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## HANDOUT FOR 'PLAY ALONG BASSOON CLINIC'

At Midwest Clinic, Room W179, 2:30PM December 17, 2009

"Follow the Leader" - Modeling Without Music for Groups of Wind Instruments

This instructional technique may be used for instrumental methods classes, master classes, clinics or workshops. It is especially useful in groups with players of different playing ability or where the players' ability is unknown. The concept is based on "call and response" in which the participants echo what the leader plays. The goal is to attend to phrasing, note starts and endings, tone-quality, pitch and development of the ear. No printed music is needed.

Students may sit or stand facing the leader. If chairs are used leave some room between chairs.

Guidelines for leader:

- Before playing the instruments, some rhythmical models can be made using clapping, tapping or chanting.
- Announce the first pitch and key in which you will be playing. Tell them subsequent models will begin on the starting note or the ending note of the previous model.
- Play a few slurred notes at a moderately loud dynamic in a steady, relatively slow tempo for the participants to mimic.

### Examples of models

Leader Followers Very brief comments can follow models.

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- After some responses, brief comments about fundamentals can be made but keep the session moving.
- Stay in one key for preliminary models.

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- Play several variations of the same rhythmical pattern before changing it.
- Repeat some notes within patterns to require tonguing.
- Provide models that allow rests for inhalation.
- As the patterns progress, the starting note can be:
  - a pitch one step away from the last pitch
  - (or, much later) any pitch in the previous pattern
  - as they build confidence don't tell them the starting pitch.
  - Add additional beats using fewer pitches before adding additional pitches.Some groups will remember more, some less.
- Later sessions can include changing dynamics, metronome games, chromatic pitches and varying intervals or arpeggiated patterns. Request responses to be twice as fast or twice as slow as the model, or repeated a number of times.

Advanced students can:

- develop "answering" phrases with preset or improvised patterns.
- learn trills, embellishments, accelerandos, and ritards.
- develop improvisation by acting as modeler.
- use scales beyond the major or minor modes.

This instructional technique encourages students:

- To listen attentively.
- To establish tone and musicality based on the modeler's example.
- To play without music.
- To blend with other players.
- To become aware of key.
- To begin to develop improvisation.

After the first few patterns the relative technical ability and playing experience of each player will become evident. The patterns can be adjusted to account for this or players can be divided into stronger and weaker groups using different models.

Leader can:

- Review: posture, air supply, tongue placement, tone, articulation, basic fingerings.
- An advanced student can be the modeler if the leader needs to circulate amongst the students. Leader could write out sample models for the modeler.