



**Texas Bandmasters Association
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Single Reed Success

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SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS**

Single Reed Success

Presented by Greg Countryman

Texas Bandmasters Association Convention

July 27, 2019

I. SELECTING STUDENTS FOR CLARINET & SAXOPHONE

A. Clarinet

- The student can form a flat chin like sucking a thick milkshake through a straw.
- The student is not severely double jointed.
- Testing finger coordination – touch the fingertips in both hands to the thumbs in a sequence and then reverse.
- The student needs to be “bright”, because in my opinion, clarinet is the most complicated of the basic woodwind instruments.

B. Saxophone

- The student can form an “ooo” shape with face.
- Testing finger coordination – touch the fingertips in both hands to the thumbs in a sequence and then reverse.
- In my opinion, saxophone is the easiest woodwind instrument to learn to play.

C. Testing tone production on clarinet/saxophone

- Clarinet – First produce a sound on the mouthpiece/barrel and then on the entire clarinet with you holding and fingering.
- Saxophone – First produce a sound on the mouthpiece/neck and then maybe on the entire saxophone with you holding the instrument.
- These suggestions may be useful if you need to limit the number of students on saxophone.
 - Use MH or strength 3-4 reed.
 - Raise the reed above the mouthpiece.
 - Open the octave key slightly while the student is trying to produce a sound.

II. EQUIPMENT

A. Clarinet

- Ridenour Lyrique 576 or Buffet E-11
- Ridenour RE 5 clarinet mouthpiece with a medium hard LaVoz reed. I would not suggest using a 5RV lyre mouthpiece. I would also not recommend using Vandoren or D’Addario reeds for the first 2-3 months.
- Students will eventually need harder reeds to produce a focused tone quality and to gain control in upper register.
- Ligature – Bonade inverted or Rovner – each type has advantages, but in my opinion, this choice is not crucial.
- Neckstrap if needed

B. Saxophone

- Yamaha YAS 26
- Vandoren AL3 saxophone mouthpiece with a medium LaVoz reed. Selmer C* is also fine. I would not recommend using Vandoren reeds for the first 2-3 months.
- I do not believe harder reeds are always necessary for alto sax. Most of our altos play on Vandoren 2 ½’s with only a few using 3’s as needed. The need to move to harder reeds is not the same as clarinet.
- Ligature – Bonade inverted or Rovner

Rationale for LaVoz reeds with beginners: Every reed in a box of LaVoz usually plays and you are not trying to determine if the squeak or tone production issue is something the student is doing incorrectly or if it is just a “bad” reed.

III. TEACH HAND POSITION AND FINGER MOTION BEFORE TONE PRODUCTION

Clarinet – You must first teach how to put the upper joint, lower joint and bell together. Be very specific about how to assemble the instrument to avoid bending keys. Use mirrors on the stands so students can see their hand position. Number fingers: Left hand – T, 1, 2, 3, P; Right hand – 4, 5, 6, P

Right Hand Position – Put the bell on the left knee and hold the clarinet at the top of upper joint with the left hand.

- Place the fingers first and then the thumb. Place the pinky on the C/low F key.
- The fingers are flat and centered with the tab of the fingers in middle of the tone hole.
- There should be a slight slope to the fingers with the side of finger 4 near the side Eb key.
- The thumb rest should be between the thumbnail and the first joint. The thumbnail should be at a 45-degree angle toward the chin so that the fingers can lay flat and do not roll on their side.
- Move the fingers from the large knuckles and stress keeping them low. The fingers should move straight up and down from the tone holes.

Right Hand Finger Exercises – Hold as described above.

