓ It is imperative that YOU instill in your students an “OCD Attitude” about care and safety of their instrument.
- ✓ Now, it is time to put the two parts together! Again, remove the bell section first with the left hand, with the bell parallel to the ground. Remove the slide section and keep the two sections away from each other. Carefully check each student for proper handling of the two sections. Check for a 90 degree angle with the bell section and slide section. Now, slowly bring the two sections toward one another with the bell section angled away from the slide section. Gently rest the bell section receiver onto the longer end of the slide section and show them how to secure the locknut.
- ✓ Finally, place the mouthpiece in the leadpipe receiver and give a ¼ turn to secure it.

Hand Position

- ✓ Left hand = “Rock n’ Roll” sign.
- ✓ Right hand = Double-barrel pistol.
- ✓ The pinky finger of the left hand needs to act as an “insurance policy” for the slide lock. If they are trained to use the pinky finger as insurance, they will not have a problem if they ever forget to lock their slides.
- ✓ Do not allow students to leave the slides unlocked or their instruments **LEANING IN A CHAIR**. If they must put their instruments down, put them down on the floor with three points of contact: mouthpiece, tuning slide, and bell. Do not lay them flat on the slide.

The following is a quote from Emory Remington when asked about hand position for control of the slide action:

“I prefer holding the slide crossbar between the thumb and the first and second fingers with the palm facing the player’s chest.”

Relaxed, Ready, and Playing Positions

Teach these positions the first day of class!

- ✓ ***Relaxed Position*** (almost never used), is reserved for times when you are not working directly with a student and you do not feel it necessary for them to sit in ready position. The back may touch the chair at this position only. Do not allow the slide to touch the edge of their chair at any time. I see trombone players who allow their slides to rest or bounce on the edge of their chair...A LOT.
- ✓ ***Ready Position*** is how students will sit in class when receiving instructions or waiting to play. Both feet are flat on the floor, shoulder width apart. The rear is toward the front of the chair, the spine is straight, the shoulders are placed in line with the hips and both hands are on the instrument. Remind students to look tall. The instrument is placed between the legs in front of them to protect it from items or people who may damage them. Students are expected to be still and are not allowed to talk unless recognized by the teacher.
- ✓ ***Playing Position*** is the same as Ready Position except that the instrument is simply moved up to the face in preparation to play. Posture should not change when bringing the trombone up to the face. Both hand positions should be correctly placed on the instrument before bringing it to playing position. Students should never change the way they sit due to the environment (chairs, stands in the way). The weight of the instrument is supported fully by the left hand (locknut on the fatty part of the thumb) and by resting on the neck. DO NOT allow the trombone to "FLOAT!" Balance of the trombone can be awkward and physically demanding at first. Be aware of this and give them breaks to rest. Practice "Trombone Pull-Ups."

The First Steps To Tone Production

- ✓ The breath should result in relaxation, not creation of tension. Think of a “yawn” when taking a breath. The throat is open and relaxed and the tongue is low and soft.
- ✓ Breathing Chant = “Out, 2, Breathe Breathe, Play, 2, 3, 4, Stop, 2, Breathe Breathe, Play, 2, 3, 4, Stop.”
- ✓ Practice “saying” the Breathing Chant AND “demonstrating” the Breathing Chant with the metronome. Be sure to transfer and reinforce the breathing chant and all of the details of breathing once they add the instrument.
- ✓ The breath should exit the mouth just as evenly as it entered. Monitor the students who try to blow it all out at once. “Pace” or “manage” the air throughout the exercise. Even air through the beginning, middle, and end of the note. Draw air column shapes on the board. Have students draw their own shapes on notebook paper.
- ✓ Watch for the shoulders to stay down and soft. The throat remains relaxed. Demand that students remain “like a statue” when breathing or playing. Any movement at all should come from the stomach and/or lower back.
- ✓ Breathe through the bottom of your chair, down to the floor.

Embouchure

- ✓ In teaching the formation of the embouchure, keep it simple. “Sim-Poo.”
- ✓ Demonstrate the embouchure. Make sure they can see you.
- ✓ Watch each individual as they form their embouchure. Look for an oval shaped aperture. Avoid a “smiling” or “stretched” aperture.
- ✓ Address problems only as they arise on an individual basis. If you continually mention: “Don’t do this,” or “make sure you are NOT doing this,” you give them too much to think about. Keep it simple.
- ✓ Cheeks stay firmly placed against the teeth. No “puffy” cheeks.
- ✓ Use mirrors and a mouthpiece visualizer.

Air Flow

- ✓ Demonstrate your air on their hand.
- ✓ Keep the air focused into a concentrated area on the palm.
- ✓ Call their attention to the evenness and consistent direction of the air flow.
- ✓ Let them blow their air on your hand. I will sometimes draw a circle on my hand to give them a very specific area in which to blow their air.
- ✓ If it is not correct, demonstrate again on their hand. Then, have them blow on their own hand and make it feel the same way as when YOU demonstrated.
- ✓ Address students whose aperture spreads all the way across the lips – blow air only through the center of the lips.
- ✓ Address students who get a “buzz” or “spitting” sound. Relax the center (make it softer) and allow the air to pass more freely through the aperture.
- ✓ While checking the air of each individual, closely monitor the texture of the lips and the size and shape of the aperture and address as necessary.

Mouthpiece Placement

- ✓ Mouthpiece only – place the mouthpiece for them at first.
- ✓ Generally, ½ top & ½ bottom lip works well.
- ✓ Due to the variance in individual dental structure and lip size and shape, this may alter slightly to possibly 2/3 top & 1/3 bottom lip.
- ✓ Give the students many opportunities to place the mouthpiece on their own and closely monitor.

Adding the Mouthpiece and the Air

- ✓ Allow the students to blow air only through their mouthpiece at first. Before they do, explain that the only sound you want to hear at this point is air flowing through the mouthpiece.
- ✓ Some may experience a natural buzz the first time, some may not.
- ✓ Do this in front of the mirror as well, so they can begin to monitor their own mouthpiece placement.
- ✓ The actual “buzz” will result when the air pressure is increased and the aperture is made smaller.
- ✓ Demonstrate the buzz and stress the importance of the even air flow from the time the buzz starts to the time it is finished.
- ✓ Demonstrate a buzz with the mouthpiece and add it to the horn without stopping the buzz to demonstrate the transition and correlation of buzz to actual sound.
- ✓ There are two types of buzz to use with the class as a whole. Random pitch and specific pitch.
- ✓ Start with the random pitch to get everyone buzzing together. Even though they are buzzing a random pitch, stress that they should attempt to make an even sound from beginning to end.
- ✓ Then, play or buzz a specific pitch (“F” is a good starting point) and check this individually before you try the entire class.
- ✓ Add the mouthpiece and check individuals. The goal at this point is for everyone to be able to create a “sound.” If they are on an “F”, that would be great. Remember that they will probably struggle with simply holding the instrument up for a while so go slow and be patient.
- ✓ Do not play as a class until most are on the “F”. Hear some duets or trios.
- ✓ It is important that each day they are reinforced with the breathing exercises, embouchure formation, checking air flow, mouthpiece placement and buzzing. The formation of good habits and procedures in the beginning will play great dividends later.

