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This beginner book focuses on oboe-specific challenges, and the speed and level of difficulty are well suited to weekly lessons.  The goal is that each student will be prepared to get through one full page each week, which will require them to practice each page thoroughly the week beforehand.

(In progress) Lesson by lesson guidelines (lessons are listed by book lesson, not actual number of lessons.  Students move through things at their own pace.):

**Pre-book:Oboe assembly and care, hand position, breathing, embouchure, reed exercises**

We will discuss how to put the instrument together safely, how to soak the reeds, how to tell which side of the reed goes towards the player, that the reed goes all the way in the oboe, how to put the reed in the reed case, how to safely set the oboe down, how to swab the oboe, and how to put the oboe safely away.  We will discuss embouchure, posture, and proper breathing, and do a few reed exercises (students will have a sheet of paper with details on these exercises, which they should try to do every day).  We will discuss hand position and learn the first, most straightforward six notes (B A G F# E and D, though not yet by sight), which they should also try to play each day.  Low D is particularly picky about correct fingerings, air, and embouchure, and is especially beneficial to work on for that reason.

Before we can begin the book, we will also work on tonguing on the oboe (we'll have already started tonguing on the reed) and starting notes with the tongue.

**STUDENTS SHOULD CONTINUE TO WARM UP WITH A LONG TONE ON THE REED AND A REED SIREN EACH DAY AT THE BEGINNING OF PRACTICE AS WE PROGRESS THROUGH THE BOOK.**

**Lesson 1: Tonguing note beginnings, starting to read music, slurs**

We will quickly introduce basic music reading (staff, treble clef, bar lines, measures, whole notes, whole rests, beats, time signature).  We will learn to read B, A, G, F#, and E in whole notes, and we will learn about slurs.  We will practice using rests well (leaving the reed on the lip, keeping the fingers in place, opening the mouth to breathe, and breathing out before breathing in) and holding whole notes for a full four counts.  In this lesson, students begin to actually read music in tempo.

**Lesson 2: Quarter notes, half notes, half rests, left hand finger movement**

We learn quarter notes and read music with quarter notes, changing notes at progressively faster intervals (first every three measures, then every 1, then halfway through each measure). We learn that accidentals carry through a measure.  We learn and play half notes and half rests.  We have a finger movement study that focuses on precise finger technique (curved, close fingers, small movements, fingers always moving together) for several primarily left hand finger combinations.  We practice a piece all the notes we have learned to read that also alternates half notes and quarter notes (a good opportunity to check pulse and rhythmic accuracy).  We play Merrily We Roll Along, focusing on accuracy of slurring vs. tonguing, and accurate rhythm, and on not breathing after every half note.  A short written exercise which students should complete at home for me to check finishes the page.

Students should pay extra attention to exercise 5, which focuses on finger movement.  They should practice in a mirror to be sure that their fingers are staying curved both when on and when off the keys, and that they are staying as close to the keys as possible at all times.  They should repeat each section (labeled a, b, c, and d) until it is clean. Letters c and d will take extra focus to make sure two fingers move exactly together and there are no blips between notes.

I highly recommend that students practice saying and fingering each exercise before playing it.

**Lesson 3: Quarter rests, low D, right hand finger movements**

In the first three exercises, we begin working with quarter rests, and we learn about ties.  In exercise 3, we will briefly introduce the concept of breathing out in one rest, playing a bit, and then breathing in during the next rest (a skill that will later be called on quite a lot on oboe, even if little sixth grade music requires it).  We we learn to read low D, and will have another finger movement exercise (number 6), similar to the one on the previous lesson.  Again, students should likely practice this exercise a good deal more, using a mirror, and focusing on close, curved fingers and clean transitions.  Remember that saying and fingering an exercise in tempo before playing it is always wise.  Students will need to prepare just the top part of the duet (#7), and should, as always, fill out the written exercise at the bottom of the page at home, before their lesson.

**Lesson 4: Dotted half notes, C, repeat signs and endings, more complex finger movement**

We learn middle C and dotted half notes.  In our lesson, we will discuss how to figure out dotted rhythms generally speaking as well, not just the dotted half note.  In exercise 1, measures five and six, which change between B and C, often give students some trouble.  Exercise 2 is another very important finger movement exercise, with the added complication of cross fingerings (students must put down fingers on the left hand while picking up a finger on the right hand at exactly the same time).  Like all of the finger movement studies, this exercise warrants extra time and use of a mirror to check for close, curved fingers.

The lesson continues to put together all previously learned concepts, with #4 including slurs vs. tonguing and half notes vs. quarter notes.  #5 is particularly challenging, and again, will likely require more time than the easier exercises.  I especially recommend that students practice saying and fingering this exercise several times, as the notes jump around more than they've previously seen, and the exercise is therefore more of a test for their note reading skills.

#7 introduces pickup notes and first and second endings.  Students will start at the pickup note (the beginning), play through the first ending, take the repeat back to the backwards repeat sign, and then skip the first ending, playing only the second ending.  The small text on the page should make this reasonably clear if read carefully.  Students need prepare only the first line of the duet, and should fill out the written exercise at home.

**Lesson 5: Cut time, right F**

Students will learn about cut time (2/2: two beats in a measure and the half note gets the beat).  All exercises with a cut time option (2, 3, 4, 9, 10) will be taken in cut time in the lesson, though students should be prepared for this as long as they are able to play it quickly in regular 4/4 time (the one they're used to right now) at home.  I recommend attempting a tempo of at least 100, preferably 120, once  they are comfortable with the exercises at a slower tempo (and only then; it's always better to start slowly and accurately).  While most of these exercises are fairly easy, students may find it helpful to isolate particularly tricky measures (i.e. the second measure of #4), and practice those measures PLUS 1 NOTE in isolation until they are more comfortable.  As always, I recommend saying and fingering an exercise in tempo before playing it.

Students will also learn right F (fingerings for new notes are shown as they are introduced and can also be found in the very front of the book in a fingering chart, in case of confusion); the right F key is pressed with the same finger as the low D key.  There are several exercises to get used to right hand F, which are quite tricky for young students.  These should be played MUCH slower than the cut time exercises, and will actually probably require more preparation.  In addition to the written exercises on right F, I will hear students play |:D-E-F-E:|, repeated several times, to help their third fingers get used to going between the old location (low D) and the new one (right F).

Students should fill out the short written exercise at the bottom of the page at home.

**Lesson 6: Bb, 3/4 time, left and forked F**

Students will learn Bb, and will practice several Bb finger exercises (#2 and #3 tend to prove somewhat challenging, #2 for the cross fingerings, #3 for the chromaticism and tricky finger combinations).  Exercises 1 and 4 should be played in cut time, and exercise 4 reviews first and second endings.  #5 seems easy at home, but I recommend playing it carefully with a metronome a few times, as the change in rhythm in measures 5 and 6 can trip up inattentive students.

We learn 3/4 time (three beats in a measure; quarter note gets the beat), which is technically quite similar to the familiar 4/4, but feels very different (like a waltz).  Ties and dotted half notes are reviewed.

The book introduces forked F--we will also learn left F (fingered like E plus the long straight key in the middle of the left hand pinky keys).  As most student oboes do not have a left F key (though yours will), the book mostly treats it as though it is not an option; we will mostly play left F's instead of forked, where the book marks forked.  The rule for choosing F fingerings goes like this: use **right F (1)** if you can get to it and to the note after without sliding; if you can't use right F, use **left F (2)**; use **forked F (3)** only when you can use neither right nor left F without sliding fingers. On this page, #7 and #10 will be played with left F only.  As they are finger exercises, #8 and #9 will be played once through with left F's and once with forked.

At the bottom of the page is a written exercise in which students will identify slurs and ties, which should be filled out at home (confused students should turn back to lesson 3, where ties were introduced, and carefully read the text introducing ties in #2).

**Lesson 7: Low C, endurance challenge, 2/4 time, using right and left F**

Students learn low C; exercises 1 and 3 focus on the new note, and exercise 4 is a C major scale.

Exercise 5 is an endurance exercise.  Students should take a different one of these six notes each day and practice holding it as long as possible to build endurance, with the goal being a minimum of 15 seconds by the end of the week (for perspective, professionals can often manage 60 seconds).  I recommend putting this exercise at the end of a practice session, as it can be tiring.

In exercise 6, we learn 2/4 time (2 beats in a measure; quarter note gets the beat), which is otherwise quite straightforward, though students sometimes miss that the exercise is two lines long.

The last three exercises focus on switching from left to right F (students should use left F's, never forked, in these exercises, and change the F's above the notes to L's if I haven't gotten that done already).  These are the most challenging exercises on the page, especially exercise 7, and will likely require the most time during the week.

