A New Model for Beginning Trombone Lessons

D.M.A. Document

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Musical Arts in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

Joel Shonkwiler, B.M., M.M.
Doctor of Musical Arts

The Ohio State University
2010

Document Committee:
Joseph J. Duchi, Advisor
Jim Akins
Graeme M. Boone
Abstract

Several consistent deficiencies have arisen in young trombonists who have received their beginning instruction only through their band classes. Students have displayed difficulties in note identification, rhythm, sound production, instrument handling and care. These deficiencies seem to be tied to a lack of idiomatic instruction during the outset of study, the lack of a suitable visual and aural model for playing, and a beginning band method book which provides an overwhelming amount of information which is therefore difficult to grasp. Beginning trombone students will benefit from a more focused idiomatic approach which is led by an artist-teacher of trombone. The manual included in this document considers teaching techniques assembled over years of private study, as well as techniques gathered from study of successful instructors and the instruction of this author. The manual provides a structured routine of breathing, sound and rhythm coaching, note learning and ear training that is meant to provide an instructor with the ability to facilitate the aforementioned beginning groups.
Dedication

This document is dedicated to the late Brother Todd Ritter, SM, whose excitement for teaching inspired me during our short period of contact at the University of Dayton. Remembering his apparent joy has been a constant reminder to me that musicians, without that same joy, will fail to reach audiences and students in the way they were meant to.

I would like to thank my former teachers, Johnny Mack, Denver Seifert, Timothy Anderson, Carl Lenthe, and Joseph Duchi, as well as the numerous other teachers from whom I have received instruction, advice, or learned from in masterclass settings, for their excellent instruction and counsel throughout my academic journey.

I also wish to thank my wife, Suzanne, who has provided me with the love, support and patience necessary to finish this terminal degree. Suz, each success on this road is shared with you.
Vita

1999…………………………………………Fairborn HS

2003…………………………………………B.M. Performance, University of Dayton

2004…………………………………………M.M. Performance, Indiana University

2006-2009……………………………………Graduate Teaching Associate,

Trombone Studio, School of Music,

The Ohio State University

Fields of Study

Major Field: Music
# Table of Contents

Abstract ............................................................................................................................ ii  
Dedication ................................................................................................................... iii  
Vita...................................................................................................................................... iv  
List of Tables ................................................................................................................. vi  
Introduction .................................................................................................................... 1  
Chapter 1: The Problem ................................................................................................. 3  
Chapter 2: The Method Book ....................................................................................... 22  
Chapter 3: The Instructor’s Manual ............................................................................ 30  
References ....................................................................................................................... 87
List of Tables

Table 1. Descriptions of Embouchure Formation.................................................................6
Table 2. Concepts Learned with Band Method Books before the Introduction of the Notes of the First Full Scale.................................................................12
Introduction

The motivation for this project comes from my positive experiences in group lesson and masterclass settings. While taking Suzuki Piano lessons at age six, there was a group lesson before or after my individual instruction time. In this time period, we played games, learned notes with flashcards, and played for one another. After that year my family moved, and I was enrolled in private piano lessons in another format which did not include group time. While my parents remember my earliest recital performances as good – they especially compliment my playing posture even years later – much of the ease of learning was lost for me when I switched teachers. I gradually lost interest after that time. When I began playing the trombone in my fifth grade band, I was reintroduced to instrumental group instruction. It was a small band program, and I had the luxury of being taught my first notes with only the two other trombonists in the band. While our teacher was not a trombonist – he taught the notes by having us match with the piano – we learned a great deal from each others’ successes and failures.

As I neared graduation from high school I attended my first masterclass. Watching a student work with a master teacher in front of the audience, I was surprised how much my playing improved after watching someone else do all the work. During college and graduate school, I attended masterclasses with many
prominent trombonists. I have often included the insights gained from these classes in my lessons, and in sectionals and masterclasses given at The Ohio State University, as well as many Columbus-area Middle and High Schools.

Seeing the lack of homogeneous group time for beginning trombonists, the goal of this document is to provide private instructors with a method which will encourage the use of groups to aid student learning.
Chapter 1: The Problem

In my experience teaching a private studio in Columbus, Ohio, few of my students of any age have brought sound fundamentals into their first lessons. These students rarely take deep enough breaths to produce a supported tone, and often lack a strong concept of a good sound. Students have learned wrong note names or incorrect slide positions for notes. Few were confident and facile in their use of the slide. Finally, none of these students had an understanding of how to care for their instrument. The music they brought to lessons, most of which utilized basic notes and rhythms, was a great challenge for them because the fundamentals were not learned.

There were other deficiencies which, while not specific to the trombone, hindered the ability of students to play their best. Most students did not recognize that adding an accidental would change the note itself (i.e.-they would verbally identify both a-naturals and a-flats as “A”, etc.). Many students had little understanding of proportional rhythm (i.e.-two half notes to a whole note, four eighth notes to a half note, etc.). This would be replaced either with arbitrary ‘fast’ and ‘slow’ speeds (recognizing eighth notes as fast and quarter notes as slow) which did not relate to one another, or students would base note lengths upon how quickly (or slowly) they could recognize the note to be played and move the slide to each correct (or incorrect) position. The first problem reflects an inherent rhythmic difficulty but
the second is due to poor note recognition skills. For those students who were able to correctly clap their rhythms and had trouble only while playing, the rhythmic problem is tied to an incomplete understanding of a trombone-specific fundamental.

Many of these concepts could be more readily taught by an instructor who is working only with instrumentalists within his specialty. He is able to more readily address specific challenges presented on his particular instrument. In contrast, a band director works with every instrument, often all at once. This limits his chances to give specialized instruction. Even in the event that the band is separated into homogeneous groups for their initial sessions, the band director is not a specialist in each instrument, and can only communicate a limited understanding to many of the groups he is teaching. This is where beginning band books are seen as advantageous. They were created to standardize beginning curricula for all instruments, promoting student learning while allowing a band director to teach all instrumentalists.

The band method texts present another set of challenges, however. As it is necessary for every beginning trombonist to show competence in trombone-specific fundamentals in order to progress to more difficult material, the band methods seem to hinder this important development. I have found that the structure of these methods, which are meant to teach every beginning instrumentalist the same material at the same time, is unhelpful – perhaps detrimental – to a beginning trombonist.
This is because the trombone, and possibly any instrument, benefits from a more idiomatic treatment to learning the basics.

If directors only follow the lessons from their beginning band book, the fundamentals will largely be covered. Students will be presented with notes, rhythms, and some books also deal with instrument care and handling. Without the ability of the instructor to demonstrate, however, much of this material is very difficult to grasp. The explanation in each book on how to form the embouchure (see Table 1) is merely a list of steps that a student must check through to form the lips. The information is different from book to book, and while an established player can decipher the information, it is very difficult to actually perform each step and successfully form a trombone embouchure. Instrument holding position, slide handling, instrument cleaning, breathing, and all fundamentals benefit from a live demonstration by a knowledgeable instructor.

Another problem with the band method books is that they deal with many secondary concepts at the same time as the primary ones. These include key signatures, time signatures, accents, breath marks, dynamics, and composer biographies. There is no need for students to understand key signatures, for example, because they have not yet learned all of the notes in any one key, and it does not take much time to edit music with accidentals printed on each note. If students are taught this concept, however, they also must understand that a flat in the key signature
Table 1. Descriptions of Embouchure Formation

**Essential Elements 2000**¹
1. Moisten your lips.
2. Bring your lips together as if saying the letter “m.”
3. Relax your jaw to separate your upper and lower teeth.
4. Form a slightly puckered smile to firm the corners of your mouth.
5. Direct a full airstream through the center of your lips, creating a buzz.

**Standard of Excellence**²
1. Shape the inside of your mouth as if saying “oh.” Bring your lips together as if saying “em.”
2. Your lips should have firm corners but a relaxed center. Your chin should be flat and pointed.
3. Take a full breath of air and blow, creating a relaxed, buzzing tone.
4. While buzzing, place the mouthpiece over the buzz with equal amounts of the mouthpiece on the upper and lower lips.
5. Put the mouthpiece into the mouthpiece receiver. Take a full breath of air and play a long, steady tone.