Articulation, Slide Technique and Flexibility

Articulation

- ✓ In primary articulation, the tongue is placed behind the upper teeth and a “Too” or “Doo” consonant is used.
- ✓ I personally use a “Too” or “Doo” articulation for the middle and upper registers and “Toe” and “Doe” for the lower register.

Legato articulation

- ✓ In legato articulation (on a single note), the surface of the tongue that touches the back of the upper teeth is more broad and softer than in firm articulation. I use a very soft “lou” syllable and describe the tongue as simply placing a tiny “dent” in the air stream.
- ✓ Teach Natural Slurs during their beginner year!!
- ✓ The Reginald Fink Introducing Legato book is highly recommended!!

Slide Technique

- ✓ An overall summary of slide technique can be obtained by elaboration upon an aforementioned quote from Emory Remington regarding hand position:

“I prefer holding the slide crossbar between the thumb and the first and second fingers with the palm facing the player’s chest. This encourages using the wrist as a hinge and provides the most relaxed slide action I’ve seen. The hand must be relaxed, but controlled, and you should not allow the wrist to become too loose. The slide should be used in quick strokes – smoothly and never in a jerky or spastic manner. Through careful practice the student can perfect a wonderful coordination between the tongue action and the slide technique which provides a truly relaxed approach to both staccato and legato playing.”

Also, PLEASE see Joe Dixon article “Trombone Slide Action: Beauty of Movement, Beauty of Sound” for extensive coverage of slide movement. I’ve included this article as a part of this clinic with permission of Joe Dixon.

Trombone Slide Action: Beauty of Movement, Beauty of Sound

Joe Dixon

The uniqueness of trombone is centered upon its use of a slide; however, the teaching of efficient slide action to young students is often insufficiently addressed. Frequently students are simply taught to move the slide as fast as possible without any further instruction or monitoring. Unfortunately, they continue for years attempting to move faster and faster without regard to effortlessness and efficiency. In reality, the slide needs to move only as fast as necessary—not as fast as possible. Conversely, we could say that the slide moves as slow as is efficient—but no slower. Nonetheless, ignoring form when teaching slide action will result in poor technique.

Like many skills, any effort that is exerted beyond what is efficient will create negative results. All aspects of playing an instrument should be monitored by these questions:

- Does it look effortless?
- Does it feel effortless?
- Does it sound effortless?

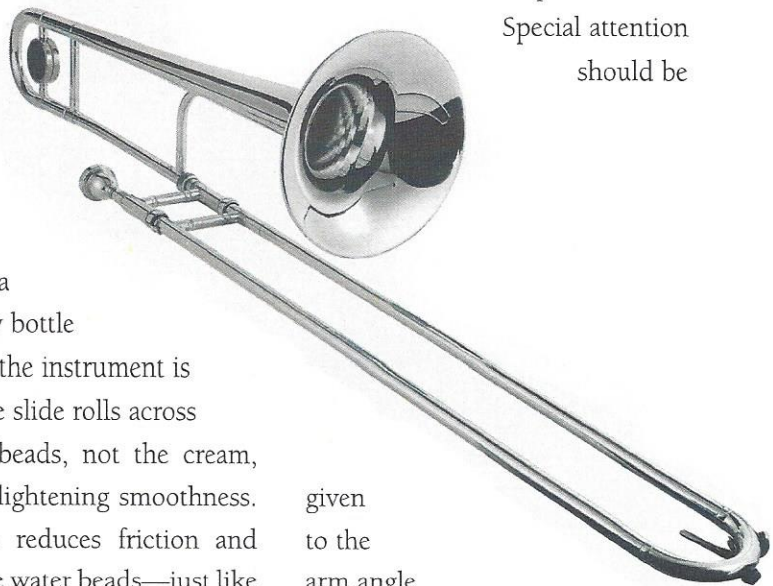
FIRST THINGS FIRST

Before our approach to slide action can be discussed, we must address three important points.

You must have a trombone slide that works. Often I check trombone slides while visiting schools and I wouldn't perform on 98% of them. I suggest that students clean and re-lubricate slides at least twice a week. Use an excellent cream lubricant. Slide oil, although convenient, is not an acceptable choice. A dry slide is impossible to move correctly and will cause serious friction wear on the slide tubes. Use a water spray bottle every time the instrument is played. The slide rolls across the water beads, not the cream, to achieve lightening smoothness. The cream reduces friction and helps create water beads—just like wax on a car. I would also estimate that 50% of the trombone slides that I check have issues requiring professional repair. Unfortunately, students can become complacent with the condition of their slide and accept it as status quo. I want students to memorize what their slide feels like at its best (when new) and never let them

accept less than that again. Do you check trombone slides at least once a week?

For most, I would be “preaching to the choir” discussing the importance of posture in breathing and tone production. For trombone, muscle-memory is also important for learning to play with good intonation. Inconsistent posture changes the way that a slide position feels. Special attention should be



given to the arm angle floating away from the body. The angle should allow the right arm to reach all positions without changing the actual distance of the arm from the ribs. By making the hand position and arm angle consistent, we reduce the variables for memorizing the feel of a position to only one element: elbow angle.

Trombone Slide Action

Similarly, I teach that right hand position stays as consistent as possible. I use two fingers and a thumb at the bottom of the slide brace. The hand stays at a right angle to the slide with the palm facing the chest. While holding the slide brace, I prefer students not allow their fingers to protrude past the first knuckle. This allows a little extra “reach” as well as helping prevent the ever-popular problem of touching the bell with the fingers. Students should not “let go” of the slide with their thumb except for 7th position.

LEARNING SLIDE POSITIONS

Similar to our rules for efficiency, trombone positions should be taught by: what does it sound like? What does it look like? What does it feel like? From the beginning, teachers and students should be obsessed with exact placement. Remember that posture and hand position are essential to learning to play in-tune.

Good intonation requires a trained ear, embouchure muscle-memory, and arm muscle-memory. Are you re-enforcing these skills every day?

SLIDE MOVEMENT

Slide action is about quickness, gracefulness, and efficiency. Place the slide. There should not be any adverse reaction from the body or instrument when the player either moves or stops the slide. Avoid the bell of the instrument bouncing while moving or the slide forcing a “bungee” reaction when stopping. Keeping the texture of the arm soft will help minimize reactions. Work for grace and

agility—“beauty of movement” is effortless. Brute force is not an option.

The hand position (two fingers and a thumb) is held as if one were holding a small ball bearing between the thumb and fingers. That imaginary ball bearing becomes a point that we move in a straight line to

exact positions in space in front of us. Moving this “point in space” is much more exact than thinking of moving the entire slide.

The slide does have to move quickly, however, addressing velocity without visual effortlessness will never give a satisfactory result. In reality, the trombonist has the same amount of time to move between positions that a trumpeter has to depress a valve, or a flutist to depress a key. Unfortunately, this realization seems to add to the sense of panic rather than staying focused on accuracy and ease of movement.