- Start with all fingers down and move 4 alone, 5 alone, 6 alone, pinky alone (Fingers alone)
- Finger Exercise #1 - Start with all fingers down
 1. Pinky(P) ↑, P ↓
 2. P ↑, 6↑, 6↓, P↓
 3. P ↑, 6↑, 5↑, 5↓, 6↓, P↓
 4. P↑, 6↑, 5↑, 4↑, 4↓, 5↓, 6↓, P↓
- Finger Exercise #2 - Start with all fingers up
 1. 4↓, 4↑
 2. 4↓, 5↓, 5↑, 4↑
 3. 4↓, 5↓, 6↓, 6↑, 5↑, 4↑
 4. 4↓, 5↓, 6↓, P↓, P↑, 6↑, 5↑, 4↑
- Multiple Finger Exercises - #3 & 4

Left Hand Position – Place the clarinet on the right knee and hold the clarinet with the thumb rest in the “V” of the right hand. Not in correct hand position.

- Place the fingers first and then add the thumb.
- The fingers are flat and centered with the tab of the fingers in middle of the tone hole.
- The first finger is the key to the left hand position.
 - Form the loser sign with the left hand.
 - Cover the first hole with the first finger.
 - Raise the wrist up until the 1st joint touches the A key.
 - Roll the wrist back toward your body until the 2nd joint touches the G# key. The student should now see the back of the left hand.
- Then fold the other fingers out and let them cover the tone holes. All the fingers should slant downward at a 45-degree angle. Place the pinky on the B/low E key.
- Thumb goes across the tone hole at a 45-degree angle
 - Teach 3 positions of the thumb
 - Position 1 - hole only
 - Position 2 - hole and register key
 - Position 3 - register key only (break the first joint of the thumb to roll up to the register key)

Left Hand Finger Exercises – Hold the clarinet as described above.

- Finger Alone and Finger Exercises #5, 6, 7 & 8, which are similar to RH exercises #1-4.

Finger Exercises Using Both Hands - Put both hands on the clarinet in correct hand position and rest the bell of the clarinet on the left knee.

- Finger Exercise #9 - Start with all the fingers down, except left pinky
 1. P↑, P↓
 2. P↑, 6↑, 6↓, P↓
 3. P↑, 6↑, 5↑, 5↓, 6↓, P↓
 4. P↑, 6↑, 5↑, 4↑, 4↓, 5↓, 6↓, P↓
 5. P↑, 6↑, 5↑, 4↑, 3↑, 3↓, 4↓, 5↓, 5↓, P↓
 6. P↑, 6↑, 5↑, 4↑, 3↑, 2↑, 2↓, 3↓, 4↓, 5↓, 6↓, P↓ (leave 1↓ to stabilize clarinet)
- Finger Exercise #10 - Start with all fingers up, except T and 1 down (reverse order of #9)
- Multiple Finger Exercises - #11 & 12

Saxophone – You must first teach how to put on neck strap, get the instrument out of the case (without dropping it) and finally, how to hook the neck strap to the saxophone.

Right Hand Position - Hold at the top of the instrument with the left hand and let the sax hang to the side of the right leg.

- Place the fingers first and then add the thumb. Put the pinky on the C key
- The fingers should be flat and centered with the tab of fingers in middle of pearls. Students with large hands can touch the pearls with the fingertips instead of the fingers lying flat on the pearls.
- Put the right thumb under the thumb rest and push the bell of the saxophone toward the knee where it rests on the side of the thigh. This will help the students anchor the mouthpiece later. Students with small hands may need to place the right thumb on the right side of the thumb rest.
- Move the fingers from the large knuckles and stress keeping the fingers low. The fingers can stay touching the pearls and should move straight up and down above the keys.

Right Hand Finger Exercises – Hold the saxophone as described above.

- Fingers Alone and Finger Exercise #1 – 4 are the same as Clarinet.

Left Hand Position - Use correct right hand position to hold the saxophone.

- Place the fingers first and then add the thumb.
- Center the fingers on the pearls and then raise the wrist until the top of the first finger is the same height as the top of the 2nd palm key.
- Place the pinky on the G# key.
- The thumb goes across the pearl at a 45-degree angle with the hard part of the thumb (at the 1st joint) on the pearl. The thumb then rocks to the tip of the finger to push the octave key. Do not let the students lift the thumb to hit the octave key.

Left Hand Finger Exercises – Hold the sax in playing position with both hands in correct playing position.

