

Crafting a Purposeful Warm-Up **Don't Just Warm-Up: Build Up**

with Bruce Pearson, Clinician

**The 67th Annual Midwest Clinic
International Band and Orchestra Conference
Chicago, Illinois**

**Thursday, December 19, 2013
1:30PM**



Bruce Pearson is a world-renowned music educator, composer, and author. He co-authored, with Ryan Nowlin, the ***Tradition of Excellence Comprehensive Band Method*** and ***Teaching Band with Excellence: A Comprehensive Curricular, Pedagogical, and Administrative Resource***.

He is the author of the ***Standard of Excellence Comprehensive Band Method*** and ***Best In Class Comprehensive Band Method***. He also co-authored the ***Standard of Excellence Jazz Ensemble Method*** and the ***Standard of Excellence Advanced Jazz Ensemble Method*** with Dean Sorenson.

In addition to his method books, Dr. Pearson is well known as a composer of many widely-performed compositions for concert band and jazz ensemble. He has led clinics in all fifty of the United States and has been guest conductor and clinician, by invitation, of countries throughout the Pacific Rim, the Orient, Europe, and the Canadian provinces.

Dr. Pearson has taught at the elementary, junior high, high school, and college levels, for over thirty years. Twice nominated for the prestigious Excellence in Education Award, he was recognized as “most outstanding in the field of music” for the state of Minnesota. In December, 1998, Dr. Pearson, “in recognition of his outstanding contribution to music education,” was awarded the prestigious Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic Medal of Honor. In 2001, he was awarded St. Cloud State University’s Distinguished Service to Music Award “in appreciation for lifelong contribution to music and music education.” In 2007, Dr. Pearson received St. Cloud State University’s “Distinguished Alumni Award.” That same year he was recognized as the first Patron for the Maryborough Conference in Queensland, Australia.

Dr. Pearson continues to serve as a guest lecturer, clinician, and conductor in addition to his work as a composer, arranger, and author.

Follow Dr. Pearson on Twitter: @BrucePearsonMus

Objective

By the end of this session, you will be aware of tips and technique for crafting an effective warm-up that will develop each band member's and the ensemble's performance and musicianship skills and prepare them for an effective rehearsal.

Identifying the Purpose

- A. Developing Individual Skill
- B. Developing Ensemble Cohesion
 - 1. Balance
 - 2. Blend
 - 3. Rhythmic
 - 4. Dynamic
- C. Developing Musicianship
- D. Focusing the ensemble's attention on the rehearsal's objectives
 - 1. Allow the rehearsal music to be the filter that crafts the warm-up's strategies.
 - 2. Key organization—use those keys for technical focus.
 - 3. Isolate rhythms.
 - 4. Assessment—include elements that are the focus of assessments, which sets priorities for the next rehearsal/warm-up.

Rehearsal Plan Based on a 50-Minute Period

Parts of Rehearsal	10	20	30	40	50
1. Warm-Up and Tuning	20%				
2. Familiar Selection		10%			
3. Primary Rehearsal Selections		30%			
4. Secondary Rehearsal Selections			20%		
5. Sight-Reading Selection				10%	
6. Closer					10%

Warm-Up

- A. Embouchure and Stick Control
- B. Technique (Scales, Thirds, Arpeggios, Rudiments, etc.)
- C. Mind
- D. Listening
- E. Tuning
- F. Chorale
- G. Concept and Activity

Crafting the Strategies

- A. Developing the Individual Skill
 - 1. Developing Consistent Tonal Energy—Breathing Exercises
 - a. Through the nose to relax the body.
 - b. Through the mouth to play.

