



DAY ONE: CLARINET

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ABOUT ME:

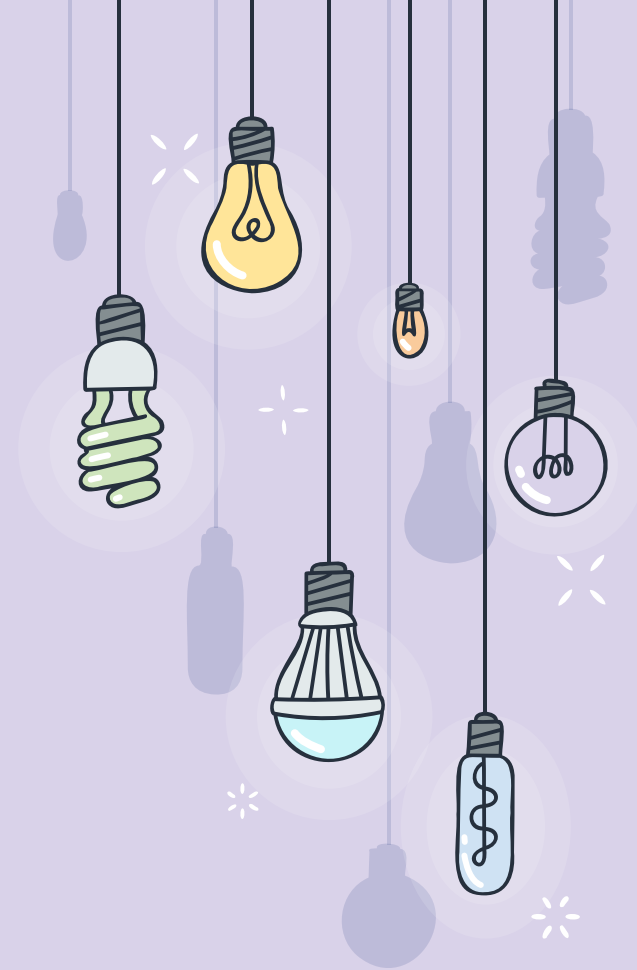


- + 32+ years of experience teaching beginning/ middle school band
- + Experience as a private clarinet lesson teacher
- + Masters degree in clarinet performance
- + Active as a performer

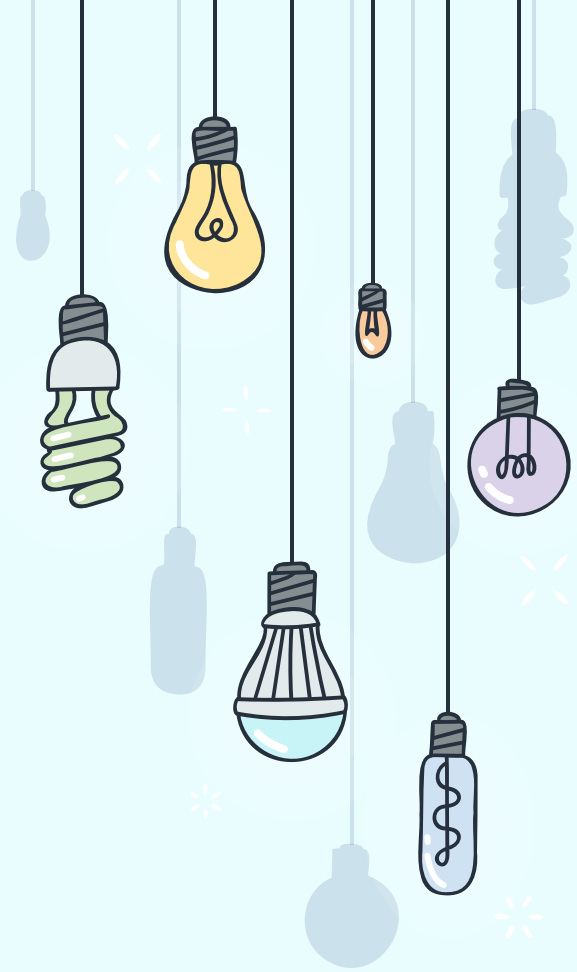


On clarinet, we want our most vibrant, resonant sound.

Anything that stifles the reed's ability to vibrate will negatively impact sound quality.



Thus, everything we do with physical set-up must maximize the reed's ability to vibrate.



1

BEFORE THE CLARINET

Things to teach before making a sound



* TEACH THESE SKILLS WITHOUT THE INSTRUMENT

- + Posture/ body position
 - × Balanced, natural, tension free
- + Breathing procedures for inhale
 - × Full, relaxed
 - × Expansion around middle of body
- + Fast, focused, and directional air stream on exhale
 - × Cold air, moving straight forward



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EMBOUCHURE



* THE CLARINET EMOUCHURE MUST BE "BUILT"

- + Teach embouchure in steps
- + Provide frequent verbal prompts and feedback
- + Watch your students, check individually
- + Use mirrors
- + Clarinet and saxophone embouchure are not the same.