Changing positions requires that a player synchronize the exact placement of the slide with the articulation syllable and the lip vibration of the note being played. No simple task. It is Reason No. 1 that the pace of beginning trombone classes moves slower than other instruments. Do not

allow a student to anticipate and move early—think of changing on the note.

Placing the slide also means that I do want students to “throw” or “sling” the slide from one position to another. I use the wrist only for tuning adjustments. The wrist—like the arm—will be relaxed, but not loose.

**Similar to our rules for efficiency, trombone positions should be taught by:
What does it sound like?
What does it look like?
What does it feel like?**

Inconsistent posture changes the way that a slide position feels.

Special attention should be given to the arm angle floating away from the body.

Similarly I teach that right hand position stays as consistent as possible.

Trombone Slide Action

Perhaps the principal reason that young trombonists have difficulty in learning to slur is that they never really learned to correctly connect two notes without space, pause or hesitation. Proper slurring is impossible without a proper slide technique.

The beauty of slide movement is visually the same no matter what style is being performed. For example, louder dynamics do not translate into more aggressive slide action.

In my clinics for beginners I always visually demonstrate slide technique. I want students to memorize in their minds what it looks like. I want them to mimic what my changes look like.

Our artistic slide movement helps translate into “beauty of sound” by helping avoid tension, facilitating continuous airflow, improving intonation, and setting the foundation for musically satisfying transitions between notes. Like other fundamental aspects of playing—tone quality, intonation, and articulation—slide technique is not a skill that you teach and then “move on.” It is a skill where form is being perfected for a lifetime.

Joe Dixon is well known as a brass and wind ensemble clinician. He is an artist clinician for S.E. Shires trombones and F. Schmidt low brass. He currently resides in Houston. Mr. Dixon may be contacted via his web site joedixonstudio.com.

THIRTY-THREE WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR BEGINNER TROMBONE CLASS

Joe Dixon

1. *Be Organized.* Have students expect that organization and discipline are necessary to learn a performance art.
2. Arrange students' chairs and stands to allow proper posture and horn angle, a safe distance between trombonists, and a neat and orderly learning environment. Do not allow the physical setup of the rehearsal room to visually undermine your efforts to teach organization and discipline.
3. From the first day students should learn proper behavior for rehearsals – the way we behave as trombonists and musicians; the way we rehearse and learn.
4. Teach a physical respect for the trombone from the beginning. For some children it is the most expensive possession they have ever owned that is exclusively theirs. Teach them to care for it, that it is fragile, and warn them of the dangers that can happen. No one else should ever hold or try to play their trombone.
5. Continue to “sell” the idea of trombone *after* the student has chosen the instrument. Help them achieve an identity as a trombonist. Teach them about the great players and teachers. Help students develop a pride in their choice of instrument.
6. Allow rest opportunities to compensate for the awkwardness of holding the trombone. Watch for problems with mouthpiece placement, posture, hand positions, etc., which the instrument's weight might cause.
7. *Teach Fundamentals.* Do not be a slave to a method book. Allow students to focus on new skills separately from their music. Avoid teaching new lines from a book and a new skill at the same time. Do not teach two new skills at once.
8. Nothing is more important to the young trombonist than developing tone quality, intonation, and articulation skills. If the trombone student moves too fast, too soon, it is difficult to correct these skills at a later point in the student's development. While the problems can be addressed in private lessons, the opportunity for effective daily monitoring is lost once the student enters a performing ensemble.
9. A student's ability level in slide action and intonation skills determines when it is appropriate for new rhythmic concepts to be *played* on the instrument. For young trombonists, mental comprehension of the material will usually be ahead of the physical skills that the trombone demands.
10. *Teach music theory.* Teach students note names, intervals, key signatures, scale construction, understanding of time signatures and pulse, rhythms (until they rival your percussionists), sight singing (until they rival your choir), musical terms, etc.
11. Rhythmic skills can be taught separately from the instrument. A student's comprehension of rhythm can progress well beyond their temporary lack of slide action or intonation skills.
12. Do not assume that once material has been presented that it was learned. Always respond to the student's attempt to use your information. Mostly, we teach students concepts that require years of constant feedback.
13. Make ear training an important part of your class. Teach your trombonists to hear and identify intervals.
14. Have students learn to vibrate correct pitches on the mouthpiece alone as a way to develop tone quality, ear training, and air usage. Use a piano to give a reference tone. It helps if the student trombonist has some piano skills and home access to a keyboard.

15. Always have students learn to (a) sing lines on correct pitches, (b) count lines while placing the slide, and (c) play the line vibrating exact pitches on the mouthpiece alone before performing with the instrument.

16. Unless you are teaching specific ensemble skills, listen to students play alone. Do not allow a group to hide an individual's problems or your ability to hear them.

17. Monitor embouchure, mouthpiece placement, posture, and hand position daily. Have the student bring a mirror to monitor facial movement (a clip-on car visor mirror is great).

18. *Quality requires constant monitoring.* If you play-along with your class they do not hear your playing and you cannot keep track of what your students are doing.

19. Learning intonation on trombone utilizes all three learning styles: auditory, kinesthetic, and visual. The student must hear the pitches/intervals, feel the arm angle, and visually monitor placement of positions. Posture and slide action are part of tuning.

20. Lip slurs are important exercises for improving tone, embouchure strength, flexibility, and range. Teach students to do lip slurs with minimal or no facial movement, no head or instrument movement, no breaks or bumps in the slurs when changing, and evenness of volume and tone color. Do not go faster, higher, or lower than a student can perform with correct physical fundamentals. Have the students use their mirrors.

21. Daily teach the concept of aural, visual, and physical effortless.

22. Do not teach slide action until you have taught proper lubrication of the hand slide. Monitor the condition of your students' trombone slides weekly.

23. Require practice cards.

24. Teach your students what practicing is, how to organize a practice session, and techniques that help them achieve their goals. If students do not learn to *identify* and *solve* musical and physical problems, then they are not practicing correctly.

25. Require your students to own a metronome. Teach them how to use it. If you do not regularly use a metronome in class – and furnish metronome markings for your students – they will not use them at home. Approach playing with metronome both as an ensemble skill and a way of learning “internal pulse.”

26. Teach students how to use a tuner as soon as they can make a centered sound. Small tuners are relatively inexpensive.

27. Discuss each item on the *Physical Skills Checklist* with your staff and private instructors. The staff must be uniform in their approach, rhetoric, and expected quality levels. The private instructor should be your specialist, however, if you cannot agree on concepts, do both yourself and your students a favor and find a new instructor. You want to be able to strongly support your private teaching staff.

28. Encourage students to use home audio and video equipment as a valuable practice tool. Do a video demonstration in class on spotting posture errors, embouchure problems, and any inconsistency of slide positions.