2. Creating the Balance and Blend

a. Layers

Soprano Voices

Woodwinds

Piccolo
Flute
Oboe
1st Clarinet

Brass

1st Trumpet

Percussion

Bells
Xylophone
Snare Drum
Triangle
Cymbals

Alto Voices

Woodwinds

2nd Clarinet
3rd Clarinet
1st Alto Saxophone

Brass

2nd Trumpet
3rd Trumpet

Percussion

Marimba
Chimes
Wood Block
Tambourine

Tenor Voices

Woodwinds

Alto Clarinet
2nd Alto Saxophone
Tenor Saxophone

Brass

Horns
1st Trombone
2nd Trombone

Percussion

Tenor Drum
Tom-Tom

Bass Voices

Woodwinds

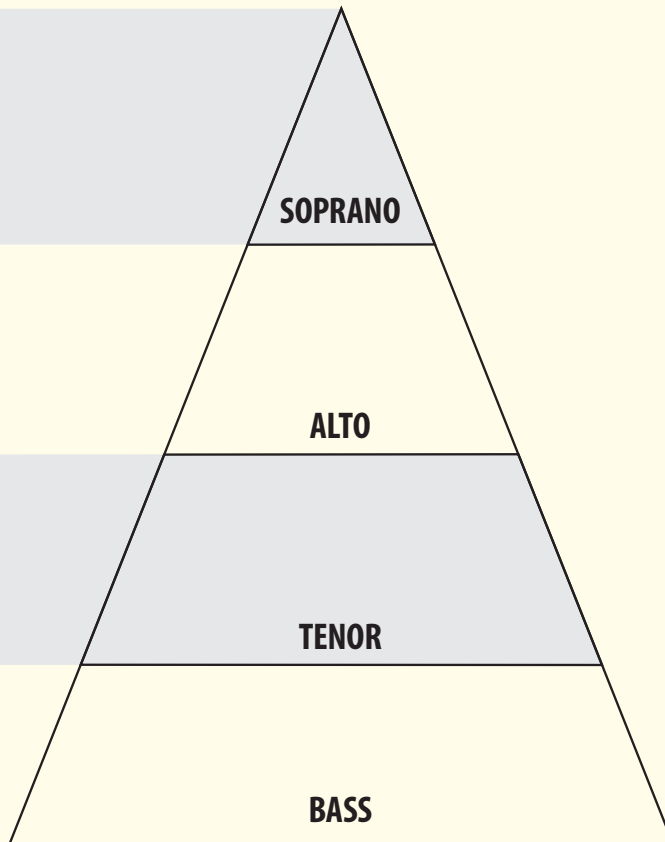
Bass Clarinet
Bassoon
Baritone Saxophone

Brass

Baritone/Euphonium
3rd Trombone
Tuba

Percussion

Timpani
Bass Drum



b. Dynamics—maintaining the ensemble's tone

Dynamic Control



3. Embouchure and Stick Control

► Mix and match exercises 1A, 2A, and 3A in any combination.

1A.



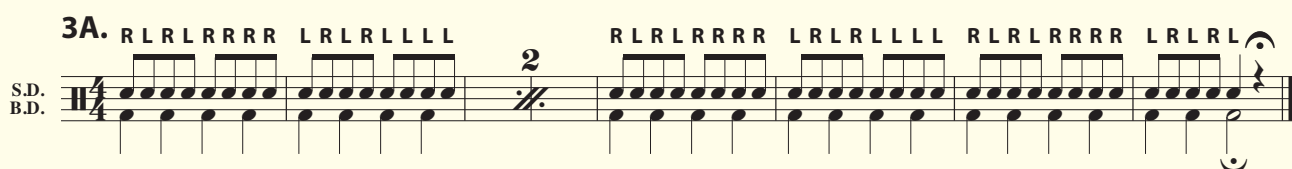
2A.



3A.



3A.



4. Technique—Maintaining the Sound

Slurs and Lip Slurs



Technique Builder



Stick Control



Slurs and Lip Slurs can be played simultaneously with Technique Builder and Stick Control.

C Major Technique Study (Concert B $\flat$ Major)

A) B) C)

S.D.
B.D.

Concert B $\flat$ Major Scale (9-Stroke Roll Study)

A) B)

S.D.
B.D.