**Accent on Achievement**³
1. Moisten your lips and bring them together as if you’re saying the letter “M.”
2. Keeping your jaw open and relaxed, firm up the corners of your lips to form a slightly puckered smile.
3. While the corners of your lips are firm, the center of your lips should stay relaxed for the best sound.
4. …Center the mouthpiece on your lips, remembering to keep the corners of your lips firm. Take a deep breath through the corners of your mouth, then buzz through the mouthpiece starting with the syllable “Tah”.

---
means that the flat will be implied when that note is printed. That is an extra
secondary concept that is necessary to understand the first, and only complicates what
should be the primary task of learning notes. Another example is learning time
signatures, which are unnecessary for beginning songs which are very short. Time
signatures complicate the primary concept of learning rhythm.

This sort of organization leads to pages with vast amounts of information on
cluttered pages (see Illustrations 1, 2 and 3 (scan pages from each book). Concepts
are treated as learned once they have been printed so students only receive one chance
to get the concepts they will need for the remainder of the book. The students with
whom I have worked are usually in their second year or beyond, and are far enough
into their beginning band book or ensemble music that the concepts of rhythm, note
recognition, and instrument handling are assumed, as are all of the secondary
concepts. Yet these are the items which I spend my time teaching the students,
indicating that they have not successfully learned them. Since more advanced
materials require competence in these fundamentals, this means that these students
cannot learn the new material as it is based upon concepts they have not yet grasped.
The advanced concepts are merely added to the list of things of which the student has
a vague understanding, but not mastery. Because of the organization of band method
books, beginning trombonists are given less of an opportunity to succeed. As one can
see, non-specialist instruction and non-specialized learning methods are inhibiting what could be a simpler approach to teaching beginning trombone.

I began to suspect that beginning trombone players would benefit from a specialized approach when I taught group trombone to fifth graders in the Columbus, Ohio area. The students began in the January following their start in the band, and many bad habits had already set in, consistent with the earlier descriptions. Learning from a specialist on their instrument, they received more correct information on proper breathing, instrument handling, slide positions, and playing in rhythm. While the group lessons only lasted until the end of their first year, they showed marked improvement, and all chose to continue with private lessons.

Seeing the benefit of working with a specialist on a specialized curriculum in a group of their peers, I have come to believe that this would be beneficial to all beginning trombonists. A specialist-led, group-based approach would aim to give these players a better grasp of the fundamentals of air and sound production, rhythm and note reading, and instrument handling and care upon which their future success will depend.
Band Instruction

The difference between a beginning band class and other academic subjects is a matter of content. While a teacher in math or science focuses on common material with all students at one time, band directors attempt to teach common musical concepts to students who are learning uncommon instruments. Students are better able to function in a varied group once they have had time to establish the fundamentals of playing their instruments. This includes being able to read, recognize and play their first several notes and understanding proportional rhythm. When it is considered that ample time is often not allocated toward careful learning of these fundamentals for each group of like instruments, it becomes difficult to comprehend how beginning band students can gain enough confidence in the particular problems of their instrument well enough to grasp the overarching musical concepts.

Some school band programs separate their beginners into groups of like instruments for the purpose of teaching fundamentals. These homogeneous groups, while a step toward better beginning instruction, still present two obstacles. The first is that, if there is not a director who specializes in each instrument then some students will be taught their fundamentals by an instructor who does not fully understand the idiomatic difficulties of the instrument they are teaching. The second obstacle is the beginning band book, which does not present material in a manner that is idiomatic to
each instrument, but rather is designed to be used with the full band, learning notes and concepts in the same order.

According to Kohut, “the first thing a student needs is an aural conception of how he should sound.” Employing specialists for every instrument within each school district would be costly, and so some directors give sound examples for the mixed groups by playing their own instrument. The inability of a single band instrument to give a quality sound model for all other types of instruments in the band means that students are not presented with such a model for their instrument. Kohut further explains that, “Teachers sometimes have students listen to good recordings…while this can be helpful, it can never fully substitute for a live demonstration.” Recordings cannot fully bridge this gap because they nearly always present music that is far beyond the reach of a beginner, in both range and technical parameters. They also give no visual cues of what it looks like to play the instrument. Therefore, to give a student their best start, a specialist on each instrument is necessary.

5 Ibid., 9.
Beginning Band Method Books

Some of the aforementioned trombone-specific fundamentals (notes, slide positions, sometimes care and handling) are covered in beginning band texts. As has already been established, all of those fundamentals will benefit from a visual and/or aural demonstration. Ultimately, the problem is that all of these concerns need to be firmly impressed upon students before they learn the variety of secondary concepts which fill beginning band books. These include: time signatures, key signatures, dynamics, ties, accents, articulations, more advanced rhythms (dotted or 16\(^{th}\) notes), form (D.C. al Coda, repeats, etc.), tempo markings (allegro, andante, etc.), and composer dates and mini-biographies. Looking at the trombone books from the three most popular band methods, the number of secondary concepts a student learns may reach beyond twenty before they have learned the eight notes of the b-flat scale (see Table 2). While all of these concepts are valuable – and most of them are necessary for students before they can play music of any real substance – placing these secondary concepts alongside the fundamentals seems to be reducing students’ confidence in both.
Table 2. Concepts Learned with Band Method Books before the Introduction of the Notes of the first Full Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Concepts</th>
<th>Essential Elements 2000</th>
<th>Standard of Excellence</th>
<th>Accent on Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Bb</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eb</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bb</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bb Scale</strong></td>
<td><strong>End</strong></td>
<td><strong>88</strong></td>
<td><strong>End</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Note</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half Note</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter Note</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth Note</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument Care</td>
<td>general</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument Handling</td>
<td>general</td>
<td>general</td>
<td>photo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breath Mark</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary Concepts</th>
<th>Essential Elements 2000</th>
<th>Standard of Excellence</th>
<th>Accent on Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Ab</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low A</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dotted Half</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/4 Time</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4 Time</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4 Time</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bb Key Signature</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eb Key Signature</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab Key Signature</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F Key Signature</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamics</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cresc./Dim.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegro</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderato</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andante</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tie</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slur/Legato</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accent</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat/Sharp/Natural</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1/N/A/74</td>
<td>1/N/A/49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fermata</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Composer Bios</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Styles Explained</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.C.</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rit.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is concern by the author about the effectiveness of current elementary methods of instruction for trombone in particular. Since the technical challenges of the slide are so unlike those faced when learning keyed and valve instruments, it seems that an obvious need – the need to present elementary material in a fashion idiomatic to the trombone – has been overlooked. There are two goals in the writing of this method book. The first is to present material in a way which is idiomatic to the instrument. The second is to promote its use in a group lesson scenario, led by an artist-teacher, who can provide appropriate sound and visual models.

The method book would be useful in a private lesson scenario as well, but adhering to the idea that common material is suitable for use in classes, this method will allow the instructor to work with a group of beginners to teach this material. Groups will also be able to utilize activities and games for multiple students, which will reinforce retention of concepts and help to foster listening skills crucial to ensemble playing. Students also can learn from one another just by going through the materials together. Mini-lessons given to individual students will also aid the others in the class in the way that masterclass participants and audiences learn together. Teachers can charge less per student, which will make beginning lessons more attractive to parents. The book will also lessen the burden on the non-specialist band director to teach their students how to play this instrument. For the band director who specializes in trombone it will give them a tool to promote good habits from the
outset of study. Ultimately, it will allow band directors to focus on musicianship and ensemble skills necessary for successful performance, rather than learning and relearning notes and slide positions.