For the written exercise at the bottom, I would like students to write the note that gets the given number of beats for the first half, and then write the rest that gets the given number of beats for the second half.

**Lesson 8**: **Pinkies (Eb and Ab)**

This lesson focuses on the pinkies, which should stay curved at all times.  The first half of the lesson focuses on Eb (if students struggle with keeping this pinky curved, they should make sure the hand is not too high--the first finger on the right hand should actually be reaching up just a little, not down, so that the bottom of the hand can be close enough to the oboe to easily hit all the pinky keys and stay curved.  All knuckles should be about the same distance from the oboe; if the lower knuckles are farther away than the higher ones, it may be impossible to get the pinky to reach the keys curved as it should).  Then, we very briefly learn about left Eb.

The second half of the lesson focuses on Ab.  As the key acts as a lever, the left pinky should aim to hit it nearer the tip than the inside.  Naturally, the pinky should be quite curved.  Since that's the highest of the left hand pinky keys, keeping it curved means keeping the pinky and the G finger closer together than is comfortable, almost as if the pinky is trying to cross underneath the third finger.  Many students try to straighten out the third finger and pinky, pulling the hand and wrist up, to keep a more comfortable distance between them, but this will slow down technique over the long term and should be avoided.

Many of these exercises are particularly difficult, and will require careful practice.  Saying and fingering is always advised, and on pieces with more complex rhythms (like exercise 3), counting in tempo is also helpful.  Exercises 1 and 5 are finger movement studies, and students should aim particularly for excellent hand position on those.  Exercise 2 will be played in 4/4, and starts with an almost Bb major scale, but the second half is a bit trickier (remember that accidentals carry through a measure--there are no E♮'s).  Exercise 3 focuses on complex 3/4 rhythms (counting is advised; the second line subtly changes the rhythm) and on the key of g minor (students should make sure to play Bb's and Eb's, even next to F#'s).  In addition to some chromatic motion, exercise 4, works on moving the pinky cleanly on both C and Eb keys (measures 5 and 6--only the pinky should move, and it should stay curved as it moves on and off the C and Eb keys).

Exercise 6 focuses on moving the pinky from the Ab to the left F key (with a note between, of course; students should almost never slide a pinky directly from one pinky key to another).  Students should use Left F, not forked, as usual, and should use the Eb's to move the pinky from the Ab key to the left F key.  Exercise 7 is exceptionally challenging, but it's also repetitive, which can make things easier (the first and second measures are the same as the third and fourth, and also the fifth and sixth).  Again students should remember that accidentals carry through a measure.

In the written exercise at the bottom of the page, students should fill out right and left F's themselves, with L's and R's below the notes, and should also practice playing it.  They should remember that right F is the first choice and should be used when possible, and that left F is the alternate for when the third finger is otherwise occupied (on D, Eb, or low C) during the note before or the one after the F.  (Forked F should only be used when neither right F nor left F could be used without sliding fingers, which does not come up in this exercise).

**Lesson 9: Half hole**

In lesson 9, we learn the half hole.  This is the method used to bring C#, D, and Eb up an octave (we will work on D and Eb in this lesson), and it is vital to long term technical facility that students are careful to do it consistently and well.  We will work to open and close the half hole by pivoting the first finger of the left hand, without sliding, without moving the entire hand/wrist, and especially without ever letting the fingertip lift off the key.  The motion will begin at the finger joint in the hand, and it will look and feel as though the middle knuckle is leading the movement.  It is important to keep the hand relaxed, as any tension, especially in the webbing between the thumb and first finger, can lock up this movement (students should be sure not to squeeze the oboe with the left thumb).  Students will be instructed to practice this movement with the left hand on the right arm throughout the week, so that they can work on the finger pivot without the added complication of the oboe, and can get a good deal more practice in for this specific movement (they can do this riding in the car, watching TV, etc.) than they otherwise might--you should see them doing this throughout the week.  After the reed long tone and siren, students should warm up the half hole (and the air and embouchure) by playing low D-high D-low D-high D-low D, in half notes, focusing on tone, still embouchure, and crisp half hole pivots.

Exercise 1 is a finger exercise--use of a mirror is recommended, and students should be very particular about snappy and accurate finger pivots (no slides, pick-ups, or slow moving tense fingers).  Exercise 2 also focuses on the half hole pivot; students should remember to check the key signature, should see the exercise is two lines long, and should note that the last four measures are particularly difficult and may require more practice than the rest of the exercise.

In exercise 3, we have the added complication of left F near the half hole.  Students should take care that in using the left pinky, they do not raise or tense their hands, which can lock up the half hole.  I recommend fingering a D with a left F key down and practicing opening and closing the half hole, without playing, just to make sure they aren't letting the pinky prevent their best half hole pivot.

Exercise 4 is fairly easy, but I recommend counting it before playing it.  Exercise 5 is another finger movement study, but now with Eb's.  Again, students should work for perfect half hole pivots, in spite of the left F in the third measure, and should aim for their best curved pinky (keeping the hand low) for the Ab in the second half of the exercise.

In exercise 6, students should make special note of the key signature, and should think about the fingering they plan to use for the last F in the piece (Can you use right F before Eb? Can you use left F after Ab? If you can do neither without sliding, you must use forked F).  In measures 5-8, students should be careful to move only the pinky and not the hand when transitioning from Ab to left F and back, and to keep the pinky very curved on all Ab's.  It helps to think about the two target points for the tip of the pinky--one is low and centered, the other high and out.

Exercise 7 is quite straightforward, but students should take the opportunity to use their best hand position and curved pinkies on all of the Ab's.  The written exercise at the bottom is in 4/4 and asks students to add bar lines.

**Lesson 10: More half hole, using left and right F**

Lesson 10 continues to work the new and vital half hole skill.  Students should continue to practice the octave D warm up daily.  Exercise 1 is a finger study isolating several half hole combinations (Bb-D, then D-A, then B-D).  Students should take care to pivot only the first finger, not the hand or wrist, in spite of the other left hand fingers needing to move off and on keys at the same time.  These are different motions and should be carefully treated as such.  Use of a mirror is highly recommended when practicing this exercise.

Students should remember to check their key signature in exercise 2, and should note that it is three lines long.  As always, precision should be exercised in the many half hole motions.  As 3/4 is sometimes uncomfortable at first, counting first may be wise here.

Students should prepare both lines of the duet in exercise 3.  On the repeated D's, take care that the half hole stays in a good, pivoted open position (the middle knuckle should be almost below the fingertip, and the lower part of the fingertip will be in contact with the key), and does not try to slide to a more comfortable position on the open half holes lest it make it difficult or impossible to close the half hole cleanly.

In exercise 4, students should check the key signature, and should make careful note of the last two F fingerings.  One has to be forked, another should be left.  This should be marked and practiced accurately.  Also, count carefully through the tie and rest in measures 8 and 9, as it is a commonly missed area for counting.

Exercise 5 is in CUT time (2/2).  Students should write in right and left F's, and should carefully practice the piece.

**Lesson 11: First Octave Key**  
  
In lesson 11, we learn about the first octave key, which is used to play high E, F (all three forms, though left F isn't listed), F#, G, Ab (not listed on this page, but also uses the first octave key). Notice that all of these notes, except forked F, lack the D key, but HAVE the G key.  Students should begin by simply playing each of the first octave key notes, including Ab.  
  
It is important that students hit the octave key in the bottom part of the key (in the future, their oboes will have an additional octave key higher up), and with a STRAIGHT, RELAXED THUMB. The thumb should touch the bottom of the octave key with the side of the thumb that naturally faces the first finger, without turning or tensing the thumb to hit the key, and it is vital that the muscles in the webbing between the thumb and first finger stay relaxed.  If it tenses, it will slow and limit the half hole motion.  
  
There are basically three ways to move the thumb on and off the octave key:  First, you can keep the thumb hovering just above the octave key when octave key notes are near, and just move it on and off the key like you would other fingers.  Second, you can let the thumb rest in its standard position just below the key, and move it on and off the bottom of the key with small, circular motions.  Third, you can move the thumb onto the key in the same manner as the second option, and then slide it off back to rest position (it is good to be able to do this at least once, as when the additional octave key is added in future years, one rarely does have to slide from that octave key to the first.)  Notice that all these methods keep the thumb quite straight, and move it from the furthest joint (where the thumb meets the *wrist*).  AVOID bending the thumb at all when moving it on and off the key, or squeezing the oboe with the thumb when it's in rest position.  
  
Exercise 1 is simply about moving octaves.  Be sure to play the slurs.  Be careful to keep the embouchure round and the air pressure strong so that both the low and high notes can easily speak, and focus on how you're moving the thumb on and off the octave key.  
  