Thirds (Paradiddle Study)

S.D.
B.D.

Arpeggios [I-IV-I-V⁷-I] and Chords [I-IV-I-V⁷-I] (C 17-Stroke or C 9-Stroke Roll and Paradiddle Study)

S.D.
B.D.

Articulation and Technique Etude #2 (Stick Control Study)

Basic ♩. = 80; Advanced ♩. = 92; Mastery ♩. = 120

S.D.
B.D.

5. Warming-Up the Mind—Developing Mental Focus

a. “By the Numbers”

- Play the following notes of the Concert E $\flat$ Major Scale:

1. 1-3-5-3-1
2. 1-2-5-1
3. 6-8-1-4

b. Echo drills (intervals and rhythms)

c. Dictation drills

B. Developing Ensemble Cohesion

1. “All Together Now”

- Play the following rhythm on the entire Concert E $\flat$ Major Scale:



2. “Follow the Stick”—Developing Eye Contact

3. Developing Listening Skills—Consistency of Tonal Energy

a. Match and Pass That Note

- note lengths and style: staccato, tenuto, marcato
- dynamic range: piano, mezzo piano, mezzo forte, forte

Match and Pass That Note



b. Play a chorale without direction

C Major Chorale (Concert B $\flat$)

William Croft (1678–1727)
English Composer
arr. Bruce Pearson

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

S *mf*

A *mf*

T *mf*

B *mf*

4. Tuning

- a. Vertical
- b. Horizontal
- c. Pitch tendencies, for example:

The following notes are naturally out of tune on most clarinets:

Tendency to be sharp:

Tendency to be flat:

Using an electronic tuner, check each note on your clarinet and mark the pitch tendency of each note on the fingering chart on the inside back cover using a + for sharp and a – for flat.

C. Developing Musicianship

1. Musical Concepts

Melodious Etude

Andante

Musicianship Tip: The most important note in each phrase is indicated by an "X." Crescendo all notes leading to the most important note within each phrase. Decrescendo leading away from that note.

Londonderry Air

Adagio con rubato

Australian composer Percy Grainger used this melody in his composition *Irish Tune from County Derry*.

Irish Folk Song

Melodious Etude

Modéré [Moderately]

Musicianship Tip: The note preceding a syncopated note should be played shorter and slightly softer than the syncopated note. The syncopated note should be played full length and slightly louder than the notes surrounding it.

Ecosaise

Allegro

In addition to his nine famous symphonies, Beethoven wrote many charming dances, like this ecosaise (Scottish dance).

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

German Composer

Other concepts to consider for your warm-up:

2. Theory
 - a. Intervals

Interval and Tuning Etude

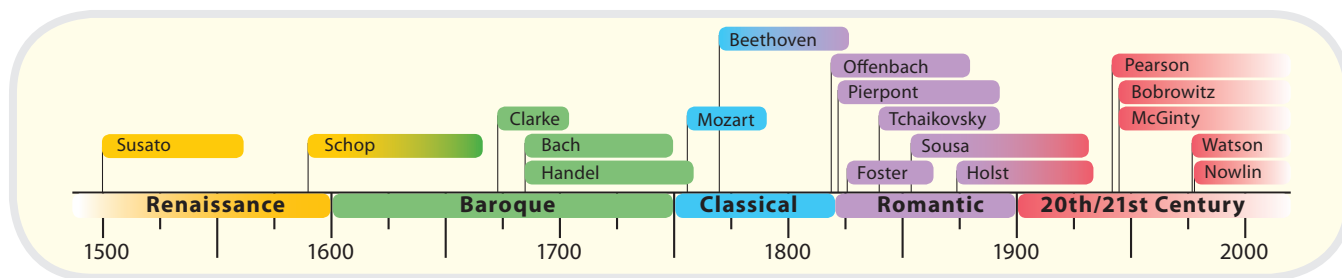
Largo
div.

