

Jr. High Bassoon Students

Lesson 1

(30 Minute Session)

1 – Warm-up (5 minutes)

- Make sure you demonstrate good posture. Take two or three deep, full breaths reminding yourself how you need to breathe to play a wind instrument.
- Test the “crow” of your reed – using a loose embouchure, blow air through the reed.
 - Aim to have multiple tones (low, medium, high) simultaneously. If you achieve only a single tone, it is possible that your embouchure is too tight, or your reed needs adjusting.
- Long tones
 - Start quietly with low notes moving to higher ones.
 - Play notes as long as possible to build stamina and control.
 - Add dynamics including crescendos and decrescendos, listening for richness of tone.
- Connectivity challenge.
 - As you play a scale, keep your embouchure open and relaxed, connecting the notes so they blend into one another. Very important as you ascend: **compress the air – don’t apply pressure with your lips.**

2 - Technique (10 minutes)

The image shows two staves of musical notation in bass clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of two flats (Bb Major). The first staff is labeled 'Scale' and 'Arpeggio'. The 'Scale' section consists of an ascending eighth-note scale from Bb2 to Bb4, followed by a descending eighth-note scale from Bb4 to Bb2, and a final whole note Bb2. The 'Arpeggio' section consists of a descending eighth-note arpeggio from Bb4 to Bb2, followed by a final whole note Bb2. The second staff is labeled 'Thirds'. It consists of an ascending eighth-note scale from Bb2 to Bb4, followed by a descending eighth-note scale from Bb4 to Bb2, and a final whole note Bb2.

Bb Major Scale, Arpeggio and Thirds



Bb Chromatic Scale

- When you practice your scales be sure to vary the articulations: all slurred, all tongued, slur two & tongue two, tongue two & slur two, slur three and tongue one, etc.

For enrichment: to advance your technique even more, play your scales in full range; i.e.: For major scales, start on your lowest note (not necessarily the root or first note of the scale) and play to your highest note using the same key signature.

Always work with a metronome aiming for accuracy first and then increase the tempo. Accuracy is more important than speed.

3 – Work on your repertoire (15 minutes)

Choose to practice what needs to be mastered; don't waste your time practicing what you can already do.

- Listen to the piece you're working on. Most band pieces are available to listen to on jwpepper.com.
- Listen and play along – don't worry about mistakes.
- Isolate the more difficult passages and work on these in small "chunks."
 - Without playing, figure out the **rhythms** first. Write in the counting if you need to and if need be, S L O W it way down. Accuracy is more important than speed.
 - Look at the notes and add the fingerings to the rhythms you've just learned.
 - Take note of the key signature and any accidentals; play these small "chunks" sections on your instrument. Accuracy is more important than speed.
 - Put the "chunks" together, gradually increasing tempo if necessary. Accuracy is more important than speed.
 - **Practice with a metronome is always encouraged.**

4 – Listening (5 minutes)

- On YouTube, find examples of great players to listen to and *really listen* for the following: breathing, tone quality, articulations, musical phrasing, dynamics, etc. Great players to check out: Christopher Millard, Sophie Dartigalongue, Milan Turkovic.