Exercise 2 is a finger movement study.  Notice that the low notes stay the same within each of the four exercises, and the high notes move chromatically.  Focus on moving the thumb as described above, and on keeping the air and embouchure consistent, without bumping or changing between the notes.  
  
Exercise 3 includes both half hole (measure 3, be sure to pivot) and octave key notes, though never yet next to each other.  In the last half of the exercise, the octave key changes often happen at surprising times--be aware of when your thumb moves!  
  
Note that exercise 4 is in cut time (2 beats per measure; the half note gets the beat).  It's somewhat challenging, but note that it is made entirely of arpeggios--the first four bars are the F major arpeggio, the fifth and sixth the C major arpeggio, and the last two the F major arpeggio again.  It may help also to group the notes in your mind, as you group letters into words when reading--the first two notes form a group, then the next three, then the next two, then the next three, then the next two, then the next three, then the next three, then the next three (always two beats at a time).  
  
Exercises 5 and 6 are duets.  Watch your counting in both, and use (and mark, if I haven't yet) left F's instead of forked in exercise 6.  
  
Exercise 7 is the most challenging on the page, and will should have the most practice.  This is the last chance to perfect the half hole pivot by itself before we start adding the first octave key motion to the mix. Do watch the key signature.  The one F natural in this piece is a left F, but remember that the barline after it cancels the accidental.

**Lesson 12: Combining the half hole and first octave key**  
  
In lesson 12, we begin to combine the half hole and first octave key.  Remember that the half hole finger must pivot, and that for it to do so, the webbing between the thumb and first finger must stay relaxed (keep the thumb straight, don't curve it to hit the octave key, and move it as if the joint near the thumbnail does not exist).  This finger combination is incredibly common in oboe music.  It is one of the most vital skills to get down this year, and students MUST be able to play this well at this beginner level to manage the harder music they will have in years to come.  
  
The first exercise is a finger movement study.  Note the key signature, and remember to change the F (forked) to L (left).  Consider checking in with a mirror, and be VERY picky about your half hole pivots.  
  
Exercise 2 is fairly straightforward.  Note the key signature, but we will not do the repeat.  Count carefully through long notes in 3/4.  
  
Exercise 3 is a bit tricky.  Take note of where ideas repeat to make it easier to play.  Be careful to be accurate with right and left F's in this exercise, be careful with the half holes, and note that the beginning of the second line is the trickiest part (isolate the hard measures).  The last four measures (plus one note) are simply an F major scale, which makes it easier to play.  
  
Exercise 4 is one of the hardest things to date.  We will play it in cut time and take the repeat of the first line (there are three, notice), but it is wise to start practicing it in 4/4.  Note the key signature, be very picky about the many half hole transitions, and take the time to count it before playing, first in 4/4, and later in the week in cut time (2/2).  You may have to sit and think about the rhythm in the syncopated measures (i.e. 5 and 6, not counting the pickup measure) for a bit.  If they give you trouble, draw a visual representation of the measure and figure out where the notes fit within the beats.  
  
In exercises 5 and 6, I would like students to focus on accurate articulation (along with good half hole transitions, of course).  Singing and fingering first is recommended.  Note the key signatures.  
  
Remember to fill out the brief written exercise at the bottom

**Lesson 13: Half hole to first octave key with a focus on half hole Eb; low C#**  
  
In lesson 13, we continue to perfect the vital half hole to first octave key transition.  Note that all half hole notes have the D finger down, and with the exception of forked F, all first octave key notes do not (though they do have the G finger down.  The third finger on each hand is the tell for octave transitions).  
  
Exercise 1 is a finger movement study.  Be careful not to tense or raise the hand when adding the pinkies for left F and Eb.  Be picky and accurate, and practice this one often.  
  
Exercise 2 is in cut time, and students should be careful to note the Ab in the key.  I strongly advise practicing counting in tempo (perhaps with a metronome, slowly--remember you can use the tap function to find a comfortable speed) before playing.  In the fourth measure of the second line, the half hole must change precisely on time, as you would any other key.  
  
Exercise 3 again reviews the half hole to first octave key motion.  Be accurate with that, and be careful with the counting through the quarter rests, especially after the tied notes.  
  
Exercises 4, 5, and 6 work on low C# (high C# will also be half holed).  The pinky should be curved--if it struggles to reach the key, the bottom part of the hand is too far from the oboe.  E to C# (the last four bars of exercise 6) may take extra work to make sure the fingers move together.  Note the key signature in exercise 6, and remember that sharps or flats in a key apply to all notes of that name, in any octave.  
  
Remember to fill out the written exercise at the bottom.

Note: at this point, if we are a bit behind our goals, as often happens, we may fast track through the next several lessons, completing the following: 14.1, 14.5, 15.5, 17.1, 18.1, 18.2, and 18.4.  If you are on this track, focus on preparing the technical studies VERY thoroughly (14.5, 15.5, 18.4 ; they are tricky, but there are only 3), and make sure to be well prepared on at least the earliest one of the others we haven't completed (14.1 is about endurance, 17.1 and 18.1 dynamics) each week.  Check the notes for the full lessons below for notes on those exercises.

**Lesson 14: Endurance, putting things together, left and forked F finger study**  
  
Exercise 1 is an endurance study, with emphasis on being able to continue with good breathing and embouchure even after already tired.  I advise practicing this at the end of a practice session, and in front of a chair (so that if you get dizzy, you can sit down safely very quickly).  Play each note as long as possible (aim for a minimum of 15 seconds per note, maybe 10 on the last few), then, keeping the reed on the lower lip, the corners forward, and the posture balanced and tall, breathe out, breathe in, and do the same thing to the next note.  Be aware of how much reed your taking as you go, and of whether your posture is changing.  Stay near the tip of the reed, and don't let the head creep forward.  Breathe into the stomach and support well for each note.  Remember that the better supported the air is and the faster it moves, the less gets used up.  
  
Exercises 2 and 3 are closely related--the small text underneath exercise 2 applies to both.  Note that both are G scales in different patterns.  You will, in each case, follow the articulation pattern down the G scale all the way to low D and then back up.  This works endurance, articulation (aim for consistency), and the beginnings of the important ability to follow a scale pattern without having to read each note.  You will likely need to breathe once or twice in the middle, but do not breathe too often or play choppy.  
  
Exercise 4 is quite straightforward.  Note that it is 3 lines, and continue to be careful with first octave key to half hole transitions.  Play smoothly.  
  
Exercise 5 is a finger movement study.  We will do each of the 4 exercises first with left F, and then again with forked F (omitting the repeat with the forked F).  Practice this one a lot, and aim to be sure you can play the entire 7 measures with perfect fingers (and half hole/octave key transitions) on the first try by the end of the week.  
  
Remember to change F (forked) F's to L (left), as always, in exercise 6.  Exercise 7 has a lot of accidentals, which can be tricky--say and finger first, and be careful of the Eb in the 7th full measure, and in general remember the key signature does apply when not cancelled out by an accidental.  Here we learn about D.C. al Fine (stands for da capo al fine, which means literally from the head to the end, or in other words go back to the beginning and play until you see fine written).  Make sure to read the small text.  
  
Remember to fill out the written exercise at the bottom, carefully reading the instructions.

**Lesson 15: Slurs with scales in thirds; half hole C#**  
  
The first 3 exercises on this page focus on slurs.  Note your key signatures, and remember to change F (forked) F's to L (left).  For the first two exercises, you will see two sets of slurs--this almost never happens in music, but is done here to help you learn to really focus on slurs.  You will play each of those two exercises twice, once with the top set of slurs and once with the lower set.  Be picky about your slurs; I will require four measures in a row to be correct at least to move on.  Singing and fingering is always helpful.  Exercise 3 has only one set of slurs, but the Eb in measure 4 is a misprint; it should be a D.  
  
In exercise 4, remember to change F (forked) to L (left), and play smoothly.  
  
Exercise 5 is a finger study introducing half hole C#.  Remember that accidentals carry through the measure, and be precise with your half hole C# fingering throughout, and with your half hole to first octave key transitions in letter C.  
  
Exercises 6 and 7 also work on half hole C#.  Exercise 6 is a duet, though the notation is a bit different than you are used to--read the instructions below, and prepare both parts (the first oboist rests for the first 6 measures, as there are only down stems, unlike the last four measures, which have stems in both directions).  In exercise 7, watch your key signature, remember A# carries through the measure (read the text below the note if you are confused about A#), and be precise with those half hole C#'s.  If you recall arpeggios from your band class, you will recognize the A major arpeggio in measures 3 and 15.  
  
Remember to fill out the brief written exercise at the bottom.