- b. Chords

C Major Balance and Tuning Study

3. History

a. Timelines



b. Short historical comments

Mozart was a child prodigy, and he traveled throughout Europe with his father to display his talents on keyboard and violin. He composed his first symphony at age 8 and his first opera at age 12.

c. Composer spotlights

A public figure and a lover of the arts, **George Frideric Handel** (1685–1759) was another popular composer during the Baroque era. He was born in Germany near Bach's home town. In contrast to Bach, who stayed close to home his entire life, Handel traveled widely and eventually settled in England. The English royalty paid him very well, and he was greatly admired. Handel composed religious music, orchestral and chamber works, and operas, which he conducted all over Europe. He was very ambitious, and once even duelled with another composer over the right to play harpsichord for an opera performance. The duel was luckily called off when the other composer's sword broke on Handel's coat button. Handel's work *Music for the Royal Fireworks* from 1749 originally called for a huge ensemble of brass, woodwinds, timpani, and a cannon. He wrote the piece to accompany a fireworks celebration for the king of England. Just as the music began, the whole box of fireworks exploded by accident. Handel's piece, however, was a great success.



George Frideric Handel
"Handel is the greatest composer who ever lived." —Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827), famous composer of the Classical period

d. Written assessments

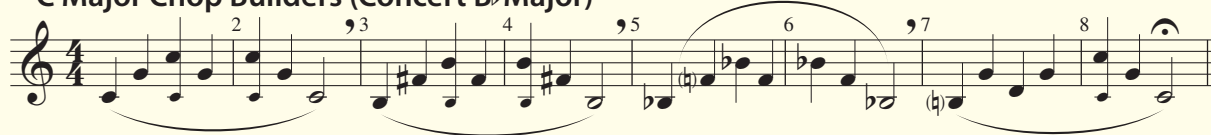
D. Focusing the Ensemble's Attention on the Rehearsal's Objectives

1. Allow the rehearsal music to be the filter that crafts the warm-up's strategies.
2. Key organization—use those keys for technical focus.
3. Isolate rhythms.
4. Assessment—include elements that are the focus of assessments, which sets priorities for the next rehearsal/warm-up.

Sample 5-Minute Young Band Warm-Up

1

C Major Chop Builders (Concert B♭ Major)



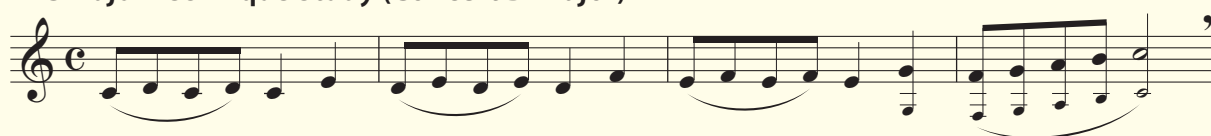
2

C Major Scale and Arpeggios (Concert B♭ Major)



3

C Major Technique Study (Concert B♭ Major)



4

Dynamic Control



5

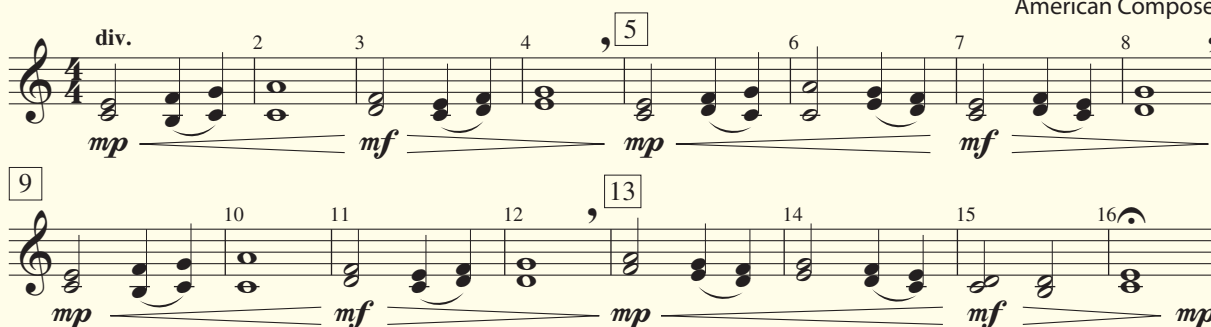
Match and Pass That Note



6

C Major Chorale: All Grace and Thanksgiving (Concert B♭ Major)

