

Our First Clarinet Lesson

The purpose of this page is to show you what we learned today in our lesson and to provide a daily reminder to the students. All points are explained in the order they were introduced to your child. They are also listed on page 2 in their lesson book. We are asking the students to practice this lesson **15 minutes a day** for at least 5 days in the next week. Please mark your practice times in the front of your lesson book on the **PRACTICE RECORD** (inside of front cover).

1. **POSTURE:** Good **TONE** is the result of good posture.

What to look for?

- * *The student should sit on the front edge of their chair with both feet on the floor.*
- * *The back should be straight with the head up.*

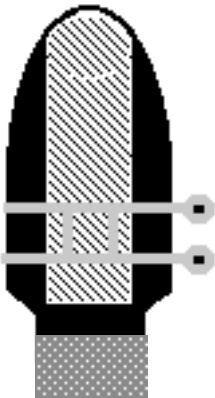
2. **BREATHING:** To produce a good **TONE** we must supply the instrument with a full breath.

- * *Good Posture: Sit up straight with your feet flat on the floor.*
- * *Take air in only from the mouth. You should feel cool air as you inhale....listen for the open throat "AHH" sound.*
- * *Don't lift the shoulders, allow the air to flow down to the stomach expanding it. It may feel like you are sipping air through a straw.*
- * *Control the release of the air. If you need to exhale faster use your stomach muscles. This is what we call Breathe Control.*

3. **FOOT TAP:** To play together as a group we must all agree on a steady beat. Anytime you play tap your foot. Try to keep the foot tap consistent

4. **SLIDE THE MOUTHPIECE ONTO THE BARREL** After applying grease to the cork, twist slightly until the mouthpiece is completely on the Barrel.

5. **PUTTING THE REED ON THE MOUTHPIECE.**



- * *For the reed to play it must be wet. Put the rounded end of the reed in your mouth let it soak for about a minute.*
- * *Hold the reed so the back of the reed (the flat side) is facing the flat side of the mouthpiece.*
- * *The reed should be placed on the mouthpiece with the rounded, thinnest end toward the tip of the mouthpiece.*
- * *When placed against the mouthpiece you should see only a thin black line over the top of the reed.*
- * *Next hold the mouthpiece with reed and mouthpiece with one hand. With the other hand place the loosened ligature (the silver piece) over the top of the mouthpiece. The ligature screws should be on the right side. The biggest end of the ligature should go on first. Slide the ligature down as far as it can go then tighten the screws. You are now ready to play!*

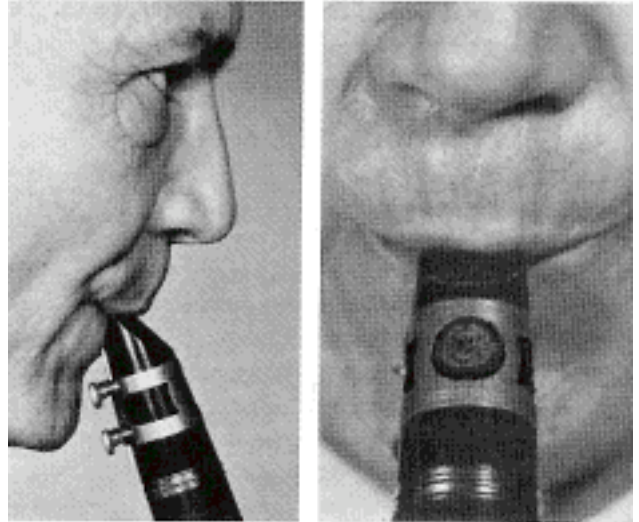
6. GETTING THE FIRST SOUND.

For the first week, your child has been given instructions to play on only the mouthpiece and barrel of the instrument. This is to teach the proper embouchure & mouthpiece placement without having to think about hand or instrument position. Those areas will be covered next week. The **EMBOUCHURE** is the position of face, lips and mouth to create the proper tone. Use a mirror each day to check placement every day.

* The proper embouchure for Clarinet should be like saying the words "We Too" Concentrate on the word "Too". This pulls the jaw down and flattens the chin. If this position is correct it should create an opening in your mouth when playing, as if there were a ping-pong ball in your mouth.

* Next say the letter "F". The bottom lip is rolled slightly in and stretched. The mouthpiece should be placed in the mouth about 1/2 inch. At the same time the top teeth must be firmly kept on the top of the mouthpiece. Use facial muscles to surround the mouthpiece.

* Keep your body position straight, head up & always bring the mouthpiece & neck to you.



7. TONGUING: We use our tongue to start every note.

* The tip of the tongue is placed on the tip of the reed. (approx. 1/8" from the reed's tip.) This is the natural resting position for the tongue.

* Form the embouchure and blow air as you release the tongue. The tone should sound full if the air support is sufficient and the tongue release is crisp. The air does most of the work in tonguing. We only use the very front part of the tongue (like when you say the word "tee" or "ta". You can also practice saying "tee" as quickly as you can. If you hear a "foo" or "wa" sound, you are not tonguing.

FIRST LESSON ASSIGNMENT:

Practice getting a good sound by breathing correctly, using a good foot tap, forming a good embouchure and tonguing correctly. Now review the DVD startup and practice the MOUTHPIECE WORKOUT (page 2) & "The First Note" #1 (page 4) Remember to practice 15 minutes a day and write down your practice times in the front of your book.