**Lesson 16: eighth notes**  
  
Lesson 16 introduces eighth notes, which are played in 4/4 the same way that quarter notes are in 2/2.  Exercise 1 should be played in cut time, and is identical in sound to exercise 2.  Note that exercise 3 is simply variations on an F major scale; aim to play it smoothly.  
  
Exercise 4 is the most challenging one on this page, and has some complex finger combinations (measures 3 and 5 particularly).  The last line is tricky.  Remember to used left F, not forked, and take notice of the repetitive pattern (note-down-note-down-down-new note, etc. for the first half; the last half is simpler).  Note the text discussing what to do with repeated notes under slurs.  Watch out for Ab's!  
  
Exercise 5 should be familiar.  You need only prepare the top part for the duet (exercise 6), but remember B is natural here.  
  
The last exercise is a little tricky, though I think not as much as 4.  Watch your key signature, say and finger first, and think about their being sort of a mental comma before the E in measure 6, so that you have more manageable groups to think about.

**Lesson 17: dynamics, putting things together**  
  
Exercise 1 focuses on dynamics.  Contrary to instructions, I would like students to play the first note forte, the second mezzo forte, the third piano, the fourth mezzo forte, the fifth forte, and the last piano.  Picture a large target for the forte (perhaps the wall) and a very small one for the piano (perhaps one note).  For forte, it's important to keep the shoulders, neck, and head relaxed and the inside of the mouth open tall to give the sound room to resonate (and, of course, to use lots of air and air pressure).  Piano dynamic requires less air, but pushed with just as much pressure and speed.  DON'T drop the air pressure for the piano.  I advise practicing breathing out only before playing the pianos a few times to get the feel for pushing little air at high pressure.  Air is the majority of where dynamic control comes from, but you can also provide a little more cushion with the the lip muscles, pushing them together a bit more, like you're saying "mmm," with an emphasis on keeping them round while they close, like a drawstring.  
  
Exercise 2 is full of scales.  If you remember which scale you are playing during the eighth note runs, and focus your brain mostly where the jumps are, letting your fingers and muscle memory help you get down the scale without as much attention, you'll find that it is not as difficult as it seems at first.  
  
Exercise 3 has several slightly challenging finger combinations.  Work for smoothness in the Eb-F transitions in measure 1, good half hole pivots in measure 5, and a curved Ab pinky in measures 6 and 8.  The last two measures are simply a variation on the Eb scale.  
  
Practice counting exercise 4 before playing it.  Note the key signature in exercise 5.

**Lesson 18: Dynamics with articulation; left and forked F finger study**  
  
Exercise 1 also focuses on dynamics.  As in lesson 17, we are changing up the instructions a little.  Play the F forte, the E mezzo forte, the D piano, the C mezzo forte, the Bb forte (it should be Bb, not B), the A piano, the G forte, and the last F piano.  For exercise 2, you will play the same notes at the same dynamic levels (I will not require the scale ascending, only descending), but with the written articulation and rhythm.  Focus on smooth playing, and on not letting the articulation alter the dynamic or reduce air support.  
  
Exercise 3 will be helped by recognizing the relevant scales and arpeggios, as best you can at the moment.  Saying and fingering first is wise, and remember to change the F (forked) markings to L (left).  
  
Exercise 4 is our final forked and left F finger study.  Notice that letters A and E are the same except for octave, and the same goes for B and F, C and G, and D and H.  It may be easier to work on them in that order.  Practice all exercises with the repeats with left F, and then, when that's clean, without the repeats with forked F.  Focus closely on half hole transitions in the higher exercises.  
  
Exercises 5 and 6 are straightforward.  I advise saying and fingering first to help with the jumps.

**Lesson 19: Scales**  
  
Lesson 19 focuses on scales and scale patterns.  Many of the exercises on this page come with options for either common (4/4) or cut (2/2) time.  These should all be played in be cut time, with the possible exception of #6 if it is proving difficult.  Pay close attention to key signatures and slurs, and it's always wise to say and finger first at home.    
  
In exercise 6, play it once through with the lower octave notes, and then once more with the higher octave notes.  
  
Exercise 7 is a round.  It's simple to prepare, but in your lesson, I will begin the piece, and then you will play from the begging when I reach circle 2.  You can play this round in that way, with a new player coming in every two measures (when the first person reaches circle 2, then circle 3, then circle 4), with up to four players.  It might be fun to try it with up to three other oboe or flute playing friends.

**LESSON 20: STACCATO, VIBRATO, HIGH Ab, AND AN INTRODUCTION TO PHR**ASING  
  
In this vital lesson, we will begin working on vibrato and staccato.  Towards the end of doing these well, we have a new addition to the daily warm-up (students should also still do a minimum of a low D-half hole D-low D octave slur in half notes, and continuing to regularly do the long tone and reed siren is HIGHLY recommended).  
  
DAILY EXERCISE:  
  
Step 1: air pulse.  Without tonguing, play a note, then go to almost silence but with the air hiss sound, etc. for several beats  
Step 2: tongue staccato.  Add the tongue to the beginning of each note, but continue to listen for air hiss ends  
Step 3: air pulse.  (Same as step 1; aim to keep the core firm the entire time, and listen for air hiss.)  
Step 4: vibrato pulse.  Similar to air pulse, but instead of getting all the way to near silence, get to just a lower intensity/volume  
  
Use a mirror to **ensure the jaw does not move**.  Aim to keep the core strong.  Ideally, the physical movement for all of these should come either from the throat or from the intercostal (between the ribs) muscles.  Avoid tension in the shoulders and neck, as those can choke out what would otherwise be successful vibrato pulsing (vibrato should be primarily a variation in the intensity of the sound, rather than the pitch).  
  
You will note that this exercise feels different on different notes, as they have slight differences in air support and resistance.  I advise starting on a slightly higher note.  You might try high F or half hole D, and see which seems easier to start with.  If it proves difficult, try it on a middle note like Bb or A.  It is important to try this exercise every day, and to be patient if it seems difficult at first.  It is VITAL to avoid any movement in the jaw or embouchure.  
  
Exercise 1 is basically an F major scale, and focuses on eighth rests.  Aim to hear the air hiss like in the daily exercise above in those eighth rests.  Practice entirely without tonguing first--there should be no pulses between the repeated non-staccato notes, but rather a beat and a half of smooth, consistent sound.  Then, add tonguing, continuing to play smoothly until each eighth rest, and listen for the air hiss in the rests.  You may breathe in in only 1 of the rests in the exercise, and may not need even that.  Be careful of the slightly changed rhythm in measure 5.  
  
Exercise 2 is also basically an F major scale.  There should be staccatos added above the quarter note E's in the third measure, as on all the other quarter notes (please add them with your pencil if I haven't yet).  Again, practice this exercise first without any tonguing (air pulse only), listening for air hiss both in eighth rests and after staccato quarter notes.  Measures 1 and 2 should sound the same.  Try to get vibrato pulses in the whole notes in measures 4 and 8 as well.  Then, add the tongue (tongue the beginning of each note), continuing to listen for consistent air hisses.  Remember, the tongue starts a note; the air ends it.  
  
Exercise 3 should also be practiced air pulse only (without tonguing) first.  Be careful of the B naturals.  In measures with repeated non-staccato notes, as the half notes in measures 4, 8, and 12, will be entirely connected and without space here, like the eighth notes in the first exercise were.  Aim for vibrato pulse on half notes and whole notes.  You will notice a difference in the way it feels to control high notes this way vs low notes.  For the high notes, keep the back of the tongue high and picture the sound coming out of the forehead.  For the low notes, imagine supporting the air almost more out than up from the core, and feel the ribcage staying open.  After working on the exercise air pulse only, try it tongued (tongue the beginning of each non-slurred note as normal), but focus on keeping the air hisses after the staccatos, and listen for vibrato pulse on half notes and whole notes, especially in measures 4, 8, 12, 16, and 17.  
  
Exercise 4 is simply a finger movement study.  Note that high Ab is a FIRST OCTAVE KEY note, and be particularly careful about the half hole motion near high Ab (If the half hole leaks on high Ab, you'll certainly get a high squeak.)  Letter A may seem difficult at first, but notice that almost every note is either Eb or Ab, and that from the second measure through the repeat, the high Ab-half hole Eb-low Ab pattern repeats.  Letter B is more straightforward, but be very particular about the half hole transitions.  
  
You do not need to prepare exercise 5.  We will use it to learn phrasing in your lesson, but you will not be required to play it.  
  