Ryan Nowlin (b. 1978)
American Composer



Sample 5-Minute Advancing Band Warm-Up

1

Slurs and Lip Slurs



Slurs and Lip Slurs can be played simultaneously with **Technique Builder** and **Stick Control**.

Technique Builder



Stick Control



2

Concert B♭ Major Scale (9-Stroke Roll Study)

Musical notation for Concert B♭ Major Scale (9-Stroke Roll Study). The exercise is written for two staves (A and B) in treble clef, 4/4 time. The melody for both staves is the B♭ Major Scale: B♭4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, A5, G5, F5, E5, D5, C5, B♭4. The notation includes slurs and ties. Below the melody, there are two staves for drum notation (S.D. and B.D.) with 'R' (Right) and 'L' (Left) above them. The drum notation is a series of eighth notes: R L R L R L R L, R L R L R L R L, R L R L R L R L, R L R L R L R L.

3

Thirds (Paradiddle Study)

Musical notation for Thirds (Paradiddle Study). The exercise is written for two staves (A and B) in treble clef, 4/4 time. The melody for both staves is a series of thirds: B♭4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, A5, G5, F5, E5, D5, C5, B♭4. The notation includes slurs and ties. Below the melody, there are two staves for drum notation (S.D. and B.D.) with 'R' (Right) and 'L' (Left) above them. The drum notation is a series of eighth notes: R L R R L R L L, R L R R L R L L, R L R R L R L L, R L R R L R L L.

Arpeggios [I-IV-I-V⁷-I] and Chords [I-IV-I-V⁷-I] (C 17-Stroke or C 9-Stroke Roll and Paradiddle Study)

NN1320B

9

Dynamic Control



10

Chorale — Band Arrangement

Martin Luther (1483–1546)
German Composer
arr. Ryan Nowlin

Maestoso
div.

To all attendees: The clinician thanks you for your attendance and attention and hopes that his suggestions will help your students make music and enjoy the music-making process.

Excerpts taken from:

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Appendix: SKILL BUILDING TEACHING TIPS

A. Tone Development

1. The concept of good tone is established through the use of models—both individual and ensemble. Play recordings of exemplary models for students. “The sound you have in your mind is the sound you will make.”
2. Air and embouchure are the two most critical components of good tone quality for wind players.
 - Good tone requires the adequate amount and speed of air.
 - Good embouchures can be evaluated by being certain that students are playing the correct pitches on their head joint (flute), mouthpiece and barrel (clarinet), mouthpiece and neck (alto/bass clarinets and saxophones), or mouthpiece alone (brass instruments) with their throats relaxed and open.
3. Wind players should visualize the air moving through their instruments and out the end—taking the sound with it.
4. Whether playing loudly or softly, the air speed remains constant. Playing loudly requires more volume (quantity) of air than does playing softly. Consistency of air speed is critical.
5. Ensemble tone is more than a composite of individual tone. Careful attention should be paid to the “layering” of tones and tessituras. A good, basic ensemble sound requires the aural representation of a pyramid.
6. Good ensemble tone can be achieved during crescendos and decrescendos by having the lowest instruments make the greatest dynamic change.
7. Be sensitive to the tone color of the percussion instruments. Insist on the good production of tone and balance from each member of the percussion section. Be familiar with the different tones that can be produced by different sticks, mallets, and instruments. Have the percussionists listen within their section and to the entire ensemble.