29. Encourage your students to own CDs or MP3s of great performers (my students have them on their phones or tablets – as do I). Help them choose models to emulate. Discuss with them the qualities that you admire in those performers. (This is also a great way to start listening to the instrument's literature and discussing various musical styles.)

30. Teach mental focus as a skill. Make your students aware that developing a high level of concentration is part of becoming a good performer. Insist on concentration in all learning and performing situations (classes, practice, rehearsals, performances, etc.). Waiting until the concert, contest, or audition is too late.

31. Do not wait until students are in a performing band to teach ensemble skills. Expect students to learn to watch the conductor, start notes together, move together, release together, match pitches, etc.

32. Students know when they are learning and when their time is being wasted. The best solution for keeping quality students in your program is to teach them how to play their instruments.

33. Frustration is often created by unreasonable expectations. Give students positive feedback on progress and help them learn patience. Let them know that various skills will require different periods of time to show solid improvement. Help students identify improvement in their attempts. "You don't have to be perfect to be better."

JOE DIXON is well known as a trombonist, brass clinician, instructor, and lecturer. He currently serves as a Master Clinician / Consultant for school music programs throughout Texas. His students have been welcomed at many of the world's great music schools including *The Juilliard School, Manhattan School of Music, Yale University, Indiana University, Harvard University,* and the *Royal Academy of Music* in London. His students have performed with the *St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the San Antonio Symphony Orchestra, the English Chamber Orchestra, the Italian National Radio Orchestra, the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, I Solisti Veneti, the Kennedy Center Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfonica del Estado de Mexico,* and numerous other orchestras and chamber ensembles in North & South America, Europe, and Japan.

JOE DIXON's teachers included LEON BROWN (*University of North Texas*), ALLEN OSTRANDER (Bass Trombone, *New York Philharmonic; NBC Symphony* under Toscanini; *Juilliard*), and ROGER SMITH (Solo Trombone, *Metropolitan Opera Orchestra*; Solo Euphonium & Assistant Conductor, *The Goldman Band; Juilliard*). He was a composition student of electronic music pioneer MERRILL ELLIS (1916-1981) and toured with Prof. ELLIS as a soloist and ensemble member of his *New Music Group*. JOE DIXON began private teaching trumpet and trombone at the age of 16 and by the age of 19 maintained a private studio of 120 students. He has taught in the United States and Europe. As a trombonist, his performance experience includes symphony, opera, ballet, chamber music and appearances as a soloist.

JOE DIXON has presented hundreds of teacher training programs and has given Master Classes and lectures on brass pedagogy at numerous universities, specialist schools as well as national music educator conventions. His Master Classes and mini-residencies have included visits to *Indiana University, the University of Houston, the University of Texas,* and presentations in Germany and Italy. In 2002 he was a panelist for the *Music Educators National Conference (MENC) Biennial* in Nashville, Tennessee. He has presented lectures for the "Careers in Music" program at *Southern Methodist University,* as well as lectures for its Brass Methods Classes. Recently, he has presented clinics for the *Texas Bandmasters Association.*

JOE DIXON was a Session Producer and/or sound engineer for critically acclaimed recordings by EDDIE GREEN and TOM BENNETT conducting the *University of Houston Wind Ensemble,* including the series of recordings for the *International Grainger Society* of wind works by Percy Grainger. The Ensemble's recording of "The Planets" (Holst) and "Appalachian Spring" (Copland) was honored as a semifinalist in three categories for a 1999 Grammy Award (Best Classical Recording, Best Orchestral Performance and Best Engineered Album, Classical) as well as a listing in the *Stereophile* magazine "Records to Die For" category. His project - music of Vittorio Giannini - was released by *Naxos* label in 2006.

JOE DIXON is a Lifetime Member of the *International Trombone Association* and a member of the *British Trombone Society.*

Flexibility

- ✓ Robert L. Marstellar defines flexibility as “the coordinated muscular adjustments necessary to move from one pitch to another in the smoothest and most precise manner.”
- ✓ The most obvious exercise for the development of great flexibility is a daily routine that includes lip slurs from slow to fast and on into lip trills.
- ✓ The lip slur can be described as having two main sections. The improper execution of either will result in a non-desirable lip slur.

Part I: Physical adjustments

- 1) Air speed, 2) voicing, 3) aperture adjustment, 4) air direction

Part II: Timing

If the physical adjustments are made gradually, the slur will happen but will not result in the desired effect. That is why it is important that all flexibility exercises be practiced with a metronome to gain the maximum benefit.

Daily Routines and Warm-Ups

Most any trombone player or teacher who has devised his own warm-up or daily routine can trace its roots to the Remington studies. I have included in this presentation a copy of a very good collection of warm-ups and daily routines that I use.

Remington Exercise

- ✓ The daily use of long tone exercises such as the Remington Exercise encompasses four principles: Tuning, Tone production, Action of the tongue, Slide action technique
- ✓ The Remington Exercise establishes the “base” note, whether it is “F” or “B-flat” and requires the student to check each interval as he moves further away from the base while maintaining good tone, timing of the slide and tongue and good slide action.

Lip Slurs

- ✓ “Vitamins” for the trombonist (or any brass player).
- ✓ Simple lip slurs – page 6 & 7 from “The Blue Book”
- ✓ Record yourself playing lip slurs and playback at ½ speed – FRIGHTENING!
- ✓ The **Tonal Energy** app is especially good for this.

Scales, Scale exercises, Arpeggios

- ✓ Key of The Week Exercises (Joe Dixon)
- ✓ Foundations for Superior Performance (“The Blue Book”)
- ✓ Varied speeds, articulations, volumes
- ✓ Full-range of the instrument
- ✓ Thirds, Herbert L. Clarke studies, modes, chromatic, etc...

Equipment

Instruments

- ✓ Jupiter Capital Series with F attachment – has worked quite well for the past couple of years for us in Argyle

Mouthpieces

- ✓ Bach 6 ½AL as a beginner
- ✓ Move to a Bach 5G around 8th or 9th grade

Lubricants and maintenance

- ✓ Slide O’ Mix / Trombontine / Yamaha
- ✓ Tuning slide grease
- ✓ Rotary valve oil (for F attachment linkage)

- ✓ Spray bottle
- ✓ Mouthpiece cleaner
- ✓ Cleaning kit and rag (use the flexible “snake” rather than the rod)

Mutes

- ✓ The key in choosing mutes for the section is getting the same muted sound through the section. If everyone plays the same mute, you will probably be fine. Here are the major brands of mutes available and some general comments:
- ✓ Jo-Ral – the best for the money; plays in tune with least resistance
- ✓ Denis Wick – probably about as good, more expensive
- ✓ Tom Crown – not as good but O.K. for the reduced price; plays sharp and with more resistance
- ✓ I have started using a set of practice mutes (Denis Wick) with my beginner classes the last several years and it has yielded some positive results that I will discuss if we have time.

