

**Establishing the Proper Set-up
for the
Trumpet**

Presented by
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Music for All Summer Symposium
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Ball State University
Muncie, IN

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OVERVIEW

- ◆ Identify Students Most Likely to Succeed
- ◆ Mouthpiece Selection
- ◆ Making the First Sound
- ◆ Posture & Hand Position
- ◆ Articulation

**Identify Students
Most Likely to Succeed**

Allow students to have personal contact with the trumpet.

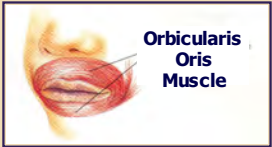

- ◆ Allow students to touch and hold the trumpet.
- ◆ Allow students to attempt playing the instrument? This could be a good or bad experience.

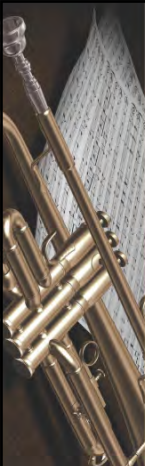


**Identify Students
Most Likely to Succeed**

Facial and dental structure should be conducive for producing a high quality, characteristic tone and flexibility.


The bite of the mouthpiece rim should rest on the skin above and below the "red" part of the lips.




Identify Students Most Likely to Succeed

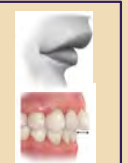
The teeth should provide a comfortable support for the embouchure.




"Normal" Bite





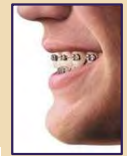
Underbite





Overbite

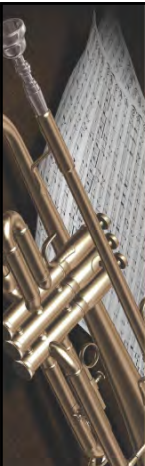


Identify Students Most Likely to Succeed


What about braces?

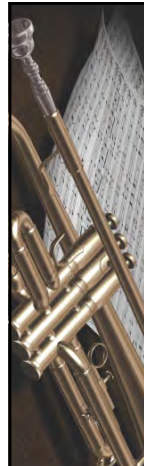


Identify Students Most Likely to Succeed

Check the student's **RIGHT** hand for:

- ◆ Injuries
- ◆ Deformities
- ◆ Number of fingers
 - Polydactylysm
 - Oligodactylysm
- ◆ Past surgeries
- ◆ Anything that can present an obstacle for progress.






Identify Students Most Likely to Succeed

Check the student's **LEFT** hand and arm for:

- ◆ Ability to support the trumpet.
- ◆ Deformities.
- ◆ Ability to reach around the valve casings.
- ◆ Anything that can prevent supporting the weight of the instrument.



Mouthpiece Selection

NO MOUTHPIECE IS PERFECT

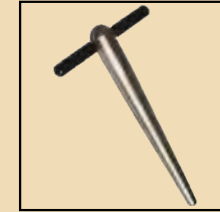
Mouthpiece should fit comfortably. For Trumpet, a mouthpiece with the same or similar dimensions as a Bach 5C works well for beginners.

Bach 7C is common but may be too small for some students.



Mouthpiece Selection

Use a mouthpiece truing tool to remove dents from the mouthpiece shank for efficient airflow.



Making that First Sound

AIR AIR AIR

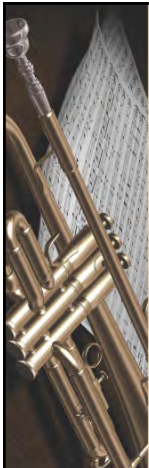
- ◆ Form a proper embouchure and gently blow air through the mouthpiece. Keep teeth separated and corners firm. Focus to the center.
- ◆ Don't try to produce a buzz initially.
- ◆ Increase air speed until the buzz happens without additional pressure or tension in the embouchure.
- ◆ Buzz should be the result of the air flow and should not be forced. The horn amplifies the buzz, the airflow fuels the buzz.



Making the First Sound

AIR AIR AIR


- ◆ I generally aim for a 50/50 to slightly higher due to the type of embouchure I allow to play the trumpet.
- ◆ Bottom lip does not buzz. A mouthpiece too low will restrict the buzz of the top lip.
- ◆ Begin attempts to match pitch on just the mouthpiece immediately, BEFORE the students realize it is difficult to do!
- ◆ Have all students sing the pitch, then woodwinds/percussion sing while brass buzz. Begin with the first note on the first line of the first book.



Making the First Sound


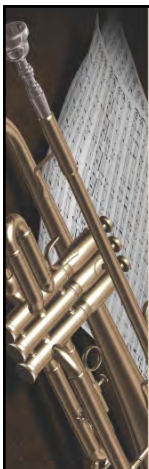
Mouthpiece Buzzing / Matching Pitch

- ◆ Have trumpet students attempt to match the first pitch on the mouthpiece while the band plays the pitch.
- ◆ Using call and echo, gradually change pitch upward and downward in half step increments.
- ◆ While matching the first pitch on mouthpiece, gradually add the trumpet. This will help achieve a warm, open tone quality and improve intonation.
- ◆ Work toward an exercise similar to the ["Dr. J. Lip Buzz"](#) by the 5th month of instruction.