**Group Lessons**

While group lessons are common for students of string and keyboard instruments, they are rare for students of wind instruments. This is shown by the large number of articles, studies and panel discussions devoted to group teaching in string and piano journals, and a lack of such research on similar groups of wind instruments. During the school band movement of the early 20th century, however, the first method books were intended for group lessons. The band movement was made possible by such instruction, which allowed for less expensive tuition for beginners. Over time, group instruction became, simply, the beginning band class. Again, the mixed class is important for teaching ensemble concepts, such as tuning, blend, and concepts common to all instruments (dynamics, time/key signatures, etc.), however there are several problems with teaching beginners of all instruments at once. First, there is a lack of a quality sound concept for each instrument. Students must learn the same notes in the same order, regardless of their ease or difficulty on any particular instrument. Finally, there is a lack of idiomatic writing toward the performance practice of each instrument. If each student was also gaining these
insights through private instruction, then the beginning band class could be a valuable testing ground for learned material, and a place where individuals could be taught the concepts necessary to function as an ensemble. Whether or not this was the case mid-twentieth century, it is not currently the norm. This has led to a new need for beginning group lessons, and methods, that are tailored to each instrument.

One may ask what makes group instruction better than private tuition for beginners. First, lessons can be provided more cheaply when students are taught in groups. This is especially important in the first year of study, when parents may be hesitant to pay the higher fee for private lessons without certainty that their student will continue with the instrument. Second, students can receive a longer weekly instruction period. This gives the teacher time to provide in-depth exploration of concepts. Third, students can learn from watching others in their class who are singled out for short periods of individual instruction. This likens to the masterclass setting, where all in attendance gain from the attention given to one student. The activities and games that can be incorporated in the group setting will help to increase interest. There is also the supportive environment of many students working toward the same goal and the accompanying spirit of friendly competition that is a part of other group activities, such as team sports and classroom group reports and projects.

The size of a group defines its purpose. *Class Group instruction* allows an instructor to teach a large number of students the same concepts. ‘Class’ refers to
larger groups – I am referring to a group of more than 5, as many as 15 – which meet at one time. Fewer concepts can be covered in a single session because of the larger number, but these concepts can be taught with greater focus, which makes class instruction beneficial for teaching fundamentals. As the class progresses, students separate themselves by showing more or less talent on the instrument, at which point the class can be broken into smaller groups, depending on ability level. *Small Group instruction* allows for more individual attention to each student, but the benefits of the group dynamic are not lost. Groups may range from 2-5 students, and take a variety of formats, from overlapping private lessons (Example: combining the last 10-15 minutes of one private lesson and the first 10-15 minutes of the next), to full-length groups, or even overlapping group lessons (students A and B for 30 minutes; students A, B, C and D for 30 minutes; students C and D for 30 minutes).

There are two possibilities for group personnel. *Heterogeneous Group lessons* involve either any grouping of instruments, from similar instrumentation (such as all brass, or more specifically, only treble-clef brass instruments like horn, trumpet and Bb baritone) to a wide variety (such as trombones, saxophones and percussion). *Homogeneous Group Lessons* involve a group of like instruments, such as the common collegiate piano class, or the group trombone lesson format for which this document is being written.
Both formats can be valuable to young instrumentalists and there are some common benefits. Righter names the following advantages to group lessons:

(to the teacher)

1. the more efficient use of time through the scheduling of longer but fewer lesson periods
2. the employment of group disciplines and sequential instructional devices for better results

(to the student)

1. the stimulation that comes from doing something with others, striving as a group toward a common goal
2. the opportunity to gain from instruction given to others in the group
3. the challenge of direct competition
4. the acceptance of playing with and before others as a normal and natural procedure
5. the broadening of each student’s knowledge of other instruments (in classes of mixed instruments)⁶

Kuhn names the following advantages to class instruction:

_Economic_

---

Administrative/Ease of Scheduling

Psychological-

1. Increased motivation due to friendly competition
2. Tends to overcome self-consciousness by association with the group
3. Learning through observation and conformity with peers

Technical Advantages

Musical Advantages

Regarding private group instruction, several articles note increased confidence in solo performances, due to the fact that students regularly play for one another. Of particular interest to this document is a study of a group lesson program for young children (age five and above) in Norway playing trombone in group lessons. The instructors of this program remark that their students, years after those initial experiences, feel comfortable in solo situations due to the large number of experiences performing for their group, and are therefore willing to be very creative in their musical interpretations. Another study, dealing with beginning group piano with college music majors, showed “higher expectations, increased motivation and musical independence” when students participated in a repertoire class to play their

---

8 Donlon, Anne Marie; Hardy, Diane; McCain, Claudia J.; Zelis, Lynette.
prepared pieces for each other. An article dealing with group lessons for beginning organists at St. Olaf College found that the class contributed to an increase in future private study, as well as increased participation at recitals of organ music.\textsuperscript{11} Other articles show that the peer environment can: foster a supportive attitude among the students\textsuperscript{12}; make individual practice more fun for the students through group practice games\textsuperscript{13}; and help students develop interpersonal skills\textsuperscript{14}.

For beginning instrumentalists, there seem to be few, if any, benefits to learning the fundamentals of one instrument in heterogeneous groups of any size. Further, teaching a full band at once destroys the small group concept because the ensemble will be too large to function as such. It is disadvantageous for a director to hold classes that focus on many instruments at once, when the need for students to focus on their instrument and its particular problems is evident at the beginning.

This author has not found any materials that would suggest that heterogeneous group instruction is preferable to homogeneous group instruction for beginning instruments. Heterogeneous group method books, such as \textit{The Universal Teacher} (1923) and the \textit{Rubank Elementary Method} (1934) were written for teachers who

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{12} Reist, Joan M, “It’s a Group Thing: Getting Started in Group Teaching,” \textit{American Music Teacher} 51, no. 3 (April/May 2002):
\textsuperscript{13} Rabin, Marvin J., “Strategies for Individual Development in Homogeneous Group Lessons,” \textit{American String Teacher} 50, no. 3 (August 2000):
\textsuperscript{14} Kim, Chungwon, “Nurturing Students Through Group Lessons,” \textit{American Music Teacher} 54, no. 1 (August/September 2001):
\end{quote}
were expected to demonstrate material on every instrument. It is this author’s experience that few band directors today would feel confident in having all students in their band imitate their level of expertise in clarinet, saxophone, flute, trumpet, trombone, baritone and tuba (and possibly bassoon and oboe), especially as the years pass since college, and their time in related methods courses. As previously mentioned, it is also unrealistic to think that a band director who is an expert at a single instrument will be able to use it to give a sound model for every instrument in the band. While it may have been advantageous to school music directors in the early 20th century to work with mixed groups out of convenience or limited time or numbers of each instrument, the current popularity of bands and the large number of specialist-teachers can assist band directors in presenting sound fundamentals for beginning instrumentalists. This allows directors to work with students on ensemble concerns and music for performances.

Kuhn sees fundamental training as prerequisite to joining the school ensemble, and says “much of the success of instrumental music in schools depends upon the results of class instruction on the various instruments.”\textsuperscript{15} There is a difference of opinion regarding the duration of this type of instruction, as some teachers advocate for beginning group lessons as a gateway into future individual

private lessons\textsuperscript{16}, and others believe that students should continue on in groups through their schooling or as a repertoire course to supplement individual study\textsuperscript{17}.

Particularly for beginning instrumentalists, the benefits of homogeneous group lessons are as follows. The ability of one specialist-teacher to work within their area of specialty helps to promote the development of instrument-related fundamentals to prepare students for their ensembles. Groups provide an efficient use of time since each student requires the same fundamentals before progressing further in their musical development. Students learn from comparing their performances to those of others in the group, and learning from the successes of one another, much as they would in a masterclass setting.


\textsuperscript{17}
Chapter 2: The Method Book

Based upon interactions between the author and his current and former students, the most important fundamentals that need to be addressed for beginning trombonists are: air support and embouchure development; instrument handling, including assembly and playing posture, and instrument care, including cleaning and slide care; a thorough learning of the first six (of seven) slide positions; the ability to play, by ear, simple songs and tetrachords (eventually scales); the ability to transfer written notation into performance, with accurate rhythm. Giving beginners the opportunity to focus on these fundamentals will provide them with the tools they need in their quest to solve the initial challenges of playing their first songs on the instrument, without becoming overwhelming.