* THE BASIC EMBOUCHURE IS NOT ENOUGH!

Start with the basics, but make sure to expand on embouchure instruction as students are ready

Failure to do so results in students that play with a stuffy sound or a significantly flat pitch



BASIC EMBOUCHURE-

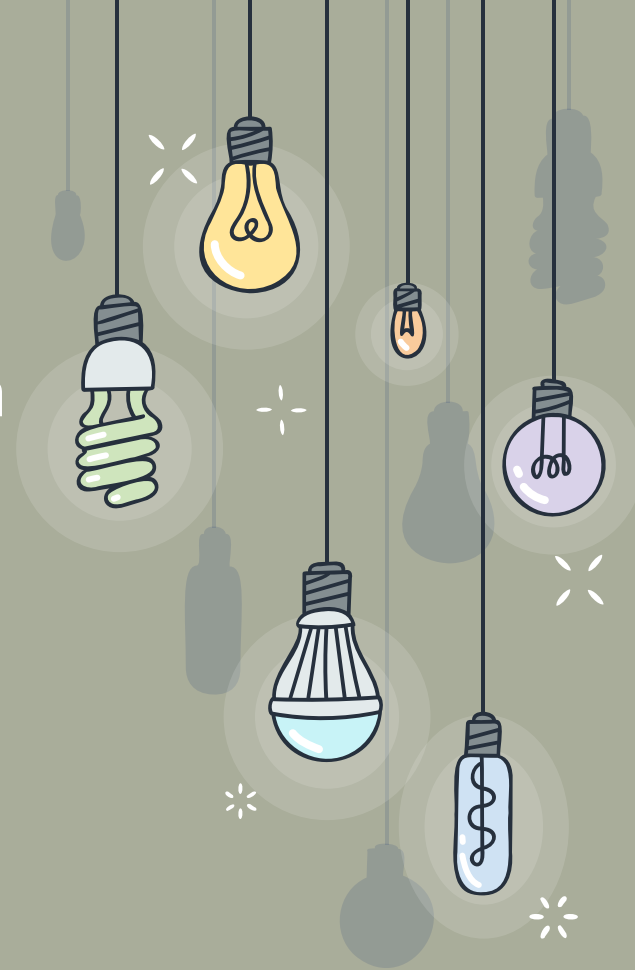
* KID FRIENDLY INSTRUCTIONS

- + Pretend you are putting Chapstick on your bottom lip
- + Feel for the valley in your chin
- + Mark your spot
- + Place the reed on your bottom lip at “the spot”
- + Place your top teeth on the mouthpiece
- + Hug the mouthpiece with your lips