Maintenance

Slide Care

- ✓ Slide O’ Mix is the easiest to use of the available lubricants for the slide.
- ✓ The application does not require the hand to touch the inner slide.
- ✓ It does not “gum-up” like thicker lubricants might after several uses.
- ✓ The hands do not become greasy during application, possibly causing the student to lose control of the slide.
- ✓ If you use the slide cream method, try Trombotine or the Yamaha slide cream.
- ✓ In using any creams, remember the key is to use as little as possible.
- ✓ When applying it to the inner slide, spread evenly until the cream is no longer visible. If you can still see the white film on the slide, you have used too much. Simply wipe off and re-apply.

- ✓ As with any cream lubricant, make sure that the inner slide is completely cleared of all existing material before applying new.
- ✓ It is a good idea to rinse the outer slide before a new application.
- ✓ The cream tends to cling to the inside of the outer slide and needs to be removed occasionally.
- ✓ After each method, you will need to give the slide a couple of sprays from the spray bottle. Supervise this carefully!
- ✓ Do "Slide Checks" at least twice a week FOR A GRADE. Instill "Slide Pride" in your trombonists and follow through with it once they are no longer in your beginner classrooms.

Horn Baths

- ✓ Students should give the instrument a bath about once a month. If a student has been ill, he or she should give the instrument a bath before they return to playing the instrument if possible to avoid becoming ill again. At the VERY LEAST, scrub out the mouthpiece!
- ✓ Horn baths should be done under close parental supervision.
- ✓ Send instructions home with the students prior to the first cleaning.
- ✓ Medium-warm water is fine – do not use any kind of household soap.
- ✓ Music dealers have a low-cost cleaning solution for instruments.
- ✓ Completely disassemble the instrument and rinse all parts in a tub. Put a bath towel in the tub floor to aid in protecting the instrument.
- ✓ Run the cleaning snake through the inner and outer slides and rinse again. Repeat if necessary.
- ✓ Wipe all parts dry with a soft cloth.
- ✓ Mouthpieces should be rinsed and cleaned thoroughly once a week.

The F Attachment

- ✓ This is perhaps the most heinously ignored area of maintenance of the trombone.
- ✓ Do some of your trombone players come with an “instant rhythm section” during heavy valve usage?
- ✓ With just a few moments of attention a week, the F attachment can truly be a welcomed aid to performance.
- ✓ The actual valve does require weekly (at least) application of standard rotary valve oil. Take the bell section away from the slide and turn upside down.
- ✓ Apply a few drops into the section that receives the slide section while working the valve.
- ✓ If you have an open wrap style instrument, you can pull the F tuning slide and apply a few drops through the tub that leads to the valve.
- ✓ The linkage requires the “3-In-One” multipurpose oil about once a week.
- ✓ If the attachment is noisy after you have applied oil to the proper places, check a couple of things: The rubber stoppers.
- ✓ They may be old and dry or may be missing all together. The hardware for the trigger. It may be loose or parts may be missing.
- ✓ See an experienced instrument repairman for severe trigger problems.

Private Lessons

IMPERATIVE! Seek out private instruction if at all possible. If you cannot get a full time trombone teacher, have a respected clinician visit your school once a month to do master classes. If you do not have the funds for this, you should consult a respected trombone teacher for ideas and concepts you can pass on to your students in a master class or sectional setting on a regular basis.

Recommended Resources

Beginning Trombone Books

First Book of Practical Studies for Trombone – Bordner – Belwin Mills

55 Phrasing Studies for Trombone – Jaroslav Cimerá – Belwin Mills

Rubank Elementary Method – J.E. Skornicka and E.G. Boltz – Rubank, Inc.

Intermediate Trombone Books

Studies in Legato (also available for Bass Trombone and Tuba) – Reginald Fink – Carl Fischer, Inc.

Elementary and Intermediate Etudes for Trombone – Tommy Pederson – Schmidt Music
(Excellent for introducing the tenor clef!)

Rubank Intermediate Method – J.E. Skornicka and E.G. Boltz – Rubank, Inc.

Advanced Trombone Books

Arban Complete Method

Selected Studies for Trombone – H. Voxman – Rubank (TMEA All-State music source)

Clef Studies for Trombone – Vladislav Blazhevich – edited by Donald Hunsberger – Accura Music
(TMEA All-State music source)

School of Sightreading and Style – Andre Lafosse – M. Baron Co. (five progressive volumes)

Melodious Etudes for Trombone – Bordogni/Rochut – Carl Fischer Inc. (three books, 120 etudes in legato style, trombonists' "Bible")

38 Studies – Fritz Werner/edited by Keith Brown – International Music Co.

60 Selected Studies for Trombone – Kopprasch – Carl Fischer, Inc.

31 Studies for Trombone – Michel Bleger/Ostrander – International

Highly Recommended All-Level Books

The following three books should be on the bookshelf (or music stand) of every serious trombonist or trombone teacher.

The Art of Trombone Playing – Edward Kleinhammer – Warner Bros. Publications (This book would be especially useful to the non-trombonist...)

Basic Routines for Trombone – Robert Marsteller – Southern Music Company

The Remington Warm-Up Studies – Prepared and edited by Donald Hunsberger – Accura Music

There is so much valuable information in each of these that one could practically “self-teach” themselves to play the trombone with little else.

Duet Books

Selected Duets for Trombone – Volume I (easy-medium), Volume II (advanced) – H. Voxman – Rubank

Amsden’s Celebrated Practice Duets – Arthur Amsden – Barnhouse Music (progressive practice duets that advance very quickly!)

Quality Solos from the Prescribed Music List

Class III

Bach – Menuet in G
Handel/Dishinger – Gavotte from Sonata No. 7
Most of the Lawton arrangements
Mozart/Powell – Arietta and Allegro
Pinard – The Crusader
VanderCook – Emerald & Ruby

Class II

Bach/Kent – Arioso from Cantata No. 156
Bizet/Smith – Angus Dei from L’Arlesienne
Borodin/Conley – Polovetzian Dances
Galliard – Six Sonatas Volume I, II
(play one slow, one fast from any sonata)
Handel – Honor and Arms from Sampson
Purcell/Dishinger – Gavotte and Hornpipe

Rachmaninoff/Brown – Vocalise Op. 34 No. 14
Shumann/Fitzgerald – Adagio from Concerto for Cello Op. 129
VanderCook – Diamond, Garnett and Turquoise

Class I (the least demanding from the PML Class I solos)

Bach/Marsteller – Six Cello Suites
(play two contrasting movements from one suite)
Corelli/Maganini – Sonata in F Major
Corelli/Ostrander – Sonata in g minor
Galliard – Six Sonatas (two contrasting movements)
Marcello/Brown – Sonata in C Major
Marcello/Ostrander – Sonata in a minor
Marcello/Ostrander – Sonata in g minor
Ostransky – Concertino
Saint-Saens – Cavatine
Telemann/Ralph – Twelve Fantasies for Unaccompanied Trombone (play one)

Class I (the most demanding from the PML Class I solos)