Production of Sound

The production of sound will be taught by helping students to breathe appropriately for the playing of a wind instrument (the same breaths as one would experience during strenuous cardiovascular activity, considerably deeper than everyday breathing), and careful development, and a general understanding of, the embouchure. Breathing exercises include visual models to gauge the effectiveness of students’ inhalation/exhalation. Embouchure development will include several visual models of vibration, such as: vocal cords, reed instruments and party favors (which
also apply the use of reeds), balloons leaking air, and the embouchure of the instructor as demonstrated through a mouthpiece visualizer. Students will also buzz single tones on the mouthpiece to gain control of these two parts of their playing, and buzz individual notes or lines of music on the mouthpiece attached to a short length (around twelve inches) of tubing, which allows for greater ease of production, and therefore less strain on the lips. Both will also benefit the connection between listening and note production.

**Instrument Handling**

The trombone is an awkward instrument, due to its outward protrusion and range of motion due to the slide and it requires skillful handling from students’ earliest exposure to the instrument to allow students to avoid future difficulties in performance. Students in this course will be coached in instrument handling from their first interactions of putting the instrument together, as well as posture and the use of the right hand and arm. Many students who have begun study with the author have been unable to do this first task, assembling their trombone, without putting a fresh dent on the slide or bell section of their trombone. While it does not take much logic to see how these dents could be avoided, it is often hard to assist students in reversing this habit after it has been learned. This researcher sees the best remedy is to begin students with a more sound method of assembly.
The first playing-position handling of the trombone will require students to be standing. This is partly to help students gain comfort in holding a large, expandable instrument. It will also promote deeper breaths because students will be less inclined to slouch while standing compared to sitting.

A young trombonist must learn different slide positions by learning to feel the distances between the mouthpiece and right hand and listening to the intonation, much like a beginning string player learns to feel hand positions and distances between fingers. No other instrument in the band works this way, and this is perhaps why there is a lack of attention given to slide operation in beginning band books. It is therefore of utmost importance to have a standard of increasing the chances of success for the beginner, by teaching beginners how to hold the trombone and operate the slide efficiently and – above all – rhythmically. Students will therefore be instructed to hold the slide with their fingertips, to promote precision when moving from position to position. A flexible, but not limp, wrist will be promoted, but ultimately students will be taught to understand that the fingertips, not the elbow or wrist, are the moving point of importance in the operation of the slide. This will be shown through games that draw this physical parallel.

A slide that moves easily is essential to its use, and to the effective teaching of its operation. Time will be spent to teach students how to maintain functionality of the slide by proper cleaning and avoiding dents. This will help to alleviate many
posture and handling problems associated with the tendency of students to become overly tense when dealing with a rough or slow slide.

**Slide Positions**

The first positions and notes that students learn in band and private method books are first (f), third (e-flat) and fourth (d). While there is nothing inherently wrong with this approach, the author is choosing to teach first (f), third (e-flat) and fifth (d-flat) positions with the intention of helping students gain a feel for the even spacing of whole steps, to allow the later insertion of the whole step spacing of second (e), fourth (d) and sixth (c) positions. This change also will allow students to play their first song (an outline of ‘Mary Had a Little Lamb’) by ear, based on the whole-step relationships. Students will be able to focus on the single interval of a whole step to determine position spacing, and therefore gain time to focus on the placement of the positions themselves, before they begin to differentiate between several intervals in one line of music.

**Playing By Ear**

Many band directors and music teachers require that students play some of their material by ear. Suzuki teaching also places emphasis on this skill as Mr. Suzuki understood teaching music as the teaching of a new language, in which
students must learn to speak before they can read. Playing by ear in his method is likened to a child imitating a parent in learning to speak their native language.\textsuperscript{18}

This method will require the instructor to teach songs note by note, then by multiple notes at a time and eventually phrase by phrase, to help increase students’ understanding of the song as a melody, not a collection of notes and rhythms on the printed page. The instructor will also play ear training games with the students, where he will play a progressively longer series of notes (starting with one, then adding notes one at a time), with the students repeating back. Students will also learn scales in this manner.

Notation

This researcher has found that middle-school students display difficulty in recognizing notes in relation to their position on the staff, and sometimes are unable to name the rhythmic unit printed on a page, or recognize its duration. This method will attempt to increase student comprehension of a modified notation that will gradually evolve through the weeks of the class. The earliest staffs will have only three black lines – for d, a and f. The lower two lines will be grey at first, and later will also be colored black. The reasoning behind this is that the first several notes (f, e, e-flat, d, d-flat, c on the second partial; b-flat, a, a-flat, g, g-flat, f on the fourth

\textsuperscript{18} Carolyn M. Barrett, \textit{The Magic of Matsumoto: The Suzuki Method of Education}, p. 46.
partial) require no more than the top three lines. While the students are playing within this range there is no need for the outer lines of the staff, and so lightening them will minimize their impact for the student. Visually, the reduction from five black lines to three will give students fewer options and increase their chances for successful execution of the notes.

In addition to the reduction in lines on the staff, the f line will be printed in red ink, unlike the other lines, printed in traditional black. This will give students a reference point in the early phases of note-learning.

Rhythm

Trombone students also have difficulty in playing proportional rhythm. With the exception of Accent on Achievement, all of the band and private trombone methods this author has studied begin with whole notes, followed by half notes, quarter notes, and continue in this way. While this is one way to show proportional rhythm from the outset of study, it requires students to count a steady quarter-note beat in order to play whole notes of the correct length even though they have not learned quarter notes. This method will teach notes without rhythm at the very beginning, and the instructor will indicate when to start and when to stop notes, at various intervals. The goal of this will be to produce good, supported sounds without concern for steady rhythm.
The next phase of rhythm will be teaching quarter notes, with the aforementioned motion exercises, and then playing on the instrument. Students will move on to half and whole notes, as well as eighth notes, after they are able to produce a steady quarter note rhythm on their instrument. These will also be introduced by motion exercises. Nontraditional notation will be used that is directly proportional in size to the relation in length of each type of note (i.e.- whole notes will be notated twice as long as half notes, etc.), which will help students to visualize these temporal relationships, as well as provide a visual shape of the note they are to play.

**Time Signatures**

Time signatures are not necessary in beginning songs (Mary Had a Little Lamb; Row, Row, Row Your Boat; etc.) as the student will know the songs from other places without having necessarily read music to learn them. They will not need to have considered the regular metric groupings. The ‘feel’ of time signatures will first be explored in motion exercises, involving students moving (clapping/marching/tapping) together with a steady beat, and then adding the larger metric unit with some other percussive act (bouncing a ball, vocalizing, etc.). This will be done as the students are learning the earliest songs in the method book and it will allow them to more easily grasp the concept of time signatures and bar lines in
more complicated songs later in the book. Implicit to the omission of time signatures is the omission of bar lines, again in the earliest songs of the method. Bar lines will be introduced to the students before time signatures, so that they become familiar with regularly spaced metrical measures. At this point the introduction of time signatures will be a natural conclusion.
Chapter 3: The Instructor’s Manual

Lesson 1

Students will learn to:
• assemble their trombone
• breathe fully to play
• play their first three notes (F, Eb, Db)
• play their first song by ear (Mary Had a Little Lamb)

Assembly (5-10 min.)

Students should open their cases flat on the floor. Once open, students should close the case again, so the slide side is on top. Give the students a sticker, some tape, or another marker to mark the slide side of the case. From now on, every student is expected to open their case with the sticker side up. Have the class lock and pick up their cases.

The instructor should do the next steps without explaining verbally. Just have them do exactly what you do.

