



**Texas Bandmasters Association
Convention/Clinic July 26-28, 2018**

**Beginning Oboe: Fundamentals for
Your Future Oboists**

**CLINICIANS:
Serena Finnigan, Jessica Maus**

**HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS**

Beginning Oboe: Fundamentals for Your Future Oboists

Clinicians: Jessica Maus and Serena Finnigan

The Texas Bandmasters Association Convention on Thursday July 26, 2018 at 3 p.m.

Teach with the End Goal in Mind!

Shape students to be soloists in your Band

- Grade 4 and 5 literature often requires oboe soloists, literature is limited if you do not have an oboe soloist.

Instrument Selection

Look for students with the following “personality traits”:

- Looks you in the eye and follows instructions well
- Enjoys homework
- Likes being the center of attention
- Wants to practice an instrument
- Possible piano background
- Patience to handle longer learning curve

Physical Factors:

- Detrimental physical factors (i.e. double joints, hand size, pronounced underbite, short upper lip, cannot match sung pitches).
- Non-detrimental (i.e. braces, facial structure).

Equipment

School Owned Oboes

- Have lesson teacher play/test instruments prior to each school year
- If available, find an oboe specialist for repair

When purchasing instruments for your school, we recommend:

- FOX Renard 333 - plastic, beginner model
- FOX 300- plastic, full conservatory
- FOX 450- option of plastic top joint, bottom joint grenadilla wood
- Loree AK- professional

Reeds

- Students should play on homemade reeds right from the start. If you have a private teacher that makes reeds, have students start using the teacher reeds right away.
- “Always have 3 good reeds in your reed case”
- Other reed sources:
 - Bocalmajoritystore.com
 - Wildflowerreeds.com
 - oboenik.com
- Reed Cases (Pro Tec Oboe reed case, holds 8 reeds, \$15 on amazon)
- Rotate Reeds to increase life span

Private Lesson Instruction

You want this person to be a resource for you!

If a private lesson teacher is *not* available for your oboists, we recommend that the band director build time in sectional schedule to meet with oboe students individually on a weekly basis.

Suggested Interview Questions for hiring a private oboe teacher:

- Tell us your methodology for starting a beginner oboe student
 - Embouchure
 - Air
 - Articulation
 - Hand Position
 - Technique
- Do you make reeds for students?
Cost per reed?
- Will you have enough room in your schedule for *all* the oboe students in the program?
Do you intend to teach in the area long term?
- What is an outline of your curriculum for students?
What method book do students work from?
What skills should a beginner have at the end of the first year of playing?
What skills would an oboist have at the end of middle school?
(Make sure their goals align with yours)
- Have your potential teacher play for you. Do you like their tone?
- Does the teacher communicate well through email and phone?
Communicate both ways prior to the interview to make sure they respond to both and seem professional.
- Watch them teach a lesson, either live or via video.

Class Environment

Clear Expectations

- Have a parent meeting and/or make a contract for parents with written expectations regarding reeds and private lessons.

Class Dynamic

- Tell students what they are doing correct or well. Positive reinforcement will help every student feel they are achieving- in a class of overachievers this is important!
- Have the kids play individually and give them feedback. Tell them what they need to work on to improve. Praise them for improvements.
- Goal is that each child feels like they are an Oboe Player- start talking early about making reeds, summer camps to learn reed making and playing with other band kids

The First Two Weeks

Before you Start Playing!

- Learn Parts of Instrument
- Instrument Assembly, including soaking reed in reed cup
- Basic Music Theory: musical alphabet, reading notes on a staff
- How to assemble music stand, How to work metronome
- Name on reed case and instrument case

First Sounds!

- Embouchure
 - Have mirrors that attach to stands so students can see embouchure
 - Syllable “oo”; teeth are apart
 - Should see some of top lip and some of bottom lip on the reed
 - Dry part of the lip touches the reed
 - Lips around reed like a draw string- equal pressure all the way around
 - Common embouchure pitfalls-bunching chin, squeezing top and bottom lip together and not using corners in, teeth too closed
- Breathing/Air
 - Imitate the feeling of back pressure using a balloon and a straw
 - Breath through the mouth, reed stays on bottom lip for the breath
 - Deep breath in, Fast air out
- First Notes
 - B A G F# E D
 - F (banana key)
 - C Scale
- Articulation
 - You can start teaching as soon as students can make a steady sound with correct embouchure
 - Syllable “Tu” interrupts the air stream
 - Tip of Tongue touches the tip of the reed lightly

Recommended Method Book and Resource for Beginner Class Instruction:

- Beginner Class Boot Camp by Sally Bohls and Jennifer Auerbach
 - Method book you can use to teach oboe and bassoons separately or together, sequence written for oboe and bassoons not full band instruction.
 - Find online at bocalmajoritystore.com

Beginner Year- 2nd Semester

Vibrato

- Once students can play with a good tone, with good air support you can start teaching vibrato
- Teach students to make pulses of air, start by practicing without the oboe
- Common pitfalls of vibrato are not using enough air or letting embouchure move
- Have students practice metered vibrato: quarters, eighths, then triplets
- Build a habit of adding vibrato to all long notes, start incorporating it into your music
- Listen to examples of oboists using vibrato on CD or your private teacher

