



# ELEMENTARY INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC



## Flute Lesson 5

### Weekly Focus: Reading and Playing Eighth Notes

#### Explanation of Lesson Focus:

For this lesson we will focus on reading and playing eighth notes. To get us ready we first need to warm-up our body and our breathing using the exercises 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, 7

**Long Tones:** For flute playing it is important to play long tones each time you practice. Strive to hold each note as long as you can with a good tone. That will be different for each person at first. If you run out of air, be encouraged, you will improve each time you try! The goal is to focus on a clear tone while playing.

The image shows three staves of musical notation for breathing exercises. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The notation consists of quarter notes and half notes, with slurs indicating breaths. Below each staff, the instruction 'breathe in' is written under the first measure of each group.

Staff 1: Measures 1-4 (quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter), Measures 5-8 (half, half), Measures 9-12 (quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter), Measures 13-16 (half, half), Measures 17-20 (quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter), Measures 21-24 (half, half). 'breathe in' is written under measures 1, 5, 9, and 13.

Staff 2: Measures 1-4 (quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter), Measures 5-8 (half, half), Measures 9-12 (quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter), Measures 13-16 (half, half), Measures 17-20 (quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter), Measures 21-24 (half, half). 'breathe in' is written under measures 1, 5, 9, and 13.

Staff 3: Measures 1-4 (quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter), Measures 5-8 (half, half), Measures 9-12 (quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter), Measures 13-16 (half, half), Measures 17-20 (quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter), Measures 21-24 (half, half). 'breathe in' is written under measures 1, 5, 9, and 13.

## Musical Exercises to Practice Reading Eighth Notes and Tonguing:

To understand eighth notes is it good to review quarter note counting. Remember that one quarter note receives one beat:  $\text{♩} = 1 \text{ Beat}$

If you divide a quarter note in half, you get two eighth notes.  $\text{♩} = \text{♪} \text{ ♪}$

In other words, two eighth notes equal one quarter note or one beat.  $\text{♪} \text{ ♪} = \text{♩}$

Let's practice reading eighth notes with exercise #47 *Eighth Note Explorer*. First, we will count the piece using "Ta ta ta ti-ti" (see below), then we will play the piece. Remember to articulate with your tongue on each note and to honor the repeat sign when speaking and playing.

### #47 Eighth Note Explorer

Tongue each note: "too"

ta ta ta ti-ti ta ta ta ti-ti ta ta ta ti-ti ta ta ta ti-ti

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

We will continue our practice of reading eighth notes by first speaking, then playing #48 *Go Tell Bill*. You will notice that this melody uses the same quarter/eighth note rhythms we just played on #47 *Eighth Note Explorer* above. Be sure to pay attention to the breath marks "·" and also the fermata at the end of the piece which asks you to hold the final note a little longer than two beats.

### #48 Go Tell Bill

Tongue each note: "too"

ta ta ta ti-ti ta ta ta ti-ti ta ta ta ti-ti ta ta ta ti-ti ta ta ta ta-ta

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