Set the case down (sticker side up), and open.
Remove the slide, place in the left hand, with the rubber tip facing down.
Remove the mouthpiece with the right hand, and place into the mouthpiece receiver on the slide. Do not tap the mouthpiece in. Put the slide, with mouthpiece, in the right hand.
Remove the bell section from the case with the left hand grabbing the throat of the bell. Attach the bell section to the slide section. Tighten the screw.
Disassemble. Put away in this order: bell, mouthpiece, slide.
Have the students reassemble with you. Disassemble again.

Breathing (10 min.)
Take time between each step so students do not become lightheaded.

Deep Sigh-Take a full breath and sigh out, all in one motion. The timing is approximate, but it should be close to breathing in for 1 count and out for 3-4 counts. Instructor can ‘conduct’ this exercise by moving a hand upwards for the breath in, and then outwards to blow.

Pinwheel Breath-Explain that breathing for an instrument means taking in a full breath and breathing out evenly. Have them take the same deep breath in, but blow onto a pinwheel, making it spin one steady speed. Instruct the
class to say Ha (In) – Taaaaaaaa (out). Do this three times (spinning fast, medium, then slow).

Blow up a balloon and let it lose air through the opening and then ask the class to sing the pitch. They will all sing differently, resulting in noise. Do it again, but tighten the opening so that it creates a pitch and have them sing that pitch (they will hopefully sing the same one). With a floppy opening, the balloon just makes a noise, but controlling the opening of the balloon makes a pitch. Ask if they think they will blow through the trombone with floppy lips or controlled, firm ones (correct answer is firm). Then, demonstrate by taking a deep breath in and blowing out with the lips together but loose, then breathing in and tightening the lips to produce a buzz. Have the students do this, reminding them that they have to blow lots of steady air.

Note: Not all students will be able to do this right away. It is the concept that is important.

Playing (10 min.)

1) Students and instructor assemble their instruments together. Make sure each student is doing this correctly.
2) Instructor takes a breath and free buzzes. Class repeats back, if able, and instructor corrects any loose lips or unsupported air.
3) Instructor buzzes and puts the mouthpiece to the lips. Class repeats back. Watch and correct students as needed.
4) Make sure each student has their slide locked. Have students grip the horn with only the left hand, and bring the instrument up to playing position. Have students touch (not grab) the slide handle with the tips of the thumb and first two fingers. Bring the instrument up and down this way a few times.
5) Instructor plays the first tone (middle F). Students repeat back. Repeat until each student is playing the same note.
6) Move to Eb (third position), explain that the hand is next to the bell, and play. Have the students play back a few times.
7) Move to Db (fifth position), explain that you move the same distance as you did from F to Eb, and play. Have the students play back a few times.
Breathing/Playing (5 min.)

Using the party favors, have students breathe in and blow one puff (with articulation-use ‘taaaaaa’ or ‘daaaaaa’, the extra ‘a’s representing the support of the body of the notes), then in and articulate two puffs, then three, and add until students cannot add without a breath. Do the same thing playing (F, then Eb, then Db).

Add-On (5 min.)

Instructor plays one of the notes the students have learned and students play back. Instructor then adds a note to the first and students play back. Continue adding notes (all same length, no rhythmic variety). As students misplay, have them stop, and continue until only one student remains.

First Song-Mary Had a Little Lamb (10 min.)

1)  Bell Choir-Break the class into three even groups and assign each group one of their three notes. When you point to a group, they are to play. This is an easy version of the song, only using the three notes that the students have learned.

   Mary Had a Little Lamb (1-3-5)

2)  Teach the full song measure by measure, then try to play the entire song.
3)  Teach ‘Hot Cross Buns’ by Bell Choir.
Assignment
Students will receive the following at the end of their lesson
- Reminder to make up their own song with the three notes they have learned.
- Reminder to play ‘Mary Had a Little Lamb’ by ear
Lesson 2

Students will learn to:
- Unify pulse in a group
- Recognize and play half and quarter note rhythms
- Read ‘beginner’ notation

Breathing (5 minutes)
1) Deep Sigh, 3-5 times, get the lungs fuller each time
2) Coordinated Breath, students move one hand up on inhale, down on exhale. Instructor determines the speed. Try to get all students moving arms (and air) together.
3) Puff Breath, students breathe in four quarter-note-length breaths and puff out four quarter-note length puffs. Do with and without tonguing.

Assembly (5 minutes)
Have students teach you how to put the trombone together. Have them teach each other or their parents (if present). Correct any misinformation from the class.

Playing (5 minutes)
1) Free Buzz (any pitch); Buzz mouthpiece (with tube) long tones (F-Eb-Db)
2) With horns, play long tones of the first three notes
3) Bell Choir-Mary Had a Little Lamb, make up another song on the spot
4) Full group performance-Mary Had a Little Lamb

Rhythm (15 minutes)
1) Have students march around the room at any speed they want.
2) Tell students to raise a hand, without stopping their marching, if you play a song at their speed.
3) Play several songs (in quarter notes) at different speeds, letting each student recognize you are playing with them. Explain that music is organized in steady beats, just as they walk in steady beats.
4) Next, play a song (in quarter notes, like ‘Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star’) for all students to march at your speed. Watch for feet moving together. Explain that playing in the band or orchestra means that everyone plays the same speed at the same time.
5) Explain that the steady beat is always there, and faster and slower notes fit within the beat structure. Play a children’s song (like Row, Row, Row Your Boat) with the students marching together, so that they hear different note lengths with their steady marching beat.
Notation (20 Minutes)

The Bass Clef shows where F is. For now, printed F’s are red to help students remember. Currently the staff has only the top three lines (A, F and D) to help students recognize note names more quickly, as there will be less room for error. The lower lines will be added later. Note lengths are relative to their size on the staff. Half notes are twice as long as quarter notes, and quarter notes are twice the size of eighth notes.

There are no key signatures, time signatures or bar lines at this time. They will be added later, after students have learned the related concepts. Each note will be marked with its accidental (if called for) even if the notes are repeated within a measure.

1) Show the class the picture of a half note next to a quarter note and explain how the difference in size corresponds to their sounding length. Half notes are exactly as long as two quarter notes. Have students clap, then play, quarter notes (on any single pitch) while you clap a steady beat. Do the same with half notes.

2) All claps should be done with a circular motion, hands meeting at the bottom of the circle. Use smaller circles for quarter notes and larger ones for half notes. This is to ‘feel’ the size and lengths together.

3) Show the picture of quarter and half rests (which look normal), and explain that these hold an open space for silence. Have students ‘non-clap’ (bring hands close together without touching) the different lengths.

4) Show some rhythm exercises and have the class clap (and non-clap) and play (and non-play) on one note. Break the class in half, with one side playing the quarter notes, and the other side playing the half notes.

5) Show the illustrations of F, Eb, and Db and explain where each note is on the slide. Use the flashcards to drill the class on these three notes. First have students name, then name and play the note, and finally just play.

Song (‘Go Tell Aunt Rhodie’ in Db)

1) Bell Choir
2) 8 beats at a time, teach by ear.
Assignment
Students will receive the following at the end of their lesson
• 3-lined staff paper to write the music to Mary Had A Little Lamb, using their notation skills
• rhythm exercises (on one or two notes at a time) to start reading notation
• notated music for ‘Hot Cross Buns’
• reminder to practice ‘Go Tell Aunt Rhodie’ by ear
Half Note

Quarter Note
Rests, Lesson 2

Half Rest

Quarter Rest

Quarter Rest
New Notes, Lesson 2

F

1st Position

E-Flat

3rd Position

D-Flat

5th Position
Lesson 3

Students will learn:
• New Notes (E, D, C)
• New Positions (2\textsuperscript{nd}, 4\textsuperscript{th}, 6\textsuperscript{th})
• Subdivision/Hypermeter

Recap Lesson 2 (no trombones. 10 minutes)

1) Flash cards: recognize note names (F-Eb-Db), note lengths and rests. Have students name notes and corresponding positions. If a student misnames the card, go to the next student with the same card. Go through the group multiple times.

