

Sound Sculpting: Breath, Tone, and Flexibility

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1. Developing Resources – “The Why”

- a. We wanted to improve the individual musicians.
- b. We do not have access to a comprehensive private lesson program, even to this day, so we had to create a curriculum to develop instrument specific skills that would be typically taught in a private lesson program.
- c. The students must understand what they are trying to accomplish and why. (Culture)
- d. These fundamentals are covered in every rehearsal, including outdoors: “Band Vitamins.”
- e. The students recognize their individual growth, and how they can apply it to the literature we perform.
- f. The fundamental routine applies to ALL bands – Varsity to Sub Non-Varsity B – this is VITAL.

2. Breathing

- a. Always start with a quiet and still room (focused mind)
- b. The Two-Count breath
 - i. 1-te-2 or 5-te-6 to start
 - ii. Students will be thinking subdivisions.
 - iii. This is universal – for both indoor and outdoor band rehearsals.
 - iv. Less tension in the body – focused mind
- c. Position
 - i. Body – good posture (relaxed vs. tension)
 - ii. Instrument & hand position.
 - iii. You must be aware of what your students are doing: walk around the ensemble.

3. Tone

- a. Individual tone quality vs. ensemble sound
 - i. Levels of listening (we use 4 levels)**
 - 1. Yourself (tone – characteristic sound)
 - a. Demonstrate what a characteristic, focused sound is (or find someone that can do this for you), especially for younger students.
 - 2. Your neighbors (trio or quintet)
 - 3. Your section
 - 4. The entire ensemble (Can you hear the bassoon?)
 - ii. What are you listening for?**
 - 1. Tone/resonance
 - 2. Volume/Balance
 - 3. Tuning
 - 4. Timing
- b. Tone and tuning go hand in hand – We love the harmony director! (always with metronome and drone)
 - i. In tone usually means in tune
 - ii. Beginning-Middle-End (BME)
 - 1. Timing of inhale and exhale
 - 2. Consistency of air speed (baby crescendo) – especially on larger intervals
 - 3. Subdivision within the long tone (1234, 1234, 1234, 1234)
- c. Long Tone Exercises**
 - i. Whole note exercise (concert F)**
 - 1. 2-count breath
 - 2. Hold 4 counts (BME)
 - 3. “off-out-in”
 - 4. Repeat
 - ii. 4-8-12-16 & variations**
 - iii. Remington exercise (F & Bb)**
 - 1. Use both Ascending/Descending intervals.
 - 2. For advanced groups
 - a. Define intervals and tuning tendencies.
 - b. Combine exercises (WWs ascending vs. brass descending for more advanced ensemble)
 - iv. Have 1st chairs demonstrate.
 - v. Individual Tuners and the “Green Light”
 - vi. Instrument specific elements should be incorporated in sectional time once a week. (Sectionals = Masterclass)

Trumpet (B Flat)

Permian Wind Fundamentals

Long Tone - F Descending

Musical notation for Long Tone - F Descending, measures 1-12. The notation is in 4/4 time and features a descending scale starting on F4. The notes are: F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), D3 (quarter), C3 (quarter), B2 (quarter). The first measure is marked with a '1' above the staff. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Musical notation for Long Tone - F Descending, measures 13-24. The notation is in 4/4 time and features a descending scale starting on B2. The notes are: B2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), G2 (quarter), F2 (quarter), E2 (quarter), D2 (quarter), C2 (quarter), B1 (quarter), A1 (quarter), G1 (quarter), F1 (quarter), E1 (quarter). The first measure is marked with a '1' above the staff. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Long Tone - F Ascending

Musical notation for Long Tone - F Ascending, measures 1-12. The notation is in 4/4 time and features an ascending scale starting on F3. The notes are: F3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter). The first measure is marked with a '1' above the staff. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Musical notation for Long Tone - F Ascending, measures 13-24. The notation is in 4/4 time and features an ascending scale starting on D5. The notes are: D5 (quarter), E5 (quarter), F5 (quarter), G5 (quarter), A5 (quarter), B5 (quarter), C6 (quarter), B5 (quarter), A5 (quarter), G5 (quarter), F5 (quarter), E5 (quarter). The first measure is marked with a '1' above the staff. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Long Tone - Bb Descending