Exercise 6 is particularly challenging. When we have slurs followed immediately by staccato notes, the last note of the slur should be lifted, or, in other words, should end with an air hiss and be about the same length as the staccato eighth notes that follow. Saying and fingering this exercise several times is going to be absolutely necessary. Notice the patterns in the notes as you do--in the first four measures (the hardest in the piece), the pattern is note-down-note-up a third-down-down, and then the same pattern one note higher. Measures 5-8 consist mostly of just two notes each (C-E, B-D, A-C plus an F#) slurred and legato. Measures 9-12 are fairly simple in notes, but care with rhythm (don't rush long notes) and staccato (list

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This beginner book focuses on oboe-specific challenges, and the speed and level of difficulty are well suited to weekly lessons.  The goal is that each student will be prepared to get through one full page each week, which will require them to practice each page thoroughly the week beforehand.

(In progress) Lesson by lesson guidelines (lessons are listed by book lesson, not actual number of lessons.  Students move through things at their own pace.):

**Pre-book:Oboe assembly and care, hand position, breathing, embouchure, reed exercises**

We will discuss how to put the instrument together safely, how to soak the reeds, how to tell which side of the reed goes towards the player, that the reed goes all the way in the oboe, how to put the reed in the reed case, how to safely set the oboe down, how to swab the oboe, and how to put the oboe safely away.  We will discuss embouchure, posture, and proper breathing, and do a few reed exercises (students will have a sheet of paper with details on these exercises, which they should try to do every day).  We will discuss hand position and learn the first, most straightforward six notes (B A G F# E and D, though not yet by sight), which they should also try to play each day.  Low D is particularly picky about correct fingerings, air, and embouchure, and is especially beneficial to work on for that reason.

Before we can begin the book, we will also work on tonguing on the oboe (we'll have already started tonguing on the reed) and starting notes with the tongue.

**STUDENTS SHOULD CONTINUE TO WARM UP WITH A LONG TONE ON THE REED AND A REED SIREN EACH DAY AT THE BEGINNING OF PRACTICE AS WE PROGRESS THROUGH THE BOOK.**

**Lesson 1: Tonguing note beginnings, starting to read music, slurs**

We will quickly introduce basic music reading (staff, treble clef, bar lines, measures, whole notes, whole rests, beats, time signature).  We will learn to read B, A, G, F#, and E in whole notes, and we will learn about slurs.  We will practice using rests well (leaving the reed on the lip, keeping the fingers in place, opening the mouth to breathe, and breathing out before breathing in) and holding whole notes for a full four counts.  In this lesson, students begin to actually read music in tempo.

**Lesson 2: Quarter notes, half notes, half rests, left hand finger movement**

We learn quarter notes and read music with quarter notes, changing notes at progressively faster intervals (first every three measures, then every 1, then halfway through each measure). We learn that accidentals carry through a measure.  We learn and play half notes and half rests.  We have a finger movement study that focuses on precise finger technique (curved, close fingers, small movements, fingers always moving together) for several primarily left hand finger combinations.  We practice a piece all the notes we have learned to read that also alternates half notes and quarter notes (a good opportunity to check pulse and rhythmic accuracy).  We play Merrily We Roll Along, focusing on accuracy of slurring vs. tonguing, and accurate rhythm, and on not breathing after every half note.  A short written exercise which students should complete at home for me to check finishes the page.

Students should pay extra attention to exercise 5, which focuses on finger movement.  They should practice in a mirror to be sure that their fingers are staying curved both when on and when off the keys, and that they are staying as close to the keys as possible at all times.  They should repeat each section (labeled a, b, c, and d) until it is clean. Letters c and d will take extra focus to make sure two fingers move exactly together and there are no blips between notes.

I highly recommend that students practice saying and fingering each exercise before playing it.

**Lesson 3: Quarter rests, low D, right hand finger movements**

In the first three exercises, we begin working with quarter rests, and we learn about ties.  In exercise 3, we will briefly introduce the concept of breathing out in one rest, playing a bit, and then breathing in during the next rest (a skill that will later be called on quite a lot on oboe, even if little sixth grade music requires it).  We we learn to read low D, and will have another finger movement exercise (number 6), similar to the one on the previous lesson.  Again, students should likely practice this exercise a good deal more, using a mirror, and focusing on close, curved fingers and clean transitions.  Remember that saying and fingering an exercise in tempo before playing it is always wise.  Students will need to prepare just the top part of the duet (#7), and should, as always, fill out the written exercise at the bottom of the page at home, before their lesson.

**Lesson 4: Dotted half notes, C, repeat signs and endings, more complex finger movement**

We learn middle C and dotted half notes.  In our lesson, we will discuss how to figure out dotted rhythms generally speaking as well, not just the dotted half note.  In exercise 1, measures five and six, which change between B and C, often give students some trouble.  Exercise 2 is another very important finger movement exercise, with the added complication of cross fingerings (students must put down fingers on the left hand while picking up a finger on the right hand at exactly the same time).  Like all of the finger movement studies, this exercise warrants extra time and use of a mirror to check for close, curved fingers.

The lesson continues to put together all previously learned concepts, with #4 including slurs vs. tonguing and half notes vs. quarter notes.  #5 is particularly challenging, and again, will likely require more time than the easier exercises.  I especially recommend that students practice saying and fingering this exercise several times, as the notes jump around more than they've previously seen, and the exercise is therefore more of a test for their note reading skills.

#7 introduces pickup notes and first and second endings.  Students will start at the pickup note (the beginning), play through the first ending, take the repeat back to the backwards repeat sign, and then skip the first ending, playing only the second ending.  The small text on the page should make this reasonably clear if read carefully.  Students need prepare only the first line of the duet, and should fill out the written exercise at home.

**Lesson 5: Cut time, right F**

Students will learn about cut time (2/2: two beats in a measure and the half note gets the beat).  All exercises with a cut time option (2, 3, 4, 9, 10) will be taken in cut time in the lesson, though students should be prepared for this as long as they are able to play it quickly in regular 4/4 time (the one they're used to right now) at home.  I recommend attempting a tempo of at least 100, preferably 120, once  they are comfortable with the exercises at a slower tempo (and only then; it's always better to start slowly and accurately).  While most of these exercises are fairly easy, students may find it helpful to isolate particularly tricky measures (i.e. the second measure of #4), and practice those measures PLUS 1 NOTE in isolation until they are more comfortable.  As always, I recommend saying and fingering an exercise in tempo before playing it.

Students will also learn right F (fingerings for new notes are shown as they are introduced and can also be found in the very front of the book in a fingering chart, in case of confusion); the right F key is pressed with the same finger as the low D key.  There are several exercises to get used to right hand F, which are quite tricky for young students.  These should be played MUCH slower than the cut time exercises, and will actually probably require more preparation.  In addition to the written exercises on right F, I will hear students play |:D-E-F-E:|, repeated several times, to help their third fingers get used to going between the old location (low D) and the new one (right F).

Students should fill out the short written exercise at the bottom of the page at home.

**Lesson 6: Bb, 3/4 time, left and forked F**

Students will learn Bb, and will practice several Bb finger exercises (#2 and #3 tend to prove somewhat challenging, #2 for the cross fingerings, #3 for the chromaticism and tricky finger combinations).  Exercises 1 and 4 should be played in cut time, and exercise 4 reviews first and second endings.  #5 seems easy at home, but I recommend playing it carefully with a metronome a few times, as the change in rhythm in measures 5 and 6 can trip up inattentive students.

We learn 3/4 time (three beats in a measure; quarter note gets the beat), which is technically quite similar to the familiar 4/4, but feels very different (like a waltz).  Ties and dotted half notes are reviewed.

The book introduces forked F--we will also learn left F (fingered like E plus the long straight key in the middle of the left hand pinky keys).  As most student oboes do not have a left F key (though yours will), the book mostly treats it as though it is not an option; we will mostly play left F's instead of forked, where the book marks forked.  The rule for choosing F fingerings goes like this: use **right F (1)** if you can get to it and to the note after without sliding; if you can't use right F, use **left F (2)**; use **forked F (3)** only when you can use neither right nor left F without sliding fingers. On this page, #7 and #10 will be played with left F only.  As they are finger exercises, #8 and #9 will be played once through with left F's and once with forked.

At the bottom of the page is a written exercise in which students will identify slurs and ties, which should be filled out at home (confused students should turn back to lesson 3, where ties were introduced, and carefully read the text introducing ties in #2).

**Lesson 7: Low C, endurance challenge, 2/4 time, using right and left F**

Students learn low C; exercises 1 and 3 focus on the new note, and exercise 4 is a C major scale.

Exercise 5 is an endurance exercise.  Students should take a different one of these six notes each day and practice holding it as long as possible to build endurance, with the goal being a minimum of 15 seconds by the end of the week (for perspective, professionals can often manage 60 seconds).  I recommend putting this exercise at the end of a practice session, as it can be tiring.