Barat – Andante and Allegro (also *great* for euphonium!)
Bourgeois – Trombone Concerto Op. 114
Bozza – Ballade
Cimera/Koestner – Carnival of Venice
Creston – Fantasy
David – Concertino in Eb Op. 4
Defaye – Deux Danses – only one required
(also a great transcription for the bass trombone by Donald Knaub)
Grondahl – Morceau Symphonique (good w/ band accompaniment)
Hindemith – Sonate (have a great piano player ready)
Pryor – any of them: Blue Bells, Air Varie, Thoughts of Love
Serocki – Sonatina for Trombone and Piano
Sulek – Sonata
Tomasi – Concerto (some treble clef and tenor clef)
Wagenseil – Concerto (alto clef)

Today's Clinicians

George Little

George Little is Director of Bands at Lufkin ISD. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Stephen F. Austin State University. Mr. Little is entering his 16th year of teaching and his second year at Lufkin. Prior to teaching at Lufkin, he taught for eight years at New Diana High School and six years at Henderson Middle School. Mr. Little's bands consistently earn top rankings in UIL and invitational competitions. Under his direction for the 2016-2017 school year, the Lufkin HS Band won the UIL Sweepstakes Award and the Superior Performance Award in the NAMMB Marching Contest. Previously, his bands at New Diana HS were named the 2016 TMEA 3A Honor Band; were previously state TMEA Honor Band finalists in 2012 and 2014; were UIL State Marching finalist in 2013; and placed as the ATSSB OPS state winner and state finalist numerous times. Mr. Little maintains an active schedule as a concert band adjudicator, clinician, and honor band conductor. He has presented workshops at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago, IL, at the Texas Music Educators Association convention, and at the Texas Bandmasters Association convention. Mr. Little currently serves as the Past President of the National Association of Military Marching Bands. Mr. Little is a member of TMEA, ATSSB, TBA, TMAA, NAMMB, and Phi Beta Mu International Bandmasters Fraternity. George and his wife, Karen, currently reside in Lufkin, TX with their three wonderful children Luke, Sally, and Dottie and they are members of Harmony Hill Baptist Church.

James McNair

2016 marks James McNair's 7th year with Argyle Band Staff where he teaches 6th grade beginner band, 5th grade music, and assists with many aspects of the Argyle Band program as a whole. In the 2015-2016 school year, he was named Teacher of the Year for Argyle Intermediate School! Mr. McNair's experience as a musician and music educator is as vast as it is varied ranging from military musician to middle school band director to college professor. Most recently, Mr. McNair served as Assistant Professor of Music, Associate Director of Bands and Coordinator of Instrumental Music Education at Texas Christian University. Previous to this appointment at TCU, Mr. McNair taught for ten years in some of the country's finest band programs including Lake Highlands High School, The Colony High School and Cross Timbers Middle School. Mr. McNair is an active clinician and adjudicator throughout the state and has been a clinician for the Texas Music Educators Convention and Texas Bandmasters Conventions in San Antonio.

Mr. McNair is a proud former member of "The President's Own" United States Marine Band in Washington, D.C. where he performed regularly at the White House for the President of the United States, on many Marine Band recordings, and on national tours.

Mr. McNair is also in high demand as one of the most versatile freelance trombonists in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area. He performs regularly with the East Texas Symphony Orchestra in Tyler, the Lewisville Lake Symphony Orchestra, the Plano Symphony Orchestra, the Garland/Las Colinas Symphony Orchestra, the Dallas Opera, the Dallas Winds, Imperial Brass, and the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra. As a soloist, he has performed with the Dallas Wind Symphony and twice at the prestigious Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago. Mr. McNair is a two-time winner of the Eastern Trombone Workshop's

National Classical Solo Competition in Washington, D.C. Mr. McNair performs regularly with the Chris Watson Band and appears on the newly released album "Black, White, and Gray" which is available on iTunes!

Mr. McNair earned a Bachelor of Music Education degree from East Texas State University where his primary teachers were Dr. Neil Humfeld, Jim Clark, Ed Jones, and Tom Bennett. He also earned a Master of Music in trombone performance from Texas A&M University-Commerce. Mr. McNair considers the following music educators as his most influential mentors and would like to thank them for their impact on his teaching on a daily basis: Marion West, Ramsey MacDonald, Dick Clardy, John Benzer, Joe Dixon, Jollette Wine, Kathy Johnson, and Amanda Drinkwater.


Chris Meredith

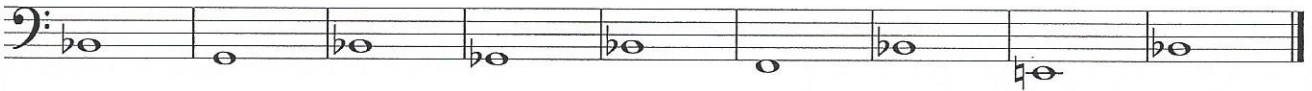
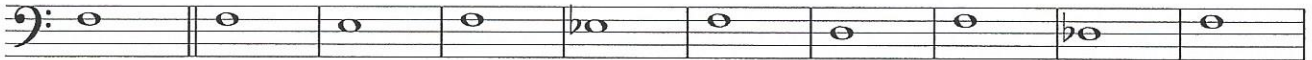
Chris Meredith is entering his eleventh year at Shadow Ridge Middle School in Flower Mound, Texas. His responsibilities include directing Honor Winds, Jazz Band, assisting Symphonic Band, and teaching the beginning french horn, trumpet, trombone, euphonium and tuba classes. Ensembles at Shadow Ridge have consistently earned sweepstakes at UIL Concert & Sightreading contests, have been selected by the Foundation for Music Education as a National Winner in the National Wind Band Honors project six consecutive years (2010-2015), and performed at The 66th Annual Midwest Clinic in Chicago, IL. Most recently Honor Winds has been a top 5 Finalist in the 2014 & 2016 Texas CC Honor Band Contests. Meredith is an alum of the University of North Texas College of Music and Southern Methodist University. As an active trombonist, Meredith performed twice at the 2003 International Trombone Festival in Helsinki, Finland as a Finalist in both the ITA Solo and Quartet Competitions, has performed as principal bass trombonist of multiple groups including San Angelo Symphony Orchestra, North East Orchestra and at the Pierre Montuex School. Meredith has also been a multiple recipient of the Lewisville Education Foundation's "Foundation Award", honored with the Texas PTA Lifetime Member Award, and was the 2012-2013 Teacher of the Year at Shadow Ridge Middle School.

Daily Routines for Trombone by Emory Remington

Transcribed by Jimmy Clark

Long Tone

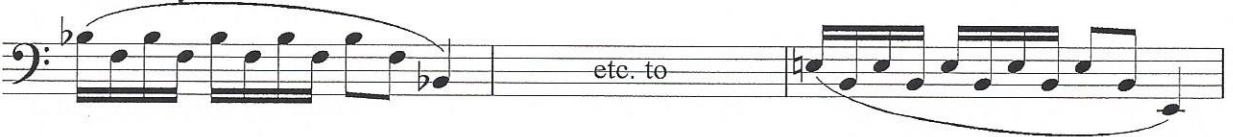
1. 