B. Intonation

1. The art of playing in tune requires good tone production and good listening. You can’t tune a poor tone—neither individual nor ensemble.
2. It is student musicians’ responsibility to play in tune. It is the teacher/director’s task to teach them how to do it. Teach students what in-tune and out-of-tune sound like.
3. Tune only after instruments and musicians are warmed up.
4. Help students understand the pitch tendencies of their instruments.
5. Tune chords from the bass voices in root position. Have students sing the fundamental pitch first before playing it.
6. Teach students to match sounds. Inform them as to who is playing the same pitch or line and have them listen to it to match those pitches.
7. Good ensemble intonation is inextricably linked to good ensemble balance. Have the ensemble play with a good pyramid of sound.
8. Tune the ensemble by having students be responsible for tuning using both the vertical and horizontal tuning process.
9. Ask players to “tune your trio” (yourself and those on both sides), which eventually links the entire ensemble.

10. Students need to know what note of the chord they are playing and should become aware of some standard harmonic intonation adjustments:
 - Major triad – tune the third down
 - Minor triad – tune the third up
 - Dominant 7th – tune the seventh down
11. Teach students the effect of dynamics (volume) on intonation.

C. Rhythmic Accuracy and Independence

1. The ensemble must feel the internal pulse (usually the subdivision of the beat). Rhythm should have a certain physicality.
2. When playing whole notes, think in eighth notes. This will often solve the common problem of rushing.
3. Think of rests as “silent notes.” Students’ minds should think of subdividing the rests also.
4. Develop rhythmic independence by a systematic process of having students play rhythm exercises in the following order:
 - a. Unison
 - b. Two-part (woodwinds play one part, brass and percussion the other)
 - c. Two-part (assign parts between sections, i.e. flutes and clarinets, saxophones and other low instruments, trumpets and French horns, low brass and percussion)
 - d. Assign parts within each instrument section
 - e. Assign parts by having the person next to them play a different rhythm
 - f. Follow the same process with three- and four-part rhythms
5. Many rhythm problems are actually technique and facility problems. Practice slowly until students get the correct patterns in their hands.
6. Counting rhythms is important but counting and clapping rhythms is more helpful to good rhythmic execution and development.
7. Make certain that “inner parts” are rhythmically vital.
8. To teach rhythms, recognize and isolate the problem.
9. It is often effective to have students “sizzle” rhythms.

D. Technique and Facility

1. Good technique and facility are dependent on students knowing their instruments. They do this by mastering the following:
 - Scales
 - Thirds
 - Arpeggios
 - Chromatic scales
 - Finger patterns
 - Lip flexibility exercises (brass)
 - Rudiments (percussionists)

Be sure students identify and recognize these patterns in music being rehearsed.
2. Students often use less air when playing faster passages. Remind them that “the faster the notes, the faster the air.”
3. Add student interest and responsibility by playing scales using the “solo-soli” system.

E. Balance

1. To teach good balance, assign and divide the ensemble into four groups by instrument range: bass, tenor, alto, and soprano. Build chords and unisons by starting with the bass section and layer each successive group on top. Emphasize the pyramid of sound with lower-pitched instruments playing louder than higher-pitched ones.
2. Students should understand the role of their part in relation to the whole. Is it melody, a part of a chordal accompaniment, countermelody, etc.? Determine which part should be prominent; students should play it accordingly. (Inner parts often need to be emphasized.)
3. Ask students to make musical judgments. This helps to make each individual student responsible for his or her own part.
4. Good ensemble balance can be achieved during crescendos and decrescendos by having the lowest-pitched instruments make the greatest dynamic change. Instruct students to “listen down” and adjust their dynamics so that the lowest-pitched instruments are heard clearly. This also applies to the percussion section.
5. Target the balance and blend by saying, “balance to the French horns” or “match the third clarinets.”
6. To create a dark, warm sound, instruct students to get “inside the sound” of the conical brass (horns, euphoniums, and tuba).
7. Instruct students to get “inside the sound” of the person they are seated next to; this will prevent individuals from “sticking out.”