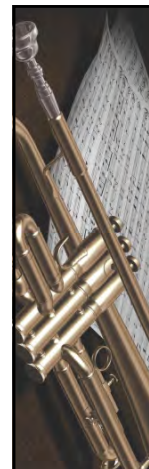
Posture

- ◆ Feet flat on the floor.
- ◆ Shoulders down and relaxed.
- ◆ Spinal Stretch.
- ◆ Allow space for the diaphragm to move unrestricted.

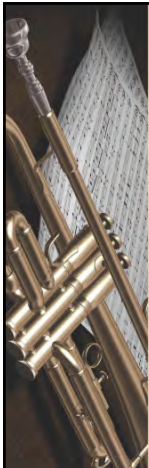
Hand Position

- ◆ Finger pads on the valve caps
- ◆ Right thumb between 1st & 2nd valves and up underneath the lead pipe. (opposable thumb)
- ◆ Keep the palm of the right hand away from the valve casings.
- ◆ Keep left wrist straight to help identify the proper placement of left thumb

Hand Position



- ◆ Main tuning slide should be pulled and adjusted
- ◆ The three valve slides should be set all the way in.
- ◆ The first valve slide is adjusted with the left thumb, and the third valve slide is adjusted with the left ring finger. Sometimes the ring is too large for thin fingers.



Hand Position

Right hand pinky IN the ring or OUT of the ring?

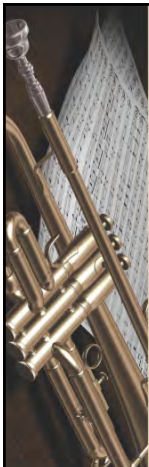
- ❖ Use the "Spider Hand" demonstration
- ❖ The pinky ring is mainly used for page turns and negotiating mute changes.
- ❖ The pinky ring is not an octave key.

Hand Position

Fun Fingering Drills

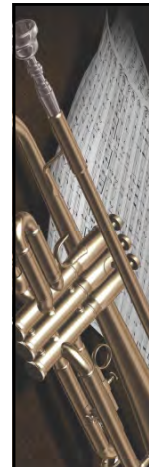
- ◆ Use interactive computer links
- ◆ [Brass Trainer](#)
- ◆ Score sheet can be printed and submitted as a homework assignment.



Articulation

Proper Airflow is Critical for Proper Articulation

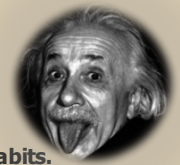
- ❖ Have students "blow fog" on the trumpet bell. Use warm, moist, fast-moving air.
- ❖ Have students move the tongue (tha-tha-tha) without moving the jaw AND without stopping the air. Use "tha" to help hit the alveolar ridge. **DON'T ALLOW THE TIP OF THE TONGUE TO STICK OUT BETWEEN THE TEETH.**
- ❖ Alternate between starting the note with just air alone. Then gently add the tongue to start the pitch. The release (attack) is the result of air (mainly) and less tongue.

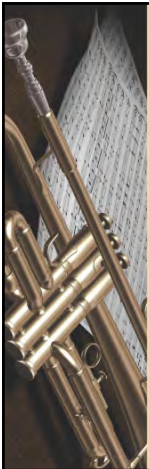


Articulation

Should tonguing be introduced early?

- ◆ Yes, because it impacts how the embouchure responds to air flow.
- ◆ Yes, because it impacts tone at initiation of pitch.
- ◆ Yes, because it helps to avoid bad habits. If you do not teach the skill, the student will invent their own method!
- ◆ You won't like their method.






A Little Trick to Improve Fingering Accuracy

from Mark Hughes, Principal Trumpet, Houston Symphony Orchestra

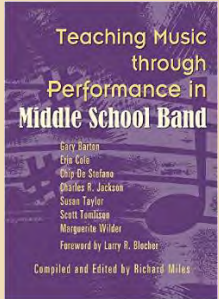
- ◆ Ask students to reverse hands
 - Hold the horn with the right hand
 - Left hand fingers on the valves
- ◆ Play difficult passage slowly with no errors three times in a row
- ◆ Switch hands back to normal position
- ◆ Technical passage now easier at a much faster speed
- ◆ Left Brain/ Right Brain Strategy.
- ◆ **WORKS FOR ANY AGE PLAYER. YOU MUST TRY THIS !**



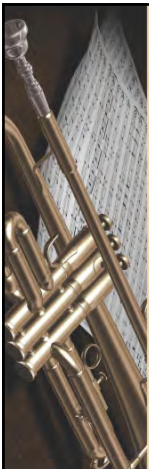
RESOURCES

Teaching Music Through Performance in Middle School Band

By
 Gary Barton
 Erin Cole
 Chip De Stefano
 Charles R. Jackson
 Susan Taylor
 Scott Tomlinson
 Marguerite Wilder



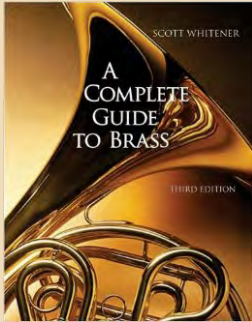

Chapter 4: Mastering Fundamentals



RESOURCES

A Complete Guide to Brass

by Scott Whitener


RESOURCES

The Band Director's Book of Secrets

By
 Charles R. Jackson, D.M.A.

Available through:

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