- Fingers Alone. Can also work on flipping fingers 1 & 2 (B to C) at this time.
- Finger Exercise #5 - Start with all fingers down in the left hand and you can either have the right hand down to help stabilize the saxophone or let the fingers hover over the pearls. These exercises are more difficult due to the flipping.
 1. Pinky (P) ↑, P↓
 2. P↑, 3 ↑, 3↑, P↓
 3. P ↑, 3↑, 2↑, 2↓, 3↓, P↓
 4. P↑, 3↑, 2↑, flip to 2, flip to 1, 2↓, 3↓ P↓
- Finger Exercise #6 - Start with all fingers up, except finger 2 is down.
 1. Flip to 1, Flip to 2
 2. Flip to 1, 2↓, 2↑, Flip to 2
 3. Flip to 1, 2↓, 3↓, 3↑, 2↑, Flip to 2
 4. Flip to 1, 2↓, 3↓, P↓, P↑, 3↑, 2↑, Flip to 2
- Multiple Fingers - #7 & 8

Finger Exercises Using Both Hands - Put both hands on the saxophone in correct hand position.

- Finger Exercise #9, 10, 11 & 12 are similar to clarinet, except for the flip on 1 & 2
 1. P↑, P↓
 2. P↑, 6↑, 6↓, P↓
 3. P↑, 6↑, 5↑, 5↓, 6↓, P↓
 4. P↑, 6↑, 5↑, 4↑, 4↓, 5↓, 6↓, P↓
 5. P↑, 6↑, 5↑, 4↑, 3↑, 3↓, 4↓, 5↓, 5↓, P↓
 6. P↑, 6↑, 5↑, 4↑, 3↑, 2↑, 2↓, 3↓, 4↓, 5↓, 6↓, P↓
 7. P↑, 6↑, 5↑, 4↑, 3↑, 2↑, Flip to 2, Flip to 1, 2↓, 3↓, 4↓, 5↓, 6↓, P↓

IV. EMBOUCHURE AND TONE PRODUCTION

- Discuss breathing - Calm in and calm out - Face stays the same as you breathe and exhale.
- Have the students practice breathing and exhaling while watching their face in a mirror.
- Spend a couple of days working on correct shape of face before adding the mouthpiece. Students should still be working on the finger exercises during this time.

Embouchure

- The best way to get the correct embouchure on clarinet is to have the students shape the face as if they are trying to drink a thick milkshake through a straw. The chin should be very flat and sculpted with the corners toward the center and anchored to the teeth. Once they get the shape of the face correct, have them keep the same face and blow out. On saxophone, have the student say "ooo". The corners are still to the center, but do not let the students get the face too tense and sculpted on saxophone.
- Teach the students to open and close the jaw without changing the embouchure. Make sure the lip moves with the teeth. Try to get the jaw open the correct amount before inserting the mouthpiece. It is best if students do not have to close the jaw to get the top teeth touching the top of mouthpiece. This will prevent biting.

Putting the reed on the mouthpiece

- Be very detailed on how to put the ligature and reed on the mouthpiece. Practice and review this for several days.
 1. Reed & Mouthpiece - Flat to Flat, Thick to Thick, Skinny to Skinny
 2. Ligature – There is a big and little end to the ligature and the mouthpiece, so make sure you match big to big/little to little.
 3. Put the ligature on the mouthpiece first and then lift the ligature so the reed can slide under the ligature. If the reed is placed on the mouthpiece first, students may chip the reed while putting on the ligature.
 4. The screws of the ligature are always on the right side of the mouthpiece.
 5. Hold the Mp/Barrel/Neck in left hand and use the right hand to put the ligature on the Mp.
 6. Raise the ligature with the thumb and 2nd finger of the left hand. Hold the reed with the thumb and 1st finger of the RH near the tip of the reed (thin end). With the bark of the reed facing the student, slide the reed (fat side first) under the ligature and then let the ligature slide back down.
 7. Use the 1st finger of LH and thumb of RH to line up the reed (left to right) on the Mp. Use the left thumb to raise and lower the reed as needed. Never touch the tip of the reed.
 8. When the reed is lined up correctly, pull the ligature down snugly with the thumb and 2nd finger of the left hand. If using a metal ligature, tighten the screws snugly, but not too tight. I used the Gigliotti clarinet ligature for many years, because once you set the screws you can just pull it up and down and you don't need to tighten or loosen the screws. Unfortunately, this ligature is not available any longer.