3 Note Slurs

2. 

Flexibility

3. 

5 Note Slurs

4. 



Remington Warmup

2

Flexibility

5.

etc. to

Trills

6.

etc. to

etc. to

6 Note Slurs

7.

etc. to

Flexibility

8.

Arpeggios

9.

etc. to

etc. to

Breath Control in Legato - to be played in ANY key

10.

Extending the Interval in Legato - to be played in ANY key

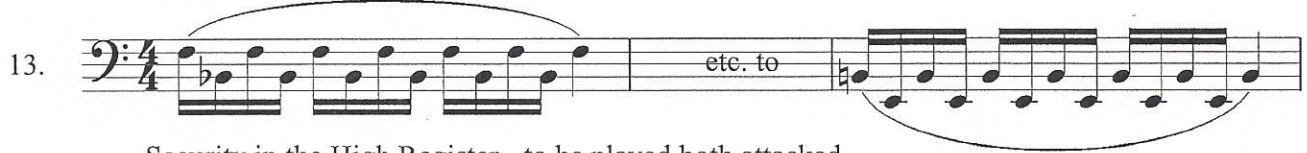
11.

Security in the High Register - to be played both attacked and slurred

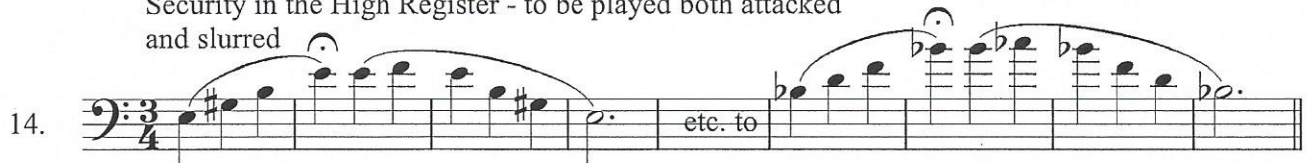
12.

etc. to

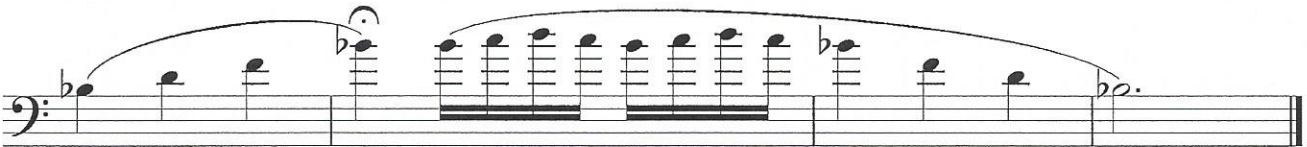
Flexibility - to be played slurred and attacked

13. 

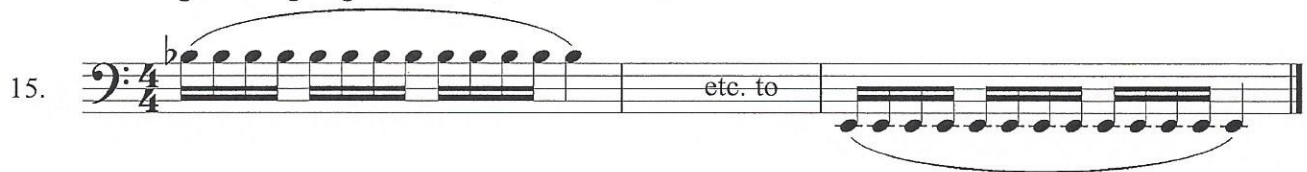
Security in the High Register - to be played both attacked and slurred

14. 

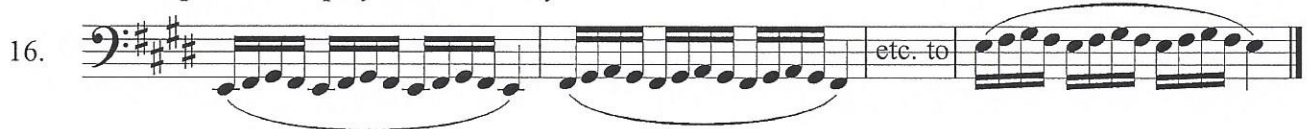




Legato Tonguing - both attacked and slurred

15. 

Legato - to be played in ANY key

16. 

Diatonic Scales - to be played in ALL keys

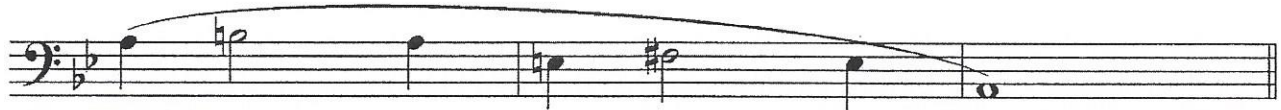
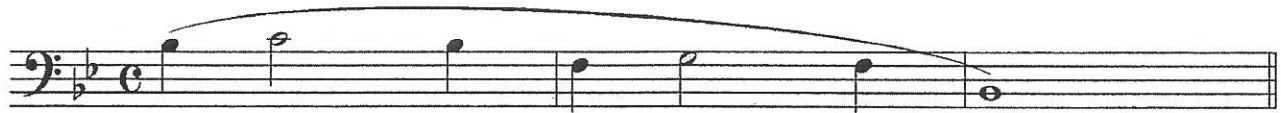
17. 





Trombone

Stamp Studies



Jacobs Flow Studies

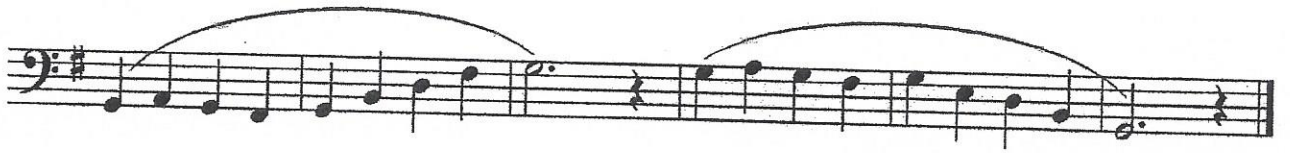
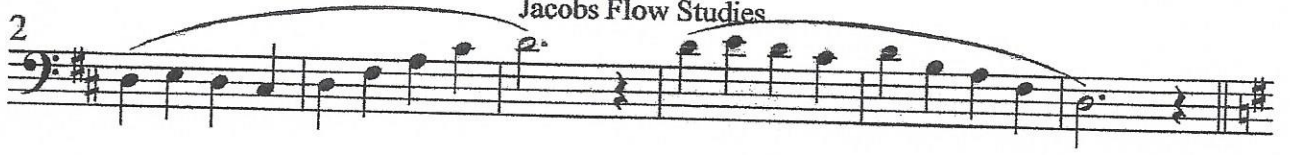
Trombone

Arnold Jacobs

The image displays ten staves of musical notation for Trombone, each containing a flow study exercise. The exercises are written in bass clef with a common time signature (C). Each staff begins with a slur over a series of eighth notes, followed by a quarter rest, and then another slur over a series of eighth notes. The exercises progress through various key signatures: the first two are in C major, the next three in B-flat major, the next two in A-flat major, and the final three in G major. Each exercise concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs. The notation includes slurs, dynamic markings such as *mf* and *f*, and articulation marks like accents and staccato marks.