In exercise 6, we learn 2/4 time (2 beats in a measure; quarter note gets the beat), which is otherwise quite straightforward, though students sometimes miss that the exercise is two lines long.

The last three exercises focus on switching from left to right F (students should use left F's, never forked, in these exercises, and change the F's above the notes to L's if I haven't gotten that done already).  These are the most challenging exercises on the page, especially exercise 7, and will likely require the most time during the week.

For the written exercise at the bottom, I would like students to write the note that gets the given number of beats for the first half, and then write the rest that gets the given number of beats for the second half.

**Lesson 8**: **Pinkies (Eb and Ab)**

This lesson focuses on the pinkies, which should stay curved at all times.  The first half of the lesson focuses on Eb (if students struggle with keeping this pinky curved, they should make sure the hand is not too high--the first finger on the right hand should actually be reaching up just a little, not down, so that the bottom of the hand can be close enough to the oboe to easily hit all the pinky keys and stay curved.  All knuckles should be about the same distance from the oboe; if the lower knuckles are farther away than the higher ones, it may be impossible to get the pinky to reach the keys curved as it should).  Then, we very briefly learn about left Eb.

The second half of the lesson focuses on Ab.  As the key acts as a lever, the left pinky should aim to hit it nearer the tip than the inside.  Naturally, the pinky should be quite curved.  Since that's the highest of the left hand pinky keys, keeping it curved means keeping the pinky and the G finger closer together than is comfortable, almost as if the pinky is trying to cross underneath the third finger.  Many students try to straighten out the third finger and pinky, pulling the hand and wrist up, to keep a more comfortable distance between them, but this will slow down technique over the long term and should be avoided.

Many of these exercises are particularly difficult, and will require careful practice.  Saying and fingering is always advised, and on pieces with more complex rhythms (like exercise 3), counting in tempo is also helpful.  Exercises 1 and 5 are finger movement studies, and students should aim particularly for excellent hand position on those.  Exercise 2 will be played in 4/4, and starts with an almost Bb major scale, but the second half is a bit trickier (remember that accidentals carry through a measure--there are no E♮'s).  Exercise 3 focuses on complex 3/4 rhythms (counting is advised; the second line subtly changes the rhythm) and on the key of g minor (students should make sure to play Bb's and Eb's, even next to F#'s).  In addition to some chromatic motion, exercise 4, works on moving the pinky cleanly on both C and Eb keys (measures 5 and 6--only the pinky should move, and it should stay curved as it moves on and off the C and Eb keys).

Exercise 6 focuses on moving the pinky from the Ab to the left F key (with a note between, of course; students should almost never slide a pinky directly from one pinky key to another).  Students should use Left F, not forked, as usual, and should use the Eb's to move the pinky from the Ab key to the left F key.  Exercise 7 is exceptionally challenging, but it's also repetitive, which can make things easier (the first and second measures are the same as the third and fourth, and also the fifth and sixth).  Again students should remember that accidentals carry through a measure.

In the written exercise at the bottom of the page, students should fill out right and left F's themselves, with L's and R's below the notes, and should also practice playing it.  They should remember that right F is the first choice and should be used when possible, and that left F is the alternate for when the third finger is otherwise occupied (on D, Eb, or low C) during the note before or the one after the F.  (Forked F should only be used when neither right F nor left F could be used without sliding fingers, which does not come up in this exercise).

**Lesson 9: Half hole**

In lesson 9, we learn the half hole.  This is the method used to bring C#, D, and Eb up an octave (we will work on D and Eb in this lesson), and it is vital to long term technical facility that students are careful to do it consistently and well.  We will work to open and close the half hole by pivoting the first finger of the left hand, without sliding, without moving the entire hand/wrist, and especially without ever letting the fingertip lift off the key.  The motion will begin at the finger joint in the hand, and it will look and feel as though the middle knuckle is leading the movement.  It is important to keep the hand relaxed, as any tension, especially in the webbing between the thumb and first finger, can lock up this movement (students should be sure not to squeeze the oboe with the left thumb).  Students will be instructed to practice this movement with the left hand on the right arm throughout the week, so that they can work on the finger pivot without the added complication of the oboe, and can get a good deal more practice in for this specific movement (they can do this riding in the car, watching TV, etc.) than they otherwise might--you should see them doing this throughout the week.  After the reed long tone and siren, students should warm up the half hole (and the air and embouchure) by playing low D-high D-low D-high D-low D, in half notes, focusing on tone, still embouchure, and crisp half hole pivots.

Exercise 1 is a finger exercise--use of a mirror is recommended, and students should be very particular about snappy and accurate finger pivots (no slides, pick-ups, or slow moving tense fingers).  Exercise 2 also focuses on the half hole pivot; students should remember to check the key signature, should see the exercise is two lines long, and should note that the last four measures are particularly difficult and may require more practice than the rest of the exercise.

In exercise 3, we have the added complication of left F near the half hole.  Students should take care that in using the left pinky, they do not raise or tense their hands, which can lock up the half hole.  I recommend fingering a D with a left F key down and practicing opening and closing the half hole, without playing, just to make sure they aren't letting the pinky prevent their best half hole pivot.

Exercise 4 is fairly easy, but I recommend counting it before playing it.  Exercise 5 is another finger movement study, but now with Eb's.  Again, students should work for perfect half hole pivots, in spite of the left F in the third measure, and should aim for their best curved pinky (keeping the hand low) for the Ab in the second half of the exercise.

In exercise 6, students should make special note of the key signature, and should think about the fingering they plan to use for the last F in the piece (Can you use right F before Eb? Can you use left F after Ab? If you can do neither without sliding, you must use forked F).  In measures 5-8, students should be careful to move only the pinky and not the hand when transitioning from Ab to left F and back, and to keep the pinky very curved on all Ab's.  It helps to think about the two target points for the tip of the pinky--one is low and centered, the other high and out.

Exercise 7 is quite straightforward, but students should take the opportunity to use their best hand position and curved pinkies on all of the Ab's.  The written exercise at the bottom is in 4/4 and asks students to add bar lines.

**Lesson 10: More half hole, using left and right F**

Lesson 10 continues to work the new and vital half hole skill.  Students should continue to practice the octave D warm up daily.  Exercise 1 is a finger study isolating several half hole combinations (Bb-D, then D-A, then B-D).  Students should take care to pivot only the first finger, not the hand or wrist, in spite of the other left hand fingers needing to move off and on keys at the same time.  These are different motions and should be carefully treated as such.  Use of a mirror is highly recommended when practicing this exercise.

Students should remember to check their key signature in exercise 2, and should note that it is three lines long.  As always, precision should be exercised in the many half hole motions.  As 3/4 is sometimes uncomfortable at first, counting first may be wise here.

Students should prepare both lines of the duet in exercise 3.  On the repeated D's, take care that the half hole stays in a good, pivoted open position (the middle knuckle should be almost below the fingertip, and the lower part of the fingertip will be in contact with the key), and does not try to slide to a more comfortable position on the open half holes lest it make it difficult or impossible to close the half hole cleanly.

In exercise 4, students should check the key signature, and should make careful note of the last two F fingerings.  One has to be forked, another should be left.  This should be marked and practiced accurately.  Also, count carefully through the tie and rest in measures 8 and 9, as it is a commonly missed area for counting.

Exercise 5 is in CUT time (2/2).  Students should write in right and left F's, and should carefully practice the piece.

**Lesson 11: First Octave Key**  
  
In lesson 11, we learn about the first octave key, which is used to play high E, F (all three forms, though left F isn't listed), F#, G, Ab (not listed on this page, but also uses the first octave key). Notice that all of these notes, except forked F, lack the D key, but HAVE the G key.  Students should begin by simply playing each of the first octave key notes, including Ab.  
  
It is important that students hit the octave key in the bottom part of the key (in the future, their oboes will have an additional octave key higher up), and with a STRAIGHT, RELAXED THUMB. The thumb should touch the bottom of the octave key with the side of the thumb that naturally faces the first finger, without turning or tensing the thumb to hit the key, and it is vital that the muscles in the webbing between the thumb and first finger stay relaxed.  If it tenses, it will slow and limit the half hole motion.  
  
There are basically three ways to move the thumb on and off the octave key:  First, you can keep the thumb hovering just above the octave key when octave key notes are near, and just move it on and off the key like you would other fingers.  Second, you can let the thumb rest in its standard position just below the key, and move it on and off the bottom of the key with small, circular motions.  Third, you can move the thumb onto the key in the same manner as the second option, and then slide it off back to rest position (it is good to be able to do this at least once, as when the additional octave key is added in future years, one rarely does have to slide from that octave key to the first.)  Notice that all these methods keep the thumb quite straight, and move it from the furthest joint (where the thumb meets the *wrist*).  AVOID bending the thumb at all when moving it on and off the key, or squeezing the oboe with the thumb when it's in rest position.  
  