Musical notation for Long Tone - Bb Descending, measures 1-12. The notation is in 4/4 time and features a descending scale starting on Bb4. The notes are: Bb4 (quarter), Ab4 (quarter), Gb4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), Eb4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), Bb3 (quarter), Ab3 (quarter), Gb3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), Eb3 (quarter). The first measure is marked with a '1' above the staff. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Musical notation for Long Tone - Bb Descending, measures 13-24. The notation is in 4/4 time and features a descending scale starting on Ab2. The notes are: Ab2 (quarter), Gb2 (quarter), F2 (quarter), Eb2 (quarter), D2 (quarter), C2 (quarter), Bb1 (quarter), Ab1 (quarter), Gb1 (quarter), F1 (quarter), Eb1 (quarter), D2 (quarter). The first measure is marked with a '1' above the staff. The piece ends with a double bar line.

LONG TONE QUICK COMMENTS

"Hold it still"

"Relaxed breath"

"Listen to your neighbor"

"Beautiful sound"

"Release together"

"Listen for bassoon"

"No stick-outs"

4. Flexibility

- a. Order of operations – fundamental foundation (breath & tone) must be established before working on flexibility.
- b. Just as important for Woodwinds as it is for the Brass**
 - i. Everyone is focusing on the same fundamental goals (*This was a game changer for us.*)**
- c. Elements of study for each individual instrument
 - i. Flutes – Harmonics
 - ii. Oboe/Bassoon – Octave Studies (half-hole and flicking)
 - iii. Clarinets – Register Studies – etc.
 - iv. Saxes – Voicing (Don Sinta)
 - v. Brass – Lip Slurs
 1. If you are relying solely on your face, you are doing it wrong!
- d. End every rep with a sustain (4 or 6 counts) and align it with the 2-count breath.
- e. Create progressive exercises
 - i. Start simple – be sure that students understand how to achieve the goal.
 - ii. Do not “go through the motion” in these exercises. It is better to do multiple reps on one exercise than to do several exercises poorly.
 - iii. Have individual students, sections, certain groups play.
 1. Wheel of Names
 2. Hot Seat
 - iv. Add more challenging levels as your students improve.

11. Flexibility 1

The musical score is for a piece titled "Flexibility 1" in 4/4 time. It features nine staves for different instruments: Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in Bb (Cl. in Bb), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.), Baritone Saxophone (Bar. Sax.), Bassoon (Bsn.), and Trumpet in Bb (Tpt in Bb). The Flute and Oboe parts play a melodic line with slurs and accents, while the Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, and Bassoon parts play sustained notes. The Saxophone parts play sustained notes with some dynamics markings. The Trumpet part plays a melodic line with slurs and accents.

QUICK COMMENTS

"Smooth"

"All notes the same volume"

"Relaxed breath"

"No tension in the sound"

"Listen to your neighbor"

"Beautiful sound"

"Release together"

"Listen for bassoon"

"No stick-outs"

"Hold it steady"

12. Flexibility 2

This musical score is for a piece titled "12. Flexibility 2". It is written in 4/4 time and features a woodwind and brass section. The instruments and their parts are as follows:

- Fl.** (Flute): Part 1 (top staff) has a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. Part 2 (middle staff) has a similar melodic line.
- Ob.** (Oboe): Part 1 (top staff) has a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. Part 2 (middle staff) has a similar melodic line.
- Cl. in B \flat** (Clarinet in B-flat): Part 1 (top staff) has a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. Part 2 (middle staff) has a similar melodic line.
- B. Cl.** (Bass Clarinet): Part 1 (top staff) has a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. Part 2 (middle staff) has a similar melodic line.
- A. Sax.** (Alto Saxophone): Part 1 (top staff) has a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. Part 2 (middle staff) has a similar melodic line.
- T. Sax.** (Tenor Saxophone): Part 1 (top staff) has a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. Part 2 (middle staff) has a similar melodic line.
- Bar. Sax.** (Baritone Saxophone): Part 1 (top staff) has a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. Part 2 (middle staff) has a similar melodic line.
- Bsn.** (Bassoon): Part 1 (top staff) has a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. Part 2 (middle staff) has a similar melodic line.
- Tpt in B \flat** (Trumpet in B-flat): Part 1 (top staff) has a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. Part 2 (middle staff) has a similar melodic line.

The score is written in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The woodwinds and brass instruments are arranged in a standard orchestral layout. The score is written in a single system with multiple staves for each instrument.