2) Sightreading Rhythm: Set a steady beat (clap or use metronome) and have students read the rhythms. If a student performs the rhythm incorrectly, go to the next student with the same card. Again, go through the group more than once.

Breathing (5 minutes)

1) Puff Breath: 3x at quarter=80, 3x at quarter=60

2) Rhythmic Coordinated Breath: breathe in for four counts (moving arm up), and out for four counts (moving arm down). Do this 4 times at quarter=100. Keep the arm (and the air) moving constantly; don’t hold.

3) Wind Pattern: ‘Perform’ Hot Cross Buns as a breathing exercise, taking breaths as needed. Do once at quarter=90.

Students assemble instruments

Performance (10 minutes - Focus on great breaths)

1) Free Buzz long tones (try for single pitch)

2) Buzz mouthpiece (no tube), try for long tones of F-Eb-Db

3) Go Tell Aunt Rhodie in Db (by ear) buzzing with tube, then with instrument

4) Teach Clair de Lune as a Bell Choir
Student Notation: Have class show their copies of ‘Mary Had a Little Lamb’ and teach from any mistakes.

New Notes (E-D-C) (10 minutes)
1) Have class find 2\textsuperscript{nd} position (E) between 1\textsuperscript{st} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} positions, then 4\textsuperscript{th} (D) between 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 5\textsuperscript{th} positions, and 6\textsuperscript{th} (C) past 5\textsuperscript{th}.
2) Play each note a few times, then Bell Choir ‘Mary Had’ or ‘Go Tell Aunt Rhodie’ in the key of C.
3) Show students the flashcards for the new notes. Have them name, name/play, and play.

Rhythm (10-15 minutes)
1) Have the class march in quarter notes as they clap half notes (circular claps). This may take a couple of minutes to get everyone doing it.
2) Switch, so that the class is marching half notes (in bigger, ‘slow-motion’ steps) and clapping quarter notes. Try having the class swap the rhythms in their hands and feet without stopping in between.
3) Faster/Slower: Have stand still and clap quarters. Change clapping speed at regular intervals, clapping twice as fast when you say “faster”, and half as fast when you say “slower”. Start with quarter and half notes only, but try eighths and whole notes as well. Do not explain the new note lengths. Just remind them they are going twice as fast or half as fast.

Assignment
Students will receive the following at the end of their lesson:
• ‘Notes I Know’ songs
• Interval exercises (1-2-1-3-1-4-1-5-1-6, etc.)
• Empty staff paper to write their own song
Lesson 3 Flashcards for first six notes, quarter and half rests

HALF NOTE

QUARTER NOTE

F

E
E-FLAT

D

D-FLAT

C
Lesson 3, New Notes

E

2nd Position

D

4th Position

C

6th Position
Lesson 4

Students will learn:
• Lip Slurs
• New Notes (High and Low Bb, high A, Ab, G, Gb, F in 6th position)
• Metric Groupings

Instructor will need students to use:
• Pinwheel
• Party Favor
• Tennis Ball

Breathing (5 minutes)
1) Extended Rhythmic Breath: In for 2 counts, out for 4 counts, quarter=80 (4x). In for 2 counts, out for 8 counts, quarter=100 (4x). Use the pinwheel, held about a foot away from the mouth, to see if the air is steady. Students should blow as evenly as they can, which will make the pinwheel spin at a steady speed.
2) Rhythm with Party Favors: Have students tap a toe in time with the metronome. Perform the ‘faster/slower’ exercise with the party favors, having students tongue and sustain whole/half/quarter/eighth note rhythms.

Performance (15 minutes)
1) Free Buzz long tone, whole class on one note
2) Buzz mouthpiece with tube, performing Chromo-tune from ‘Notes I Know’. Play with them on your trombone for reference.

Chromo-Tune

3) Student Compositions
4) Out and Back (interval song) from ‘Notes I Know’
Out and Back

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{\textbf{Rhythm (10 minutes)}} \\
\text{Give each student a tennis ball. Have the class march around the room at a steady pace, bouncing every two, three or four beats. This is to start helping students to feel measure groupings before they learn about bar lines and time signatures. Change the number of beats per bounce without stopping the group.}
\end{align*} \]

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{\textbf{New Notes/Lip Slurs (20 minutes)}} \\
\text{Students do not need to know the names of their new notes yet, though you can mention them here and there, to begin establishing the relationship in their minds.}
\end{align*} \]

1) Explain how every position on the trombone can play many different notes (demonstrate with a bugle call on one position, such as ‘Reveille’). This is how the trombone plays all the notes that it can play.

2) To play higher/lower, all you do is make the lips buzz faster/slower. For the students who whistle, have them try to whistle glissandi up and down. For those who do not, have them imitate a whistle just with air.

3) Have students try to buzz sirens on their mouthpieces (with tube, then without). Watch for students who put excessive mouthpiece pressure on the face and remind them that the air makes the change, not their muscles.

4) Have students play F and try to lip slur down to Bb. Tell them to blow steady air, then blow ‘bigger air’ as they loosen the lips. Go through the group to help those who are having trouble. Have students who get it right away explain what they are doing.

5) Have the students slur from F up to Bb. Compare the airstream to a hose, and how you can cover up part of the stream to make it spray farther (and faster). Tell them to blow a steady stream and slur up by blowing faster air and firming the lips. Go through the group to assist those who are having trouble and let students explain what is working for them.

6) Move through positions 2 to 6, slurring E to A, Eb to Ab, etc.
7) Have students try to play a high Bb without starting on F. Remind them to start with a faster buzz. Do this a few times, and on several different upper notes.

8) Have the group play one of the previous songs in the higher partial as a bell choir. Have them perform this as easily as they can. Continue to focus on blowing ‘fast’ air.

9) Show the flash cards with first note and the second note printed. Mention there is a new, fourth line added to the bottom of the staff, and that is where low Bb, which they have played, is printed. Have students name the first note and tell them the higher/lower ones.

10) Have students play the slurs together with the flash cards from earlier lessons (i.e.-show the first note and have students slur to the next note in that position). Do each from the bottom note up, and from the top down, naming the top notes as the students move down the slide.

Assignment
Students will receive the following at the end of their lesson:

1) Slur exercises (first notes printed with an arrow up or down to indicate slur)

2) Slur exercises (with upper/lower notes printed)
Lesson 4, Lip Slurs

Slur Line

B-flat

B-flat

A
Lesson 5

Students will learn:
- Low Bb, High Bb, A, Ab, G, Gb, F
- New note lengths (whole and eighth notes)
- Four Line Staff (B Line Added)

Students will need:
- Pinwheel

Song
- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star/Baa Baa Black Sheep

Breathing (5 minutes)
1) Coordinated Breath—Have students breathe in evenly over four counts, then out evenly for four counts. Do the same In 4-out 6, In 4-out 8. Remind students that they will have to blow more slowly to make the longer counts.
2) Rhythmic Breath—Do the ‘faster/slower’ motion drill as a breathing exercise, having students breathe in/out over 4 counts in eighth, quarter, half and whole note values.

Playing (5 minutes)
1) Free Buzz multiple long tones, with the class matching each note
2) Buzz mouthpiece (with and without tube) in upward sirens of a perfect fourth and downward sirens of a perfect fifth, having the class play back and match. Keep watching for students who try to change notes with mouthpiece pressure.
3) Play the add-on game with F through C.

Recap Lesson 4 (10 minutes)

Use flash cards with ‘first’ notes (F through C) on them. Ask a student to name the note, play it and lip slur up or down (F only) to the next note. Give each student a mini lesson to help gain confidence in using the air and lips together, rather than the lips only. Remind them to think ‘faster’ air for high and ‘bigger’ air for low. Try playing phrases of ‘Taps’ back and forth (this will include the D above staff, and does not need to be mentioned yet).
Notation (15 minutes)

1) Show students the new staff, with the fourth line (B) added. Have students name the lines and spaces by their corresponding letters. Ask them if they notice a pattern in the order of note names in relation to the lines and spaces. *They move alphabetically from bottom to the top.*

2) Have the class recite the ‘Musical Alphabet’, which is A-B-C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C-D-E-F-G, etc. Recite it backwards too (G-F-E-D-C-B-A). Based on this order, you should be able to pick any line or space and the students should be able to find the note name, even on a ledger line. Show some flash cards and have the class figure out the notes together.