Exercise 1 is simply about moving octaves.  Be sure to play the slurs.  Be careful to keep the embouchure round and the air pressure strong so that both the low and high notes can easily speak, and focus on how you're moving the thumb on and off the octave key.  
  
Exercise 2 is a finger movement study.  Notice that the low notes stay the same within each of the four exercises, and the high notes move chromatically.  Focus on moving the thumb as described above, and on keeping the air and embouchure consistent, without bumping or changing between the notes.  
  
Exercise 3 includes both half hole (measure 3, be sure to pivot) and octave key notes, though never yet next to each other.  In the last half of the exercise, the octave key changes often happen at surprising times--be aware of when your thumb moves!  
  
Note that exercise 4 is in cut time (2 beats per measure; the half note gets the beat).  It's somewhat challenging, but note that it is made entirely of arpeggios--the first four bars are the F major arpeggio, the fifth and sixth the C major arpeggio, and the last two the F major arpeggio again.  It may help also to group the notes in your mind, as you group letters into words when reading--the first two notes form a group, then the next three, then the next two, then the next three, then the next two, then the next three, then the next three, then the next three (always two beats at a time).  
  
Exercises 5 and 6 are duets.  Watch your counting in both, and use (and mark, if I haven't yet) left F's instead of forked in exercise 6.  
  
Exercise 7 is the most challenging on the page, and will should have the most practice.  This is the last chance to perfect the half hole pivot by itself before we start adding the first octave key motion to the mix. Do watch the key signature.  The one F natural in this piece is a left F, but remember that the barline after it cancels the accidental.

**Lesson 12: Combining the half hole and first octave key**  
  
In lesson 12, we begin to combine the half hole and first octave key.  Remember that the half hole finger must pivot, and that for it to do so, the webbing between the thumb and first finger must stay relaxed (keep the thumb straight, don't curve it to hit the octave key, and move it as if the joint near the thumbnail does not exist).  This finger combination is incredibly common in oboe music.  It is one of the most vital skills to get down this year, and students MUST be able to play this well at this beginner level to manage the harder music they will have in years to come.  
  
The first exercise is a finger movement study.  Note the key signature, and remember to change the F (forked) to L (left).  Consider checking in with a mirror, and be VERY picky about your half hole pivots.  
  
Exercise 2 is fairly straightforward.  Note the key signature, but we will not do the repeat.  Count carefully through long notes in 3/4.  
  
Exercise 3 is a bit tricky.  Take note of where ideas repeat to make it easier to play.  Be careful to be accurate with right and left F's in this exercise, be careful with the half holes, and note that the beginning of the second line is the trickiest part (isolate the hard measures).  The last four measures (plus one note) are simply an F major scale, which makes it easier to play.  
  
Exercise 4 is one of the hardest things to date.  We will play it in cut time and take the repeat of the first line (there are three, notice), but it is wise to start practicing it in 4/4.  Note the key signature, be very picky about the many half hole transitions, and take the time to count it before playing, first in 4/4, and later in the week in cut time (2/2).  You may have to sit and think about the rhythm in the syncopated measures (i.e. 5 and 6, not counting the pickup measure) for a bit.  If they give you trouble, draw a visual representation of the measure and figure out where the notes fit within the beats.  
  
In exercises 5 and 6, I would like students to focus on accurate articulation (along with good half hole transitions, of course).  Singing and fingering first is recommended.  Note the key signatures.  
  
Remember to fill out the brief written exercise at the bottom

**Lesson 13: Half hole to first octave key with a focus on half hole Eb; low C#**  
  
In lesson 13, we continue to perfect the vital half hole to first octave key transition.  Note that all half hole notes have the D finger down, and with the exception of forked F, all first octave key notes do not (though they do have the G finger down.  The third finger on each hand is the tell for octave transitions).  
  
Exercise 1 is a finger movement study.  Be careful not to tense or raise the hand when adding the pinkies for left F and Eb.  Be picky and accurate, and practice this one often.  
  
Exercise 2 is in cut time, and students should be careful to note the Ab in the key.  I strongly advise practicing counting in tempo (perhaps with a metronome, slowly--remember you can use the tap function to find a comfortable speed) before playing.  In the fourth measure of the second line, the half hole must change precisely on time, as you would any other key.  
  
Exercise 3 again reviews the half hole to first octave key motion.  Be accurate with that, and be careful with the counting through the quarter rests, especially after the tied notes.  
  
Exercises 4, 5, and 6 work on low C# (high C# will also be half holed).  The pinky should be curved--if it struggles to reach the key, the bottom part of the hand is too far from the oboe.  E to C# (the last four bars of exercise 6) may take extra work to make sure the fingers move together.  Note the key signature in exercise 6, and remember that sharps or flats in a key apply to all notes of that name, in any octave.  
  
Remember to fill out the written exercise at the bottom.

Note: at this point, if we are a bit behind our goals, as often happens, we may fast track through the next several lessons, completing the following: 14.1, 14.5, 15.5, 17.1, 18.1, 18.2, and 18.4.  If you are on this track, focus on preparing the technical studies VERY thoroughly (14.5, 15.5, 18.4 ; they are tricky, but there are only 3), and make sure to be well prepared on at least the earliest one of the others we haven't completed (14.1 is about endurance, 17.1 and 18.1 dynamics) each week.  Check the notes for the full lessons below for notes on those exercises.

**Lesson 14: Endurance, putting things together, left and forked F finger study**  
  
Exercise 1 is an endurance study, with emphasis on being able to continue with good breathing and embouchure even after already tired.  I advise practicing this at the end of a practice session, and in front of a chair (so that if you get dizzy, you can sit down safely very quickly).  Play each note as long as possible (aim for a minimum of 15 seconds per note, maybe 10 on the last few), then, keeping the reed on the lower lip, the corners forward, and the posture balanced and tall, breathe out, breathe in, and do the same thing to the next note.  Be aware of how much reed your taking as you go, and of whether your posture is changing.  Stay near the tip of the reed, and don't let the head creep forward.  Breathe into the stomach and support well for each note.  Remember that the better supported the air is and the faster it moves, the less gets used up.  
  
Exercises 2 and 3 are closely related--the small text underneath exercise 2 applies to both.  Note that both are G scales in different patterns.  You will, in each case, follow the articulation pattern down the G scale all the way to low D and then back up.  This works endurance, articulation (aim for consistency), and the beginnings of the important ability to follow a scale pattern without having to read each note.  You will likely need to breathe once or twice in the middle, but do not breathe too often or play choppy.  
  
Exercise 4 is quite straightforward.  Note that it is 3 lines, and continue to be careful with first octave key to half hole transitions.  Play smoothly.  
  
Exercise 5 is a finger movement study.  We will do each of the 4 exercises first with left F, and then again with forked F (omitting the repeat with the forked F).  Practice this one a lot, and aim to be sure you can play the entire 7 measures with perfect fingers (and half hole/octave key transitions) on the first try by the end of the week.  
  
Remember to change F (forked) F's to L (left), as always, in exercise 6.  Exercise 7 has a lot of accidentals, which can be tricky--say and finger first, and be careful of the Eb in the 7th full measure, and in general remember the key signature does apply when not cancelled out by an accidental.  Here we learn about D.C. al Fine (stands for da capo al fine, which means literally from the head to the end, or in other words go back to the beginning and play until you see fine written).  Make sure to read the small text.  
  
Remember to fill out the written exercise at the bottom, carefully reading the instructions.

**Lesson 15: Slurs with scales in thirds; half hole C#**  
  
The first 3 exercises on this page focus on slurs.  Note your key signatures, and remember to change F (forked) F's to L (left).  For the first two exercises, you will see two sets of slurs--this almost never happens in music, but is done here to help you learn to really focus on slurs.  You will play each of those two exercises twice, once with the top set of slurs and once with the lower set.  Be picky about your slurs; I will require four measures in a row to be correct at least to move on.  Singing and fingering is always helpful.  Exercise 3 has only one set of slurs, but the Eb in measure 4 is a misprint; it should be a D.  
  
In exercise 4, remember to change F (forked) to L (left), and play smoothly.  
  
Exercise 5 is a finger study introducing half hole C#.  Remember that accidentals carry through the measure, and be precise with your half hole C# fingering throughout, and with your half hole to first octave key transitions in letter C.  
  
Exercises 6 and 7 also work on half hole C#.  Exercise 6 is a duet, though the notation is a bit different than you are used to--read the instructions below, and prepare both parts (the first oboist rests for the first 6 measures, as there are only down stems, unlike the last four measures, which have stems in both directions).  In exercise 7, watch your key signature, remember A# carries through the measure (read the text below the note if you are confused about A#), and be precise with those half hole C#'s.  If you recall arpeggios from your band class, you will recognize the A major arpeggio in measures 3 and 15.  
  