13. Flexibility 3

This musical score is for a piece titled "13. Flexibility 3". It is written in 4/4 time and features a woodwind and brass ensemble. The instruments and their parts are as follows:

- Flute (Fl.):** Plays a melodic line with dynamics mp and f , and includes vibrato markings.
- Oboe (Ob.):** Plays a melodic line with dynamics mp and f , and includes vibrato markings.
- Clarinet in Bb (Cl. in Bb):** Plays a melodic line with dynamics mp and f .
- Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.):** Plays a melodic line with dynamics mp and f .
- Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.):** Plays a melodic line with dynamics mp and f , and includes vibrato markings.
- Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.):** Plays a melodic line with dynamics mp and f , and includes vibrato markings.
- Baritone Saxophone (Bar. Sax.):** Plays a melodic line with dynamics mp and f , and includes vibrato markings.
- Bassoon (Bsn.):** Plays a melodic line with dynamics mp and f , and includes vibrato markings.
- Trumpet in Bb (Tpt in Bb):** Plays a rhythmic, eighth-note pattern with dynamics mp and f .

The score consists of 8 measures. The woodwinds and saxophones play sustained notes with vibrato, while the trumpet plays a rhythmic pattern. The key signature has one flat (Bb), and the time signature is 4/4.

14. Flexibility 4

This musical score is for a piece titled "14. Flexibility 4". It is written for a woodwind and brass ensemble. The score consists of nine staves, each representing a different instrument. The instruments are: Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in Bb (Cl. in Bb), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.), Baritone Saxophone (Bar. Sax.), Bassoon (Bsn.), and Trumpet in Bb (Tpt in Bb). The music is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (Bb). The woodwinds and bassoon play a melodic line with long, sustained notes, often marked with "vib." (vibrato) and "p" (piano). The trumpet in Bb plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the first two measures, followed by a melodic line in the last two measures. The score is divided into four measures, with various musical notations including slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

15. Flexibility 5

This musical score is for a piece titled "15. Flexibility 5". It is written for a woodwind and brass ensemble. The score consists of nine staves, each representing a different instrument. The instruments are: Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. in B \flat), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.), Baritone Saxophone (Bar. Sax.), Bassoon (Bsn), and Trumpet in B-flat (Tpt in B \flat). The music is in 4/4 time and features a melodic line with various articulations, including slurs, accents, and vibrato ("vib."). The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into four measures, with the first two measures containing the main melodic material and the last two measures featuring a more complex rhythmic and melodic pattern. The woodwinds and brasses play in unison or near-unison, with some instruments having specific articulations like vibrato or accents.

16. Flexibility 6

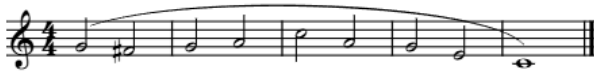
This musical score is for a piece titled "16. Flexibility 6". It is written for a woodwind and brass ensemble. The score consists of eight staves, each representing a different instrument. The instruments are: Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. in Bb), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.), Baritone Saxophone (Bar. Sax.), and Trombone (Bsn). The Trumpet in B-flat (Tpt in Bb) is listed at the bottom but has no notation. The music is in 4/4 time and features a complex melodic line with many accidentals. The woodwinds (Fl., Ob., Cl., B. Cl., A. Sax., T. Sax., Bar. Sax., Bsn) play a similar melodic line, often with vibrato markings ("vib.") above notes. The Trombone (Bsn) plays a lower, more rhythmic line. The Trumpet in B-flat (Tpt in Bb) has a melodic line that is more active than the others, with many accidentals. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with the woodwinds on top and the brass on the bottom.

Trumpet (B Flat)