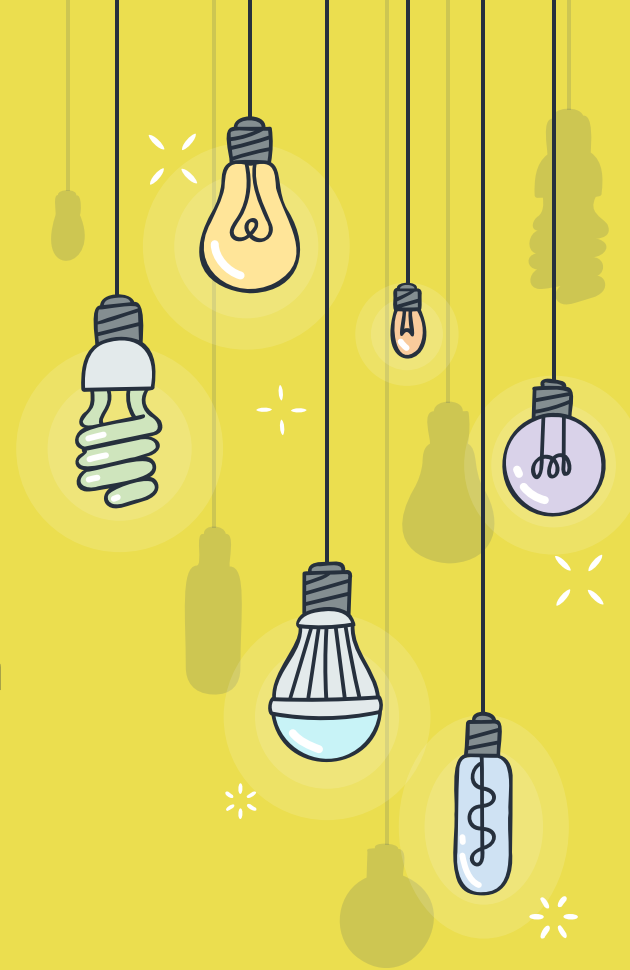
A LITTLE MORE DETAIL

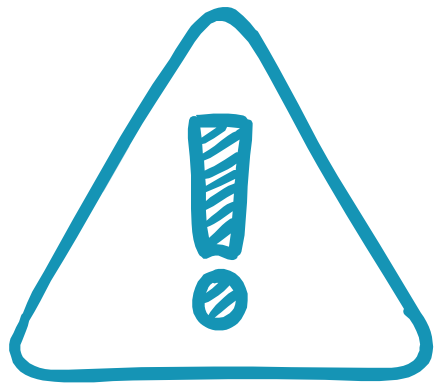
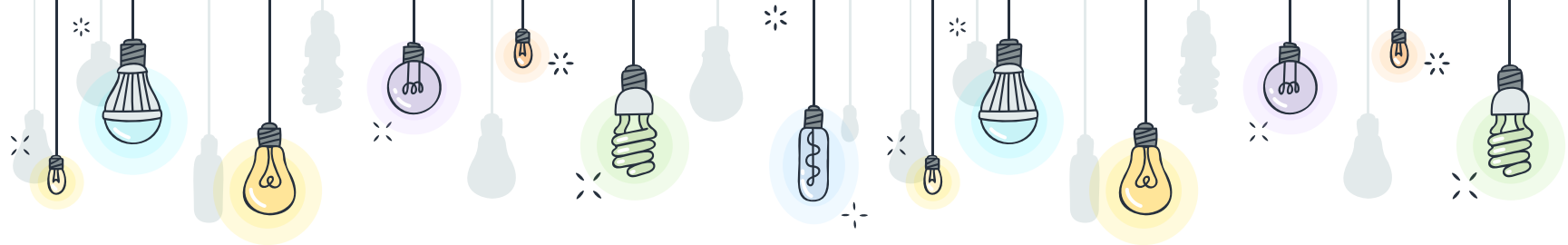
- + Lower lip is not a “cushion”
- + Don’t “roll” the bottom lip over the teeth
- + Bottom jaw and teeth move forward toward the lower lip
- + If bottom teeth are back, the chin bunches and the mouthpiece is not supported
- + Watch for the valley in the chin



TYPICAL CHALLENGES

- ✦ Top teeth are not planted on mouthpiece - do the wiggle test
- ✦ Attempting to hold mouthpiece with lips,
- ✦ Lower lip is too far into the mouth (bunched chin)
- ✦ Not enough/ too much mouthpiece in mouth
- ✦ Puffing cheeks
- ✦ Looking down/ dipped chin
- ✦ Air stream is not fast and steady





THE CLARINET WILL TELL YOU IF
SOMETHING ISN'T RIGHT!

* NEXT LEVEL EMBOUCHURE

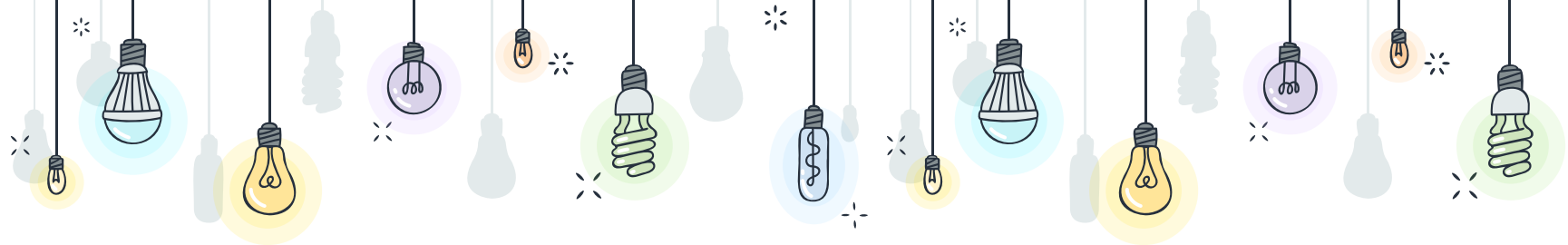
- + The right thumb and top teeth must support the clarinet - not the lips.
- + Push up gently with right thumb toward the top teeth
- + Mouthpiece should be anchored under the top teeth
- + If the bottom lip is pushing up, the reed cannot vibrate fully and the sound will be stuffy
- + Angle of the clarinet is around 35°



* LEVEL 3 EMBOUCHURE - VOICING

- + Voicing refers to the shape and size of the oral cavity
- + Controlled by the position of the tongue
- + Clarinet has the highest voicing of all woodwinds
- + Tongue arched high near the roof of mouth
 - × “ee” vowel shape
- + Concert F# on mouthpiece and barrel (will be a bit sharp)
 - × Practice with a drone
- + Voicing errors cause clarinets to be flat!