Tone Production

- When you think they are ready to produce a sound on the mouthpiece, make sure you (not the student) place the mouthpiece in the mouth for the first few days. I suggest taking the mouthpieces up daily and not allowing the students to take them home until they can place the mouthpiece consistently and successfully in class.
- Whatever sound comes out during the first attempts is fine, even if they do not get any sound. You need to make them feel comfortable with whatever happens because tension and disappointment will only make them less successful.
- At this point, I would not suggest teaching use of the tongue to start notes. We do not add the tongue for several weeks. You can discuss vowel sound from the initial sounds.
- On clarinet, hold the barrel with the thumb and two fingers to establish the correct angle. On saxophone, have the student hold the neck with the thumb and two fingers on the octave key (almost parallel to the floor).
- How much mouthpiece inside the mouth? Take in enough mouthpiece so the reed vibrates freely. When the sound starts to spread or squeaks occur, you know they have too much mouthpiece in their mouth. If the reed will not vibrate, they may not have enough Mp in the mouth.
- Make sure the head is level (eyes looking across the room and not down). Form the face (embouchure) first and then slide the mouthpiece in on the bottom lip until the top of the mouthpiece hits the top teeth. The bottom lip should not be over the teeth prior to inserting the mouthpiece (should be able to talk while forming the embouchure). The back part of the lip should fold over the bottom teeth (like a sheet over a mattress) as the reed slides in on the bottom lip. You can have the student put their first finger on their lip (like the reed) and push into the bottom teeth slightly to see how the lip folds over. I actually do this with my finger when I cannot get a student to understand this.
- You need to make sure the students understand that the top of the mouthpiece must be anchored to the top teeth and that there will be some pressure into the top teeth.
- The cheeks should not puff on clarinet and if the corners are anchored to the teeth air cannot get into the cheeks. The cheeks puffing slightly on saxophone is fine and will actually help them produce a darker, velvety saxophone sound.
- Try to get clarinets to produce an F# on the mouthpiece and barrel. It is okay if it is a sharp F# or very flat G. On saxophone, I don't worry about a pitch on the mouthpiece/neck at first because I don't want the mouthpiece on the cork too far. Just listen for an open tone quality and very free vibrations.
- Make sure that you teach the vowel sound at the initial stages of tone production.
Clarinet - "eee", Saxophone - "oo".

Main Issues with Tone Production

- Too much lip over the bottom teeth. This leaves too much lip touching the reed inside the mouth and the reed cannot vibrate freely.
- Not anchoring to the top teeth. This is the biggest problem I see.
- Using reeds that are too hard. If the sound is airy or harsh, the reed may be too hard. Using reeds that are too hard at the initial stages will make the students bite.
- Trying to use a clarinet embouchure on the saxophone or vice versa. They are not the same!

Once the students are comfortable producing a sound on the mouthpiece, start discussing instant sound, steady sound and natural ending so they become aware of the ultimate goal.

- Instant Sound - No pause, air or extraneous noises
- Steady, Constant Sound - demonstrate correct and incorrect
- Natural Ending - Explain by demonstrating how sound ends when singing or talking. Just stop blowing and make sure the tongue does not move or touch the reed to stop the sound.

Tone Production on the Entire Instrument

- Each day start with the mouthpiece/barrel/neck and then move to the entire instrument.
- YOU place the instrument the first few times and then let them try it with you watching.

