

Developing Intonation Awareness in Young Musicians

A Practical Approach For Wind Instrumentalists
Presented by Frank Troyka for Conn-Selmer, Inc.

A Few Personal Thoughts On The Subject...

Assumptions and Prerequisites

- The instrument itself is in good working condition.
 - The student is using the correct mouthpiece, reeds, etc.
 - The student produces a characteristic sound.
 - The band director/private teacher understands the tuning tendencies and idiosyncrasies of the instrument and is therefore able to guide the student.
 - The instrument is properly warmed up and the length is properly set.
- Suggested tuning notes:
- Flute/piccolo: 5th line F, then C above the F, then A below the F
The F is a good reference pitch, the C tends sharp, and the A tends flat. Tuning these notes help young flute players listen for "melodic" tuning.
 - Oboe/English horn: Concert A
 - Bassoon: Concert A, F
 - Clarinet/bass clarinet: Written D below the staff, open G, 3rd space C.
If the G is sharp, lengthen the horn at the barrel/neck; if the C is sharp, lengthen the horn between the left and right hand joints.
 - Saxophones: Low F# (written), slur to 5th line F#. If these two notes are in tune, add the written 4th line D. D is a very sharp note! Try adding the low B key to bring the pitch down.
 - Trumpet: 3rd space C, 2nd line G
 - Horn: 3rd space C (check both sides of the horn on this note)
 - Trombone/euphonium: Bb (on top of the staff)
 - Tuba: 2nd line Bb.

Understanding Equal Temperament and Pure Temperament

- The pool analogy (simplifying the overtone series)
- Defining horizontal (melodic) and vertical (harmonic) tuning
- Major and minor chords
- Color tones and tuning implications

Tools

- Yamaha Harmony Director and/or Tonal Energy Tuner App
- Korg TM-50 Tuner and Microphone
- Exercises; chorales
- Ears

In Rehearsal: Exercises and Ensemble Techniques

- Section rehearsals vs. full ensemble rehearsals
- Exposing inconsistencies; listening "into" the ensemble; pass-around exercises
- Teach students to react to the quality of sound to help with pitch discrimination.
- Considerations in choosing a chorale.
- Using technology to increase awareness and sensitivity.

In Performance

- Did it work?

Acknowledgments

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*"Guiding Students to Intonation Awareness,"
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