CONCEPTS ARE ALWAYS LEARNED ON THE "SMALL INSTRUMENT"

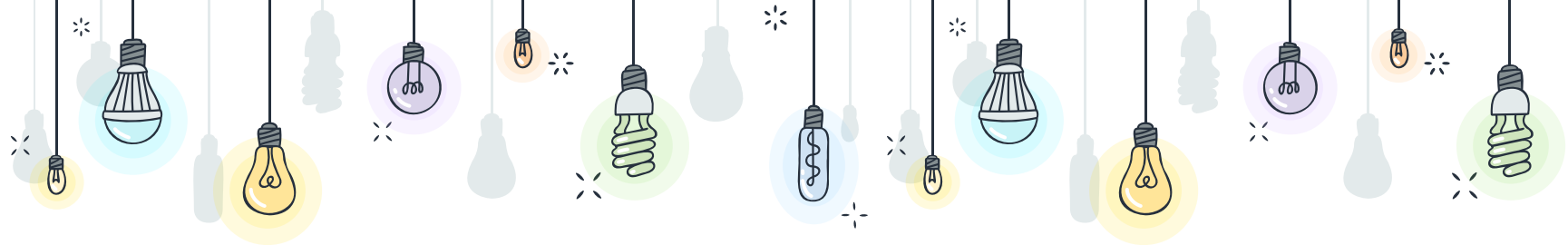
- Mini clarinet (mouthpiece and barrel)
- Half clarinet (mouthpiece, barrel and upper section)
 - Full clarinet - barrel bell
 - Full clarinet with hands in place

3

TONGUING

More challenging for single reeds
than all other instruments



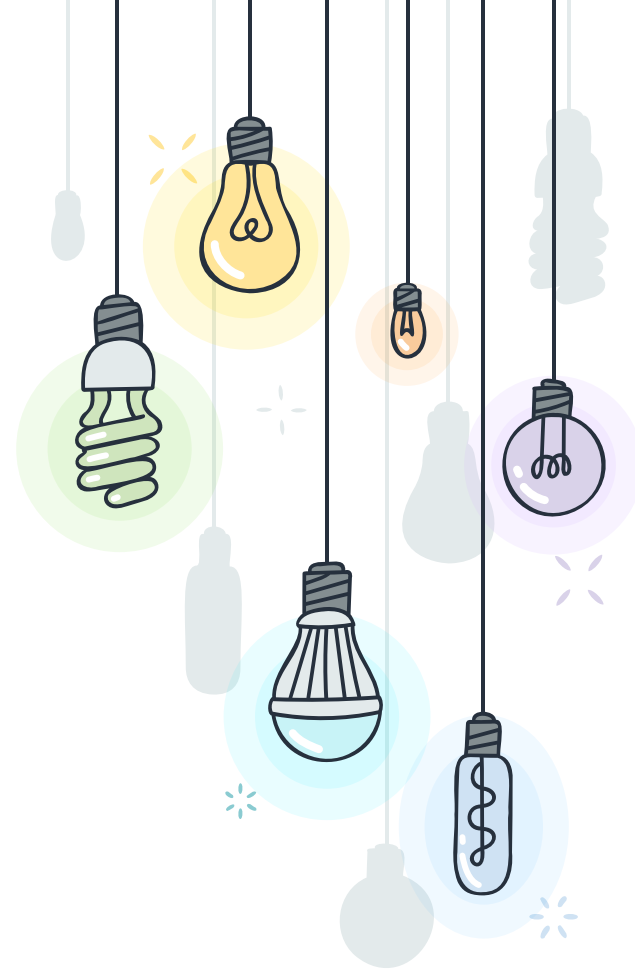


TONGUING INSTRUCTION CAN WAIT

Embouchure, air stream, and tone production must be firmly established before introducing the concept of articulation

* TONGUING BASICS

- + When tonguing, nothing will change with airstream or embouchure.
- + Tip of the tongue touches the top of reed
- + Blow a steady and smooth air stream (feel the back pressure)
- + Pull tongue down and away from the
- + reed and it will vibrate and make a sound.
- + Don't stop the air between notes when tonguing



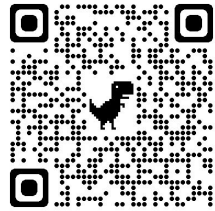
TONGUING IN SLOW MOTION

- + Place tip of tongue against top of reed
- + Blow air while tongue is in place (if you hear air, the tongue is not in the correct place)
- + Pull tongue down and away
- + Try the golf ball tonguing activity



CHECK OUT MY BEGINNING BOOK, "JUST FOR CLARINETS" FOR MORE INFO

- Used annually in Carmel (IN) Schools for beginning clarinet instruction
- QR codes with videos by myself and other Carmel beginning band directors explaining all the concepts



THANKS FOR ATTENDING!

You can find me at:

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- + www.onandoffthepodium.com