Building Range

- Use scales to learn new notes and extend the range
- Do long tones on the chromatic scale at the beginning of class and each week add a new note
- Often Band Method Books have incorrect or poor choices for fingerings; get a finger chart from your private teacher or reliable source

Alternate Fingerings/ Oboe Specific Technique

Hierarchy of The Three F's - **Teach in this order!**

- #1 - Left F (teach early - even before Regular F)
 - Most commonly used in band due to method books and key signatures/scales (Bb, Eb)
 - Use when preceded or followed by a C#/Db, D, or Eb



- #2 - Regular F (Banana key-most commonly nicknamed)
- Use in Chromatic, F and C scales



- #3 - Forked F (worst tone and tuning on most oboes)
 - Use in Ab, Db key signatures/scales
 - Use in patterns that obligate both pinkies before or after the F



Half Hole Technique

- Roll 1st finger to uncover hole of B key
- Only roll enough to uncover, common for students to roll too much
- Practice playing Low D to Half Hole D, moving only first finger in rolling motion
- Practice playing Low Eb to Half Hole Eb, moving only first finger in rolling motion

Chromatic Scale Technique

- Low C to C# Chromatic- rocking motion. Use second knuckle for the C and tip of pinkie for C#
- Low B to Bb- rocking motion. When playing low Bb you can also hold down the B key; Press pinkie between Bb and B key pressing both at once, rock pickie to B key and let off the Bb key to play B

High Note Fingerings

All subject to tuning for your specific instrument and private lesson teacher preference!

High C#/Db, often not played correctly! (LH - Index finger UP!)



High D has several options, as a beginner it is best to stick with one. As the player advances switching to a fingering that is more stable with accurate tuning is best.



1. General Pedagogy Book Fingering - tendency is quite sharp
2. Full High D
3. Full High D Opt. 1
4. Full High D Opt. 2
5. Full High D NO Half-Hole

High D#/Eb and E



1. High D#/Eb - LH Pinky is most commonly on the wrong key!!! Attributes to pitch issues.
2. High E LH
 - a. Use in the F Major scale
 - b. Use when approaching or descending to a C#/Db
3. High E RH
 - a. Use in Chromatic Scale
 - b. Use when approaching or descending to a D#/Eb
4. High E Combo - Not often utilized! Use as a last resort!
5. High E Short - Used in fast passages and pinky changes

Solo Recommendations

Solo chosen should be based on student ability, work ethic, drive/motivation, and amount of time to learn the solo.

Beginners 6th Grade:

Texas PML Grade 3 are great for this age and ability! <http://www.dev.uiltexas.org>

Title	Composer	Publisher [Collection]	Specification
Standard of Excellence Festival Solo Book 1	Pearson/Elledge	Neil A Kjos Music Co	CD Accompaniment
Standard of Excellence Festival Solo Book 2	Pearson/Elledge	Neil A Kjos Music Co	CD Accompaniment
1st Recital Series for Oboe	Various	Curnow Music Distribution	No Dotted Rhythmic Patterns
Oboe Solos Level 1	Various	Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp.	
Oboe Solos Level 2	Various	Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp.	High C and Dotted 8th/16th Rhythms
Classic Festival Solos 1	Various	Belwin Mills Publishing Corp.	
Classic Festival Solos 2	Various	Belwin Mills Publishing Corp.	
Time for Solos-First Division Band Course	Edelfsen/Best	Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp.	No higher level rhythmic patterns
First Repertoire Pieces For Oboe	Various	Boosey & Hawkes Inc.	

Middle School 7th/8th Grade:

Texas PML Grade 2 is a great starting point. These are some of our personal favorites!

Title	Composer	Arranger	Publisher [Collection]	Grade	Specification
Elegaic Dance	Head		Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.	2	
Presto	Head		Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.	2	
Largo Allegretto	Marcello	Rothwell	J&W Chester, Ltd.	2	
Adagio	Bach	Rothwell	J&W Chester, Ltd.		
Sinfonia	Bach	Voxman	Rubank, Inc. [Concert and Contest Collection]		
Two Menuettos	Bach	Voxman	Rubank, Inc. [Concert and Contest Collection]		
Gavotta	Goedicke	Voxman	Rubank, Inc. [Concert and Contest Collection]	2	
Gavotte	Gossec	Johnson	Rubank, Inc.	2	
Menuetto and Presto	Haydn	Voxman	Rubank, Inc. [Concert and Contest Collection]	2	(play both)
Gavotte	Head		Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.	2	
Andante and Allegro	Loeillet	Voxman	Rubank, Inc. [Concert and Contest Collection]	2	(play both)
Sonata in C Major	Loeillet	Rothwell	J&W Chester, Ltd.	2	(play one mvt)
Allegretto	Mozart	Scarmolin	Ludwig Music Publishing Company	2	
Sonatina	Mozart	Voxman	Rubank, Inc. [Concert and Contest Collection]	2	(play one mvt)
Siciliana	Pergolesi	Johnson	Rubank, Inc.	2	
Aria	Vivaldi	Jaeger	Hal Leonard Music, Inc. [Master Solos Intermediate Level]	2	

High School:

Texas PML Grade 1 and 2

Choosing a solo should be a conversation between student and lesson teacher

Clinician Contact Information

We are happy to answer any questions!

Jessica Maus, Central High School, Keller ISD Jessica.Maus@kellerisd.net

Serena Finnigan, Wiley Middle School, Leander ISD Serena.Finnigan@leanderisd.org