3) Explain how a note on plain line or space gets its corresponding letter name, but if you add a $b$ or $\#$, then the note gets its letter name plus –flat or –sharp. Show flash cards with flats or sharps and have the class figure out the notes together. Make sure they give the full note name.

4) Mix up the plain and the flat/sharp cards and try again. Have students name the note, and if it is a note they know how to play, have them play it too.

Rhythm (10 minutes)

1) Show the illustrations of eighth/quarter/half/whole notes in line.

2) Explain how eighth notes are twice as fast as a quarter. That means two eighths fit into one beat. Mention that they have already been clapping this speed in the ‘faster/slower’ moving drill.

3) Explain that whole notes are twice as long as a half note. That means the whole note is worth four beats. They did this in the ‘faster/slower’ drills as well.

4) Lay out flashcards of the different rhythmic units in a pattern and have the class clap four beats of each in succession. (Example, ordering the cards by: half, quarter, eighth, quarter, whole would result in 2 half note claps, four quarters, eight eighths, four quarters, one whole. Circular claps)

5) Sightread the rhythm exercises by clapping.

Playing Rhythm (10 minutes)

1) Play the rhythm exercises on the party favors, then on the trombone on any one note from high Bb to Gb or low Bb.

2) Have the students look at ‘Twinkle Twinkle Little Star’. What rhythm values are there? What are the note names?
This song will incorporate bar lines. There is no need to explain the concept yet. Tell the class that, since this song is longer, there will be lines every four beats to help find your place.**

3) Teach the class the song measure by measure.

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Assignment
Students will receive the following at the end of their lesson:

1) New rhythmic exercises to clap/play at home.
2) ‘Baa Baa Black Sheep’ (to use eighths in a song they have already learned)
3) ‘Notes I Know’ songs/exercises
Lesson 5, New Staff

A
F
D
B

G
E
C
Lesson 5, New Notes

**B-flat**

1st Position

A

2nd Position

G

4th Position

**F**

6th Position

**B-flat**

1st Position

**A-flat**

3rd Position

**G-flat**

5th Position
Lesson 5, Flashcards
B

A-flat

F-sharp
D-sharp

A-sharp

A-flat
Lesson 6

Students will learn:
- Ties
- Bb Scale

Breathing (5 minutes)
1) Extended Exhale: IN 2-OUT 4, IN 2-OUT 6, IN 2-OUT 8, IN 2-OUT 10 (quarter=100). Use the pinwheel to monitor steady air. Fill completely over the two counts.
2) Extended Inhale: IN 2-OUT 2, IN 4-OUT 2, IN 6-OUT 2, IN 8-OUT 2 (quarter =100). Use a finger to the lips to monitor steady inhale. Try to push out all of the air over the two counts.

Playing (5 minutes)
1) Free Buzz long tones
2) With mouthpiece, buzz long tones and sirens with the class. Focus on everyone buzzing the same notes.
3) Perform ‘Baa Baa Black Sheep’

Recap Lesson 5 (10 minutes)
Flashcards: Using the flashcards of the high and low notes from the last two lessons, have students ‘duel’. Have students stand with their instruments up. Show the card of a note and have students move to the correct position without playing. The person to the correct position first will be told to play. If they miss, then the other student gets a chance. If they miss as well the first player gets to try again, etc. The winner duels another player and the loser goes back into the line. Go through the line a few times until students begin to get comfortable with the new notes.

Rhythm (10 minutes)
Rhythm Canon (perform at quarter=60)-Instructor begins by clapping four beats of either quarter or half notes. On beat five, the class begins clapping your beginning speed as you begin clapping a different (or the same) speed. Continue with the class doing your speed from four beats earlier. Start with only the quarter and half note lengths, but try adding eighth note and whole note lengths. This will force the class to think of two rhythmic lines simultaneously.

Bb Scale (15 minutes)
1) Play a few major scales for the group. Give the class a tonic note and have them sing the pattern with you. Do a few of these. Explain that
scales provide a format for musical construction, and every song they have
played so far was based on a scale, even though none of their songs used
every note of the pattern.

2) Definition: a scale is a set of eight notes in ‘musically alphabetical’ order.
The first and last note have the same name, so if you start on C, then the
letters of each note in a C scale are C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C. If you start on Bb,
the letters of each note in the Bb scale are B-C-D-E-F-G-A-B, but some
notes get a flat in their name.

3) Play each note of the scale one at a time with the class playing back. Do it
again, but naming each note before you play and having the class name
and play back. Name/play two notes at a time, then four, then the full
scale.

4) Show the printed scale and have the class name the notes and positions.
Have the class play from the printed page.

5) Have the class play the scale in whole notes, then half notes, then quarter
notes. Reminder: It is important to move the slide just as you play each
note, rather than moving before you play. Help the class move the slide
just as rhythmically as the music indicates.

Ties (10 minutes)

1) Have the class clap or play a basic syncopated rhythm, printed below:

2) Explain that when there are lines every four beats in the music (as there
were in ‘Twinkle Twinkle’ and ‘Baa Baa Black Sheep’), that you cannot
use a half note to cross the line, so you use a tie.

3) Definition: A tie makes you play one note that is the length of both tied
notes. Tie two quarters together and you need to hold a note for two beats.
Half to a quarter, you hold for three beats, etc. Show the above rhythm,
printed with the bar lines and ties.

4) Have the class clap some rhythmic exercises with ties.

Assignment

Students will receive the following at the end of their lesson:

1) Scale exercises
2) An easy song to buzz with and without the tube
3) New songs
Lesson 7

Students will learn:
• Traditional Notation
• Whole and Eighth Rests
• High C and C Major Scale

Students will need:
• Pinwheel
• Party Favors

Breathing (5 minutes)
1) Coordinated Breath: In 4-Out 4, In 5-Out 5, 6-6, 7-7, 8-8, quarter=90
2) Coordinated Breath (no hands moving): 4-4, 3-3, 2-2, 1-1 (do 1-1 four times), quarter=60
3) Extended Exhale (with pinwheel): In 1-Out 4, 1-6, 1-8, 1-10 (keep going if the group is doing well)

Warmup (10 minutes)
1) Buzz long tones and sirens
2) Lip slurs
3) Bb Scale Exercise
4) Teach ‘Row, Row, Row Your Boat’ (in Bb) by ear and play as a round.

Row, Row, Row Your Boat

Notation (15 minutes)
1) Explain that the notation they have been using is not the way traditional music is printed. Show them the chart of note values as they have been learned and in traditional notation.
2) The rests have not changed shape, so the students should already be comfortable with half rests and quarter rests.
3) Have the class look at some of their old songs with new notation and have them try to play them slowly.
4) Show the notation for whole rests and eighth rests and explain that they match the lengths of whole notes and eighth notes.
5) Have the class look at the new song with both old and new notation, and have them sightread it.

New Notes/Scale (10 minutes)
1) Show the high C and high B-natural flashcards, and have the class name the notes based on their musical alphabet. Show them how to play the notes, and then teach the C Major Scale as you taught the Bb Major: One note at a time, name/play one at a time, then two at a time, four at a time and entire scale.
2) Do some lip slurs up to the fourth partial to help students play the new notes. Remind students to blow faster air as they move up the scale.
3) Teach the class ‘Row, Row, Row Your Boat’ (in C) by ear and play as a round.

Row, Row, Row Your Boat

Rhythm (5-10 minutes)
1) Rhythm Canon: clapping at Quarter=80
2) Faster/Slower: have students step (not clap) the different rhythmic units.