Clarinet

- Hold the instrument with the right hand in correct hand position with the fingers down. Hold the barrel with the thumb and two fingers of the left hand to insert the mouthpiece.
- The first note should be a G with the right hand down.
- As they become comfortable and consistent in producing the G in this manner, have them start the note and then take the left hand off the barrel. Next, start the note, take the left hand off of the barrel, and then lift the fingers in the right hand. This teaches them to learn how to pull up into the top teeth with the right thumb.
- A good way to see whether they are anchoring to the top teeth is to slightly pull up on the bottom rod (just above the bell) to add pressure to the top teeth and then let go after a couple of seconds. If the clarinet drops out of their mouth or the sound changes, they are not anchoring enough.
- Once they are comfortable with stabilizing the clarinet into the top teeth by pulling up with the right thumb without any other fingers down, have them start playing T1, T12, & T123
- Once they are successful with these notes, then add fingers 4, 5 & 6.
- All of this is done by telling them what fingers to put down and not discussing note names or reading music yet. In my opinion, reading music at this point is too much information for the students to remember. Let them focus on hand position, embouchure and tone production.

Saxophone

- You will need to adjust the neck strap, neck and mouthpiece so their head is level and not tilted. You will need to check this daily until they understand how to do it themselves.
- Put all the fingers down in both hands to insert the mouthpiece into the mouth.
- If the neckstrap is the correct length, the mouthpiece will enter the mouth as the student pushes the bell forward with the right thumb until the bell rests on the side of the thigh just behind the knee. The student should not have to raise or lower their head to reach the mouthpiece. This also helps anchor the top of the mouthpiece into the top teeth.
- Start by playing B, A or G. If you start on B or A, quickly have them try starting on a G. If G skips to the upper octave at the beginning of the note, you know their face is too tight or they are anchoring too much.
- Have the students play down to the low D soon, because this will let you know if their face is too tense, if they are using too much vertical pressure with their jaw, or if they are anchoring too much.
- Do not bother with letter names or reading music at this time. Use numbers for the fingers you want them to put down.

V. **ARTICULATION** - I feel it is best to wait until students can consistently produce a characteristic sound on several notes before you introduce articulation.

- When introducing articulation, have the students say the articulation syllable (de, dah, doe) without letting the jaw move. Tell them to see how and where the tongue touches.
- Then have the students blow air through their embouchure (without any part of the instrument) and let the tongue move as if saying the articulation syllable.
 1. Tongue touches the same place with the same strength each time. Tongue should touch in the roof of the mouth at the teeth and gum line. Touch with one taste bud of the tongue.
 2. I feel the tongue motion should be up and down (some teach back and forth successfully). With an up/down motion, the length of a student's tongue will partly determine whether they touch with the tip of the tongue or a little back from the tip or the tongue; however, it should always be the tip of the reed they touch.
 3. Listen to make sure the tongue is not staying up too long and stopping the airstream. Tongue should spend 99% of the time down.
 4. Listen to make sure there are not extraneous sounds caused by the tongue touching too hard or too much of the tongue being used.
 5. Stress that the tongue only interrupts the airstream and does not stop it. Much like flicking a finger through a stream of water coming out of a faucet.

- Next, have them put the mouthpiece in the mouth and say the articulation syllable. I have them stick their tongue out and I touch their tongue with the Mp/reed so they get an idea of how it should feel. Stress the importance of touching the center of the reed. If they touch to the left or right of center, it may cause a squeak.
 1. Clarinet – The top of the tip of the tongue should touch the side of the tip of the reed.
 2. Saxophone – The top of the tongue should touch the side of the tip of the reed. Most saxophone players do not touch with the top of the tip of the tongue, but a little farther back from the tip since the mouthpiece is further inside the mouth.
 3. Due to the angle of the mouthpiece, saxophone players must be careful they do not get a “slap” tongue or touch the reed with too much tongue.
 4. It is very important that the tongue touches the side of the tip of the reed. If they touch directly into the top of the reed, it will likely squeak. If students touch the reed below the tip it may cause extraneous noises, a drop in the pitch or a lack of clarity.
- Then have the students blow air through the mouthpiece without making a sound and articulate. Don’t discuss starting the air with the tongue at this time. Have the students blow steady air for 2-4 beats and then start articulating quarter or half notes. Blowing air for a couple of beats first helps to insure that the students are using one airstream when articulating. Listen for how the tongue is touching and you can usually hear if the student is using too much tongue or touching the reed too hard.