F. Dynamics

1. There are no dynamic “absolutes.” All dynamics are related to one another within a piece.
2. Students need to understand the dynamic tendencies of their instruments. For example, it is nearly impossible for young saxophonists to play very softly in the low register. Similarly, it is very difficult for young trumpeters to play softly in the upper register, or flutes to play loudly in the lower register. At those times, it may be necessary to adjust the number of performers playing at that time.
3. It is often helpful to describe dynamic extremes by saying, “pianissimo is as quietly as you can play WITH A GOOD TONE and fortissimo is as loudly as you can play WITH A GOOD TONE.” Obviously, the operative phrase is “WITH A GOOD TONE.”
4. To emphasize dynamic change, explain that a crescendo means not only to gradually get louder, but also to start quieter. A decrescendo means to gradually get softer and to start slightly louder.
5. Plan the crescendos and decrescendos. Instruct students how loud you want them to be at the halfway point.
6. When a band plays softly, the resonance is often lost. It may be helpful to suggest that students try “whispering” loudly.
7. For practice, have students play tones eight to sixteen beats long through the dynamic extremes; ask them to play with a good tone throughout the entire dynamic range.
8. Oftentimes, students disregard dynamic attention when playing short notes. Have them play multiple quarter notes in a variety of articulation styles through their complete dynamic range.

G. Articulation for Wind Players

1. When teaching students to tongue, don't have them say "tu" out loud; rather, have them whisper those sounds. This will minimize jaw movement.
2. Teach students to minimize tongue impact.
3. Many articulation problems are really air speed problems. Instruct the students to keep the air behind their teeth and tongues.
4. To improve sluggish articulation, have the students "sizzle" articulations before attempting to execute them.
5. On short notes, students should:
 - Use more compact, compressed air without forcing air into the horn.
 - Get the air to the back of the note faster.
6. On fast notes, students should:
 - Think, "How fast does my tongue need to move?"
 - Keep the tongue close to the point of contact.
 - Use more sound/tone as faster notes go by.

H. Phrasing

1. Tell students that phrasing is musical decision-making.
2. Determine phrase length by breath marks, harmonic cadence, and/or rhythmic cadence.
3. Instruct students to refrain from breathing during a phrase.
4. Relate the teaching of musical phrases to speaking. Have students say the phrase "I love making music" four times. Each time, have students emphasize a different word:
 - I love making music.
 - I **LOVE** making music.
 - I love **MAKING** music.
 - I love making **MUSIC**.

Discuss how this changes the meaning of the sentence. The same is true with musical phrases.

5. Identify the most important note of each phrase. Generally, crescendo all notes leading to that note within the phrase and decrescendo all notes moving away from the most important note within the phrase.
6. Oftentimes, modeling the phrase is helpful.

I. Ensemble Playing

1. Teach students about their individual responsibility. Have students play a well-prepared piece with their eyes closed to focus their listening and attention.
2. Make certain there is consistency in articulation to achieve clarity in the musical line.
3. Develop students' listening and performing skills by "passing a note" around the ensemble. While doing this, have them match the previous performer's or group's pitch, duration, and intensity. Most groups start their notes at the same time but the real problem is at a note's end: students must listen to ensure that they match each other on their releases.
4. Try scrambling the seating in the rehearsal hall so that everyone will hear different parts. The key to good ensemble playing is active listening.

J. Music Reading

1. Rhythmic reading skills are developed by having students count and clap rhythms before attempting to execute them.
2. Tonal reading skills are developed by having students “sing” tonal patterns before playing them. This can often be achieved by having students identify scale, third, and arpeggio patterns as well as Rudiments (percussion) in their music.
3. Give students a repertoire of tonal and rhythmic patterns.
4. Music reading skills can only be developed by having students audiate (hear in their mind’s ear) tonal and rhythmic sounds before attempting to perform them on their instruments.