Songs (10 minutes)
1) Hand out songs for the end-of-session performance. Parts can be distributed as the instructor sees fit.
2) Perform the songs on party favors for rhythm.
3) Sightread each song.
4) Break up the playing with breathing and rhythm drills so that students do not get too tired.

Assignment
Students will receive the following at the end of their lesson:
1) Notation Chart
2) Notated C Major Scale
3) Music with both types of notation
4) Music for end-of-session performance
Lesson 7, New and Old Notation

Original Notation

\[\text{Whole Note} \quad \text{Half Note} \quad \text{Quarter Note} \quad \text{Eighth Note}\]

New Notation
Lesson 8

Students will learn:
- High D/Db – D/Db Major Scales
- 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 Time Signatures

Breathing (5 minutes)
1) Rhythmic Breath: 8 eighths in-8 eighths out, 4 quarters in-out, 2 halves in-out and 1 whole note in-out. Also do this backwards. Quarter note=80.
2) Extended Exhale: In 1-out 4, 1-5, 1-6, 1-7…1-10 and beyond if the class is able. Quarter note=100.

Warmup (10 minutes)
1) Free Buzzing sirens
2) Playing long tones and lip slurs.
3) C Scales
4) Reteach ‘Row, Row, Row Your Boat’ in Bb or C to help the class remember.

Notation (10 minutes)
1) Flashcard duels: show flashcards of the new noteheads and the old rests. The first student to say the correct answer wins the round.
2) Playing duels: show flashcards of different notes. The first student to say the correct note name gets to play the note. If they play it correctly, they win the round.
3) Show flashcards of the new notes (D and Db). Ask the class to figure out the note names, and then play them back and forth.

Rhythm/Notation (5-10 minutes)
1) Rhythm Canon: students step (not clap) the note lengths.
2) Have class walk a steady beat, bouncing a tennis ball every two, three, or four beats. Change the number as often as you like without the students stopping their marching. Calling out a new number for each measure will help them to focus and count. Do this at a slow (quarter=60) and fast (quarter=140) speed.
3) Explain that since barlines separate the music into equal units, the size of the unit is shown at the beginning of the song with a time signature. The top number tells you how many beats are in each measure, and the bottom number tells you how to count the beat.
4) Play one song in each time signature with the class stepping to the beat. Have them try to bounce the ball on beat one of each measure.

**Scales** (10 minutes)
1) Have the class play the scales they have already learned (Bb and C) in half notes or quarters.
2) Teach the two new scales (Db and D), first note by note, then two, four and eight notes at a time.

**Songs** (10-15 minutes)
1) *Air Trombone*: Wind pattern while moving the slide with the music on one of the pieces. Have the students do the wind pattern with their front teeth touching (not their jaws clenched). This will make a hissing sound, and make it easy for the instructor to hear students supporting (or not supporting) the notes. Focus on good breathing, full-length notes, and quick slides.
2) Perform the same piece, trying to maintain the quick slides and supported air. Focus on good breathing and correct notes/rhythm.
3) Perform the chorale, listening for students’ best sounds.

**Assignment**
Students will receive the following at the end of their lesson:
1) Scale drills
2) ‘Notes I know’ chart and songs
Lesson 8 Flashcards

\[ \text{\textbullet} \]

\[ \text{\textbullet} \]

\[ \text{\textbullet} \]
Whole Note

Half Note

Quarter Note
Eighth Note
Lesson 8, new note flashcards

\begin{align*}
\text{\bass clef} & \quad \text{\note{C}_2} \\
\text{\bass clef} & \quad \text{\note{D}_2} \\
\text{\bass clef} & \quad \text{\note{E}_2} \\
\end{align*}
B

C

B-Flat
G-flat

B-flat
Lesson 9

Students will learn:
• Legato tonguing
• Low A/Ab – Ab Major Scale

Class will need:
• Tennis Balls
• Party Favors
• Soda or Water Bottle

Breathing (5 minutes)
1) Rhythmic Breath: same as week 8, eight eighths in-out, four quarters in-out, two halves in-out, one whole in-out. Also do backwards. Quarter=70.
2) Coordinated Breath: In 4-Out 4, 3-3, 2-2, 1-1. Also 4-4, 5-5, 6-6, 7-7, 8-8, 9-9, 10-10. Quarter=100.

Warmup (10 minutes)
1) Buzzing on mouthpiece (no tube): long tones and sirens.
2) Mouthpiece (with tube): scales on any pitch. Play your trombone with them as a guide.
3) Trombone: Lip Slurs and Scales (Bb and C)

Recap Lesson 8 (5 minutes)
1) Reteach (if necessary) D and Db Major Scales. Play back and forth with the class on one, two, four and eight notes.
2) Teach ‘Row, Row, Row Your Boat in both keys.

Row, Row, Row Your Boat (Db)
Rhythm (10 minutes)
1) Tennis Balls/Measures: Have the class ‘trot’ around the room (quarter=160), bouncing on beat one for a different number measure size each time. Feel free to use numbers other than two, three and four (especially six, to help feel triple meter).
2) Rhythm Canon: Using only quarter and half notes, have the students perform a three-part canon with you. Start with your bar of 4/4, which will go to the students’ hands (clap). When they start your second speed on claps, the first speed will go to the feet (walk). This may not be possible for every student the first time, but it is the heightened focus that is important. Quarter=40.

Notes/Scale (10 minutes)
1) Show the flashcards for A and Ab. Have the class name the notes and then tell them the positions. Remind the students that lower notes need bigger, fuller air to speak.
2) Play back and forth, starting on low Bb, then A, then Ab. Play the new notes several times until all students are able to play the notes.
3) Teach the Ab Major Scale as before: one, two, four and eight notes at a time.

Legato Tonguing (10 minutes)
1) A trombone player can use their tongue to play smoothly when the music calls for it. This style of tonguing is called *legato*. Play something legato for the class, and then play it with a ‘t’ articulation to show the difference. Ask the class how the different versions sound.
2) To play legato, students will use ‘d’ as their consonant instead of ‘t’. Have the class perform some early rhythmic exercises without trombone and speaking the new syllable.
3) Transfer this to party favors, and then have the class blow the rhythm exercises on a bottle. This will require the most air support, and will point out students who are not supporting through each note to the next.

4) Have the students play the rhythm exercises on trombone, in the middle register, then on a C Major scale (four quarters of each note in the scale, i.e.-CCCC, DDDD, EEEE, etc.)

**Songs** (10-15 minutes)
Rehearse the songs for the final performance. Focus on posture and good sound.

**Assignment**
Students will receive the following at the end of their lesson:

1) Scale Drills

2) Legato Drills
Lesson 8, new notes

\[ \text{Musical Staff} \]

\[ \text{Musical Staff} \]
A
A-flat
Lesson 10 (Student Performance)

**Breathing** (5 minutes)
1) Rhythmic Breath: Same as weeks 8 and 9. Quarter=100
2) Coordinated Breath: In 4-Out 4, 3-4, 2-4, do 1-4 eight times. Quarter=80
3) Extended Exhale: In 1-Out 4, 1-5, 1-6, 1-7, 1-8…as far as the class can go.

**Warmup** (5 minutes)
1) Buzzing (w/o tube): Sirens
2) Trombone: Lip Slurs
3) Buzzing (with tube): Scales. Play with the group on trombone to guide the notes.
4) Trombone: Scales (Bb, C, Db, D Major)

**Recap Lesson 9** (10 minutes)
1) Ask different students to ‘teach’ you how to play legato. Remind students that they tongue with a ‘d’ consonant and have to sustain through the note as always.
2) Perform the newest scale (Ab Major) as a legato exercise, first four quarters per scale degree, then four eighths per scale degree.

**Rhythm** (10 minutes)

**Performance**
Students perform their notated music, as well as a version of ‘Row, Row, Row Your Boat’ from memory, for their families.
Bibliography


Lowe, Donald R. “Suzuki and the Beginning Wind Class.” *Instrumentalist* 33, no. 3 (October 1978): 29; 32.