One long airstream

Air first then articulate				
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- The last step is to have the students make a sound on the mouthpiece/barrel/neck and articulate. I would still have them start the sound for 2-4 beats and then start tonguing. Once they can do this fairly well, they should be ready to articulate on the entire instrument, as well as faster note values. I now go back and have the students learn to tongue the finger exercises we have been playing. You can actually hear better what the students are doing on just the mouthpiece, so I would suggest checking articulation on the mouthpiece a couple of times each week for a few weeks.

VI. OTHER IMPORTANT CLARINET FUNDAMENTALS

1. Register Key - Teach how to use the register key by playing a lower note and then YOU (not the student) add the register key. I suggest that you start by using low C, which skips to high G when the register key is added. Then add fingers in the right hand one at a time. If the mouthpiece is not anchored to the top teeth or the vowel sound is not correct (ee), the upper note will be spread or flat. See Warm-Up #3.
2. Rolling to the A key – The 1st finger in the left hand is the most important finger in learning to play the clarinet. This finger should rock back and forth (like a windshield wiper) while moving from the large knuckle. Students MUST roll up and hit the A key with the side of the first finger on the 1st joint. Have them slur from 1st finger F# to A and there should not be a G between the two notes. You can also finger T-1-2-3-P in the left hand and then roll the 1st finger off of the hole and up to the A key. This will produce a sound much like an “old timey” ambulance siren. This is not a real note, but it teaches the students to roll the 1st finger while keeping the left hand fingers in the correct hand position. Being able to do this correctly is vital to being able to play across the break smoothly.
3. Teach right hand down on G, G# and A. It will make going across the break much easier.
4. Pinkies - Make sure you teach both fingerings (right and left) for playing C, C# and B (F, F#, E) with the pinkies.
5. Chromatic Fingerings
 - F# - first finger and thumb + bottom 2 side keys
 - B natural (high F#) - middle finger and 4 + ring key

- Eb - I usually only teach T12 + bottom side key. Can also teach T12 and ring key, but I don't feel it is absolutely necessary.
6. By the end of the 1st year, clarinets should be able to play from low E up to high E.

VII. OTHER IMPORTANT SAXOPHONE FUNDAMENTALS

1. Palm Keys - Try to keep the correct left hand shape as much as possible when hitting the palm keys.
 - 1st palm key is hit by collapsing the palm slightly
 - 2nd palm key is hit with the 2nd finger
 - 3rd palm key is hit with the 3rd finger
2. Chromatic Fingerings and Bis
 - F# - middle finger and 4 + F# key with finger 6 in the RH
 - I teach Bb as 12 + bottom side at first, but I feel it is important that the students also learn the Bis fingering (hitting the B key and the key beneath it both with the first finger at the same time) before the end of the 1st semester so the students become comfortable using this fingering.
3. Vibrato
 - I do not usually teach this until the second semester and often near the end of the year.
 - Start by having the students lightly chew on their finger.
 - Then have them try it on the mouthpiece/neck. On saxophone, the vibrato is created by letting the sound go below pitch and then back up. Be careful that it does not get too wide or too low in pitch.
 - Teach pulsing quarter notes at 70-80 first, then attempt 8th notes at about 60. Eventually add triplets and 16ths, but not until the slower pulses are comfortable and consistent. Vibrato must first be taught as subdivisions of the beat and then later they will learn to make the pulses free and not a subdivision of the beat.
4. By the end of the year, saxophones should be able to play from low Bb up to high F.

VIII. SELECTING STUDENTS FOR TENOR/BARITONE SAXOPHONE AND BASS CLARINET

- Do not put your weaker students on these instruments.
- Students on these instruments need to be strong rhythmically since they may be the only person playing their part.
- Look for a talented player who maybe does not have a great tone quality on soprano clarinet or alto saxophone, or maybe a student who has difficulty with the embouchure for their current instrument. They often sound terrific on the larger instruments.
- Make sure you check that the student's hands are big enough to be successful on the larger instrument.