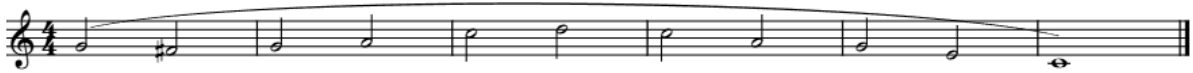
Flow Study 1



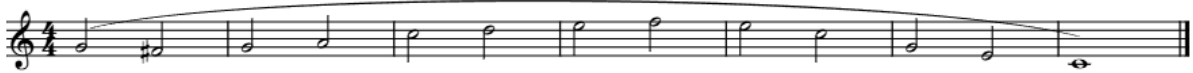
Flow Study 2



Flow Study 3



Flow Study 4



Flow Study 5



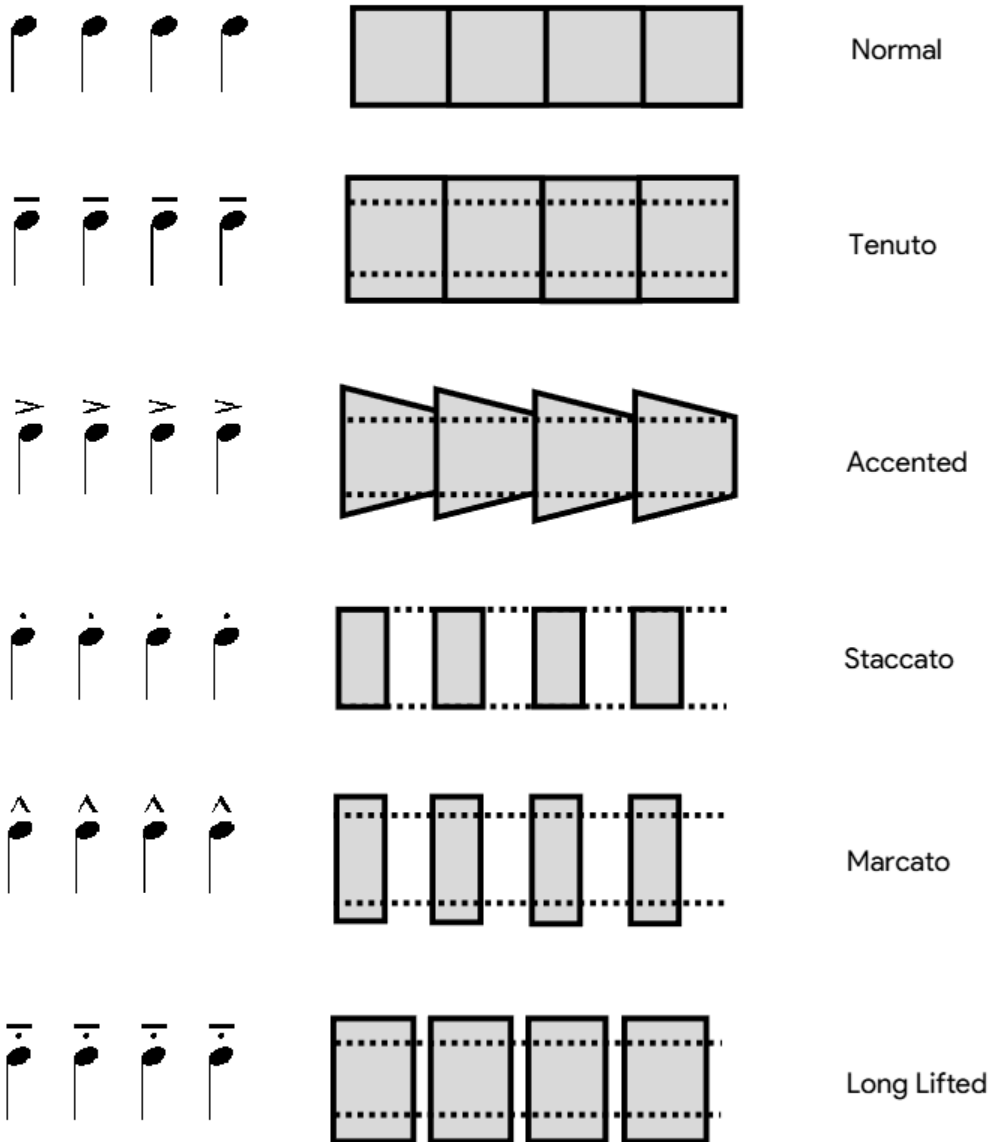
Flow Study 6



5. Articulation

- Start & end articulation with a long tone exercise
- Practice articulation while playing the flow studies
- Address note-length when articulating (style)

Articulation Markings



Other thoughts:

Keep adapting and changing as needed! We re-write these exercises each season as we learn more and as our students grow as musicians.

How much time do we spend on these exercises, and does it vary throughout the year?

We use these fundamentals for our ensemble auditions.

Some Apps We Use:

- Lesson Launchpad
 - Newzik
 - Tonal Energy
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