



ELEMENTARY INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC!



Flute Lesson

Weekly Focus: Articulation: separating pitches

Articulation is the word we use to describe if a group of notes is played separated or smooth. How do we play notes that sound crisp and clear or smooth and connected? When we understand how our breath, combined with the placement and rhythmic movement of our tongue creates either separated or smooth sounding pitches.

Explanation of Lesson Focus:

Articulation refers to how you start a note. For our lesson we will focus on tonguing. Tonguing is when you start or separate the air stream with your tongue. To get us ready to practice tonguing we first need to warm-up our body using the exercise below.

Warm Up:

Expansion breath: Place your hand on your abdomen and breathe in. Try to get your hand to move out on the inhale. This deep breath is what you will use to play the flute. If your hand goes in and your shoulders raise, you are breathing too shallow. Relax and try again. Inhale with an open breath expanding your abdomen. I like to think of it as breathing through your belly button. This breath will not only help you play the flute better but can help you relax as well.

Inhale Exhale cycle: Place your hand out in front of your face. Inhale deeply with the expansion breath through your mouth for 4 counts-Exhale blowing fast, cold air on your hand for 4 counts. Repeat this 4 times shortening the length of the inhale and extending the length of the exhale each time. If you get dizzy, stop and take a break for a minute.

- *Inhale 1, 2, 3, 4 Exhale 1, 2, 3, 4,*
- *Inhale 1, 2, 3 Exhale 1, 2, 3, 4, 5*
- *Inhale 1, 2, Exhale 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*
- *Inhale 1 Exhale 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*

Tonguing is the articulation we will use to start each note on the flute. It is so important that once learned, you will start every note with tonguing unless it has a slur marking which you will learn about later. The three steps below will help us learn how to tongue on the flute:



1-Say the word "Too" and focus on where the tongue is touching: the back of the teeth inside your mouth.

2-Repeat the word "Too" but don't vocalize, just blow air through the word

3-Now form a flute embouchure with your mouth and blow 4 tongued notes, keeping the airstream going: "Tooo, Tooo, Tooo, Tooo". Try it again!

Keep in mind that it takes some patience to get the hang of tonguing. If you lose your sound, which is common, try playing a tone and stopping the sound with the tongue and then pulling the tongue back quickly. Try to keep your embouchure steady when you are tonguing and don't stop the air.

Musical Exercises to Practice Tonguing:

Let's continue practicing our tonguing using exercise #45 Eighth Note Encounter below. Notice that the music includes quarter notes  and paired eighth notes . The first two pitches you know are quarter notes. The other two pitches connected by the horizontal beam are two eighth notes. There are many ways to think about these rhythms, but let's use the syllables "ta" and "ti-ti" because they help you think about what the rhythm sounds like *before* you play. Follow the "speak it, tongue it, play it" directions below for this exercise.

#45 EIGHTH NOTE ENCOUNTER

Tongue each note: "too"



Counting: ta ta ti - ti ta ta ta ti - ti ta ta ta ti - ti ta ta ta ti - ti ta

Standard of Excellence, Book 1 Flute, by Bruce Pearson, c. 2006 Neil A. Kjos. Page 13.

- **Speak it:** use the ta or ti-ti syllables and pay attention to how your tongue moves inside your mouth as you say each syllable. **This is important.** You should notice that each syllable is **separated** when the tip of your tongue quickly taps the top of your mouth right behind your two front teeth.
- **Tongue it:** Now take your flute and practice tonguing the rhythm on "too" instead of ta or ti-ti. Your tongue should be moving the same way to separate the syllables. Remember: **your tongue stops and starts the air to create notes that are separated and clear.** Don't stop and start the air. This will create an unfocused sound. Blow one breath and use your tongue to too, too-too the exercise not HUFF PUFF the rhythm.
- **Play it:** Now play the exercise. Notes should sound crisp and clear and **separated if your tongue is doing the right movement.**

Musical Excerpts to Practice Tonguing:

Let's play #47 *Eighth Note Explorer* on p. 13 (see below). Follow the same steps of "speak it, tongue it, play it" that you did for the exercise above.

#47 EIGHTH NOTE EXPLORER

Tongue each note: "too"



Counting: ta ta ta ti - ti ta ta ta ti - ti ta ta ta ti - ti ta ta ta ti - ti

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MUSIC VIDEO LESSONS

For Flute Lessons, go to Seattle Public Schools YouTube site.

<https://www.youtube.com/c/SeattlePublicSchoolsTV>

Flute lesson developed by Tasha Reynolds at Van Asselt, Wing Luke, Loyal Heights, Hawthorne, Beacon Hill, Greenwood