IX. IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES IN Bb SOPRANO AND BASS CLARINET

- Embouchure on bass clarinet is much more relaxed than soprano clarinet. It is actually more like a saxophone embouchure.
- For the larger instruments, the student must take more mouthpiece into their mouth.
- In the upper register on bass clarinet, the student must think of opening the jaw, which is very different from soprano clarinet. The best way to learn to play in the upper register on bass clarinet is through register key slurs. Be patient, because this may take some time for the student to get the upper register to respond without slurring from the lower register.
- If your bass clarinet has extra keys, make sure the student understands these keys. Ex. - Low C Bass Clarinet has many extra keys and almost all bass clarinets have a low Eb key.
- Airspeed on bass clarinet is generally slower and again, more like a saxophone.

X. IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES IN ALTO, TENOR AND BARITONE SAXOPHONE

- The difference in these three instruments is not great and most students have little difficulty adjusting to the larger saxophones.
- The embouchure is more relaxed for Tenor/Baritone Sax than the alto sax embouchure. On tenor and baritone sax, they have to make sure they take more mouthpiece into the mouth.

- Make sure the tenor player understands their instrument is pitched in a different key from the alto and baritone saxophones.
- Tenor and baritone saxophones can hang at the hip and the bell does not need to be pushed forward toward the knee.
- The larger saxes typically do use a harder reed (3 – 3 ½) than alto sax.
- I would strongly suggest that the students on the larger saxes use a padded neck strap and maybe even a harness for baritone sax.
- The larger saxes must learn to blend inside the ensemble sound. Tenor sax inside the trombone/euphonium sound and the baritone sax inside the tuba sound.

XI. DEVELOPING TECHNIQUE

- It all starts with scales and thirds. I actually teach thirds during the first semester of beginning band and before we start on learning all the scales.
- As they become comfortable with the notes, then speed up the tempo and go into cut time or “double cut time”.
- In the performing bands, scales, thirds, Clark studies, etc. must remain part of the students’ routine if they are going to eventually develop adequate technique.
- As ranges are expanded through these exercises, always stress matching tone quality note to note and in various registers. This is something young players (even beginners) can learn to do, but you must stress it and make it important.

XII. DEVELOPING RANGE

- I do not personally feel this is an issue for saxophone and it is easy to learn the full range of the saxophone during the beginning year. However, they must learn to control the sound in the upper and lower register and match tone quality regardless of the register.
- Soprano clarinets must learn to play in the upper register by trial and error. It probably will not sound good at first, but you must make them play in the upper register or they will never learn how to produce controlled sounds in this register.
- It is not likely to have the entire clarinet section playing high E to G in middle school, but if the students start working on the upper register during their 2nd and 3rd year of playing, they will be more prepared to handle the extreme registers in the future.

If you ever have any questions or I can help you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Greg Countryman

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Clarinet Finger Exercises

[Composer]

2

Clarinet Finger Exercises

1 Descending Notes That Don't Touch

11

22 Descending Notes That Touch

37

51 Descending Two Count Notes That Touch

60

68 Ascending Notes That Don't Touch

78

97

108 Ascending Two Count Notes That Touch

113

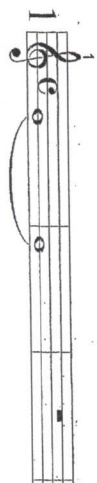
119 Right Pinky

129 Both Pinkies

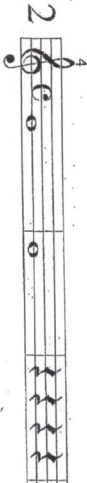
135

CLARINET WARM-UP NO.1

On Mouthpiece and Barrel - Make sure that there is instant sound and keep the airstream fast, constant and steady.



On Mouthpiece and Barrel - Make sure the air doesn't stop as you touch the tip of the reed with the top of the tip of the tongue.