Jacobs Flow Studies

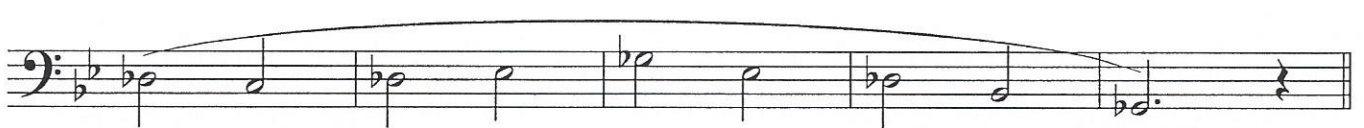
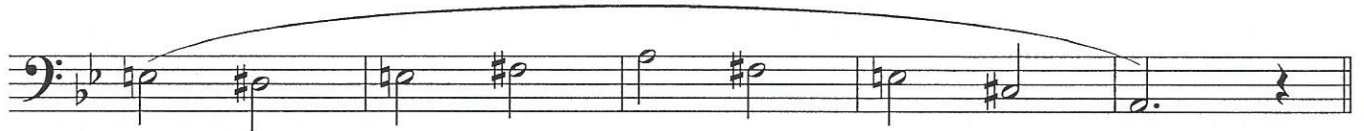
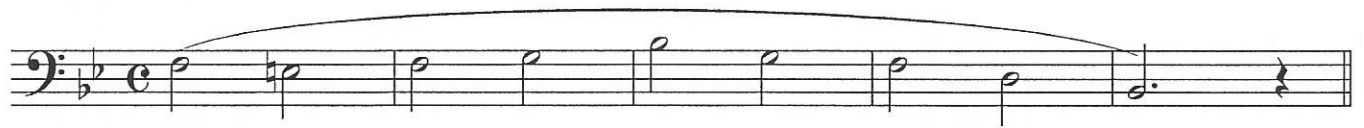
2



V.C. Flow Studies - Chromatic

Trombone

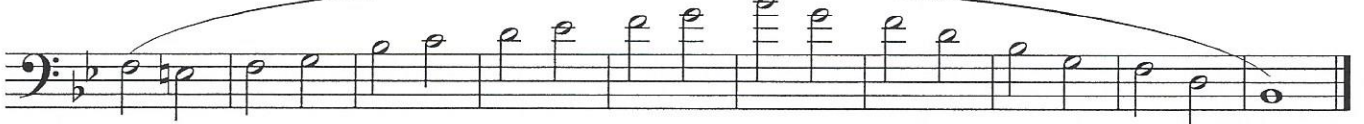
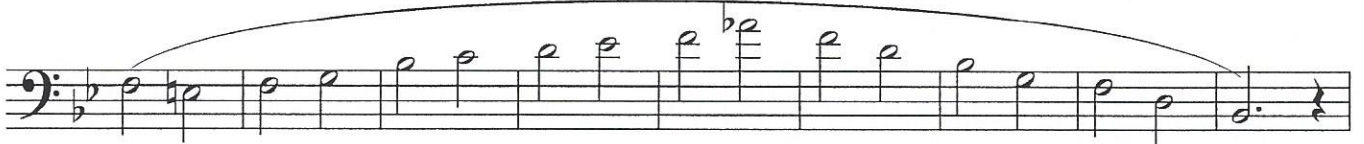
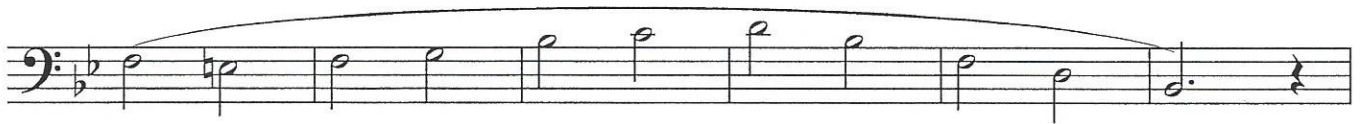
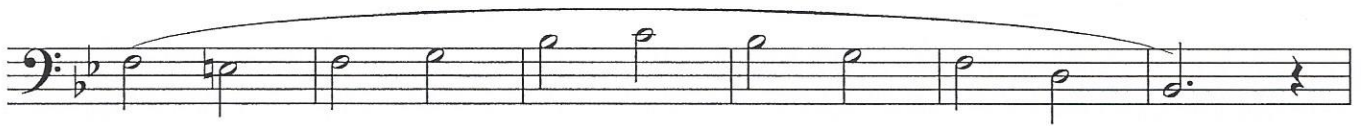
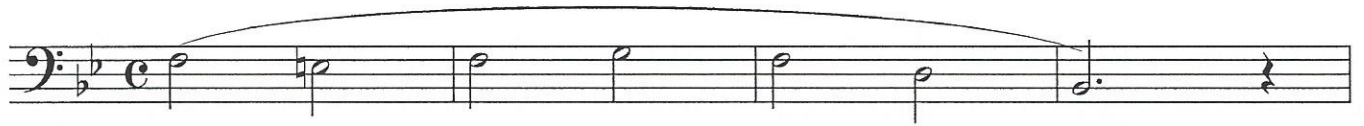
Vincent Chicowitz



V.C. Flow Studies - Range Extensions

Trombone

Vincent Chicowitz



LYRICAL FLOW WARM-UP

Joe Dixon

A Langsam $\text{♩} = 50$

Trombone

Measures 1-6

7

B

Measures 7-13

14

C

Measures 14-19

20

Measures 20-24

25

Measures 25-29

30

f-attachment

Measures 30-32

33

Measures 33-36

Basic Flexibilities

Joe Dixon

Trombone

A **B**

etc. all positions etc.

C **D**

etc. etc.

E **F**

etc. etc.

G **H**

etc. etc.

I **J** **K**

etc. etc. etc.

etc.

L

etc.

Key-of-the-Week Technique

C MAJOR

Tenor Trombone / Euphonium

A Major Scale



B Thirds



C Arban Arpeggio 1



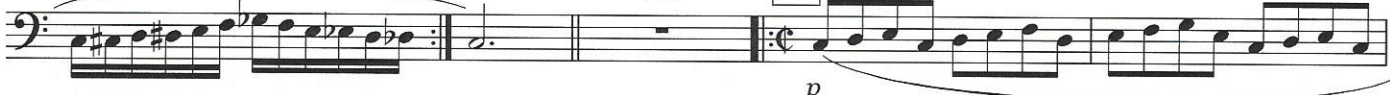
D Arban Arpeggio 2



E Clarke Study No. 1



F Clarke Study No. 2



G Arban Intervals



H Harmonic minor



I Melodic minor