On Mouthpiece and Barrel - Make sure the air is constant/steady and that the tongue touches the same place with the same strength each time.



On Mouthpiece and Barrel - Use a fast, constant airstream and make sure it feels the same each time your tongue touches the reed.

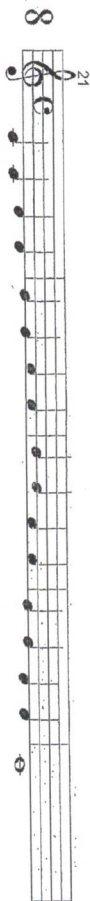
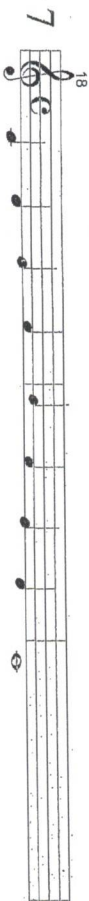
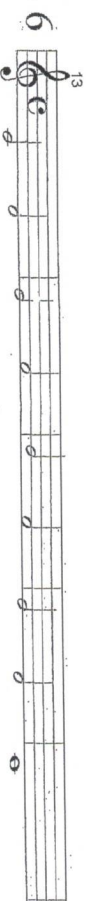


5 Lines 1-4 played on the instrument

1. Instant Sound

2. Fast, Constant, Steady Sound

3. Natural Ending to the Sound - Don't let the air slow down at the end of the note. Just stop blowing to stop the sound. Don't use the tongue to stop the sound.

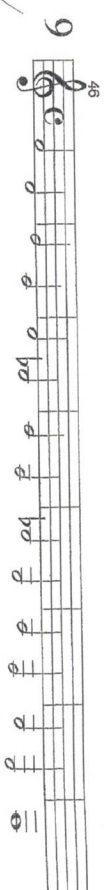
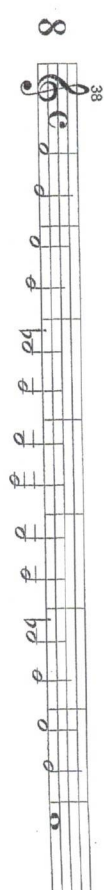
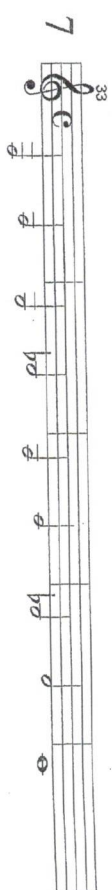
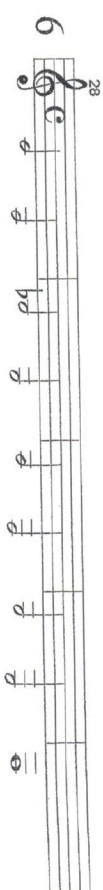
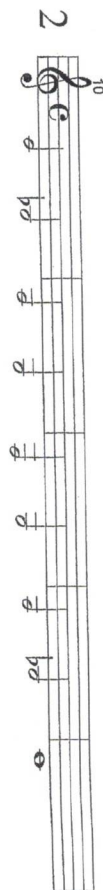


CLARINET WARM-UP NO.2

Make sure the fingers hit the center of the hole and keep them close to the holes when you aren't using them.

Move the fingers quickly as you cover or uncover the holes and move the fingers straight up and down, not back and forth!

The right pinky should stay on the "F" key the entire time



CLARINET WARM-UP NO. 3

Each group of 6 notes should be played with one constant airstream

1
2
3
4
5
6
7

Move the fingers quickly. When you move several fingers at the same time, they should hit or be picked up from the holes at the same time.

8

Make sure you are pulling up with the right thumb on this line.

9

Keep the right hand down while playing line #10 & #11. Keep the air fast and constant!!!

10

Pull Up With The Right Thumb

11

12

13

Roll the first finger. Hit the "A" key with the first joint of the first finger. Keep the left pinky touching the "B" key.

14