Remember to fill out the brief written exercise at the bottom.

**Lesson 16: eighth notes**  
  
Lesson 16 introduces eighth notes, which are played in 4/4 the same way that quarter notes are in 2/2.  Exercise 1 should be played in cut time, and is identical in sound to exercise 2.  Note that exercise 3 is simply variations on an F major scale; aim to play it smoothly.  
  
Exercise 4 is the most challenging one on this page, and has some complex finger combinations (measures 3 and 5 particularly).  The last line is tricky.  Remember to used left F, not forked, and take notice of the repetitive pattern (note-down-note-down-down-new note, etc. for the first half; the last half is simpler).  Note the text discussing what to do with repeated notes under slurs.  Watch out for Ab's!  
  
Exercise 5 should be familiar.  You need only prepare the top part for the duet (exercise 6), but remember B is natural here.  
  
The last exercise is a little tricky, though I think not as much as 4.  Watch your key signature, say and finger first, and think about their being sort of a mental comma before the E in measure 6, so that you have more manageable groups to think about.

**Lesson 17: dynamics, putting things together**  
  
Exercise 1 focuses on dynamics.  Contrary to instructions, I would like students to play the first note forte, the second mezzo forte, the third piano, the fourth mezzo forte, the fifth forte, and the last piano.  Picture a large target for the forte (perhaps the wall) and a very small one for the piano (perhaps one note).  For forte, it's important to keep the shoulders, neck, and head relaxed and the inside of the mouth open tall to give the sound room to resonate (and, of course, to use lots of air and air pressure).  Piano dynamic requires less air, but pushed with just as much pressure and speed.  DON'T drop the air pressure for the piano.  I advise practicing breathing out only before playing the pianos a few times to get the feel for pushing little air at high pressure.  Air is the majority of where dynamic control comes from, but you can also provide a little more cushion with the the lip muscles, pushing them together a bit more, like you're saying "mmm," with an emphasis on keeping them round while they close, like a drawstring.  
  
Exercise 2 is full of scales.  If you remember which scale you are playing during the eighth note runs, and focus your brain mostly where the jumps are, letting your fingers and muscle memory help you get down the scale without as much attention, you'll find that it is not as difficult as it seems at first.  
  
Exercise 3 has several slightly challenging finger combinations.  Work for smoothness in the Eb-F transitions in measure 1, good half hole pivots in measure 5, and a curved Ab pinky in measures 6 and 8.  The last two measures are simply a variation on the Eb scale.  
  
Practice counting exercise 4 before playing it.  Note the key signature in exercise 5.

**Lesson 18: Dynamics with articulation; left and forked F finger study**  
  
Exercise 1 also focuses on dynamics.  As in lesson 17, we are changing up the instructions a little.  Play the F forte, the E mezzo forte, the D piano, the C mezzo forte, the Bb forte (it should be Bb, not B), the A piano, the G forte, and the last F piano.  For exercise 2, you will play the same notes at the same dynamic levels (I will not require the scale ascending, only descending), but with the written articulation and rhythm.  Focus on smooth playing, and on not letting the articulation alter the dynamic or reduce air support.  
  
Exercise 3 will be helped by recognizing the relevant scales and arpeggios, as best you can at the moment.  Saying and fingering first is wise, and remember to change the F (forked) markings to L (left).  
  
Exercise 4 is our final forked and left F finger study.  Notice that letters A and E are the same except for octave, and the same goes for B and F, C and G, and D and H.  It may be easier to work on them in that order.  Practice all exercises with the repeats with left F, and then, when that's clean, without the repeats with forked F.  Focus closely on half hole transitions in the higher exercises.  
  
Exercises 5 and 6 are straightforward.  I advise saying and fingering first to help with the jumps.

**Lesson 19: Scales**  
  
Lesson 19 focuses on scales and scale patterns.  Many of the exercises on this page come with options for either common (4/4) or cut (2/2) time.  These should all be played in be cut time, with the possible exception of #6 if it is proving difficult.  Pay close attention to key signatures and slurs, and it's always wise to say and finger first at home.    
  
In exercise 6, play it once through with the lower octave notes, and then once more with the higher octave notes.  
  
Exercise 7 is a round.  It's simple to prepare, but in your lesson, I will begin the piece, and then you will play from the begging when I reach circle 2.  You can play this round in that way, with a new player coming in every two measures (when the first person reaches circle 2, then circle 3, then circle 4), with up to four players.  It might be fun to try it with up to three other oboe or flute playing friends.

**LESSON 20: STACCATO, VIBRATO, HIGH Ab, AND AN INTRODUCTION TO PHR**ASING  
  
In this vital lesson, we will begin working on vibrato and staccato.  Towards the end of doing these well, we have a new addition to the daily warm-up (students should also still do a minimum of a low D-half hole D-low D octave slur in half notes, and continuing to regularly do the long tone and reed siren is HIGHLY recommended).  
  
DAILY EXERCISE:  
  
Step 1: air pulse.  Without tonguing, play a note, then go to almost silence but with the air hiss sound, etc. for several beats  
Step 2: tongue staccato.  Add the tongue to the beginning of each note, but continue to listen for air hiss ends  
Step 3: air pulse.  (Same as step 1; aim to keep the core firm the entire time, and listen for air hiss.)  
Step 4: vibrato pulse.  Similar to air pulse, but instead of getting all the way to near silence, get to just a lower intensity/volume  
  
Use a mirror to **ensure the jaw does not move**.  Aim to keep the core strong.  Ideally, the physical movement for all of these should come either from the throat or from the intercostal (between the ribs) muscles.  Avoid tension in the shoulders and neck, as those can choke out what would otherwise be successful vibrato pulsing (vibrato should be primarily a variation in the intensity of the sound, rather than the pitch).  
  
You will note that this exercise feels different on different notes, as they have slight differences in air support and resistance.  I advise starting on a slightly higher note.  You might try high F or half hole D, and see which seems easier to start with.  If it proves difficult, try it on a middle note like Bb or A.  It is important to try this exercise every day, and to be patient if it seems difficult at first.  It is VITAL to avoid any movement in the jaw or embouchure.  
  
Exercise 1 is basically an F major scale, and focuses on eighth rests.  Aim to hear the air hiss like in the daily exercise above in those eighth rests.  Practice entirely without tonguing first--there should be no pulses between the repeated non-staccato notes, but rather a beat and a half of smooth, consistent sound.  Then, add tonguing, continuing to play smoothly until each eighth rest, and listen for the air hiss in the rests.  You may breathe in in only 1 of the rests in the exercise, and may not need even that.  Be careful of the slightly changed rhythm in measure 5.  
  
Exercise 2 is also basically an F major scale.  There should be staccatos added above the quarter note E's in the third measure, as on all the other quarter notes (please add them with your pencil if I haven't yet).  Again, practice this exercise first without any tonguing (air pulse only), listening for air hiss both in eighth rests and after staccato quarter notes.  Measures 1 and 2 should sound the same.  Try to get vibrato pulses in the whole notes in measures 4 and 8 as well.  Then, add the tongue (tongue the beginning of each note), continuing to listen for consistent air hisses.  Remember, the tongue starts a note; the air ends it.  
  
Exercise 3 should also be practiced air pulse only (without tonguing) first.  Be careful of the B naturals.  In measures with repeated non-staccato notes, as the half notes in measures 4, 8, and 12, will be entirely connected and without space here, like the eighth notes in the first exercise were.  Aim for vibrato pulse on half notes and whole notes.  You will notice a difference in the way it feels to control high notes this way vs low notes.  For the high notes, keep the back of the tongue high and picture the sound coming out of the forehead.  For the low notes, imagine supporting the air almost more out than up from the core, and feel the ribcage staying open.  After working on the exercise air pulse only, try it tongued (tongue the beginning of each non-slurred note as normal), but focus on keeping the air hisses after the staccatos, and listen for vibrato pulse on half notes and whole notes, especially in measures 4, 8, 12, 16, and 17.  
  
Exercise 4 is simply a finger movement study.  Note that high Ab is a FIRST OCTAVE KEY note, and be particularly careful about the half hole motion near high Ab (If the half hole leaks on high Ab, you'll certainly get a high squeak.)  Letter A may seem difficult at first, but notice that almost every note is either Eb or Ab, and that from the second measure through the repeat, the high Ab-half hole Eb-low Ab pattern repeats.  Letter B is more straightforward, but be very particular about the half hole transitions.  
  
You do not need to prepare exercise 5.  We will use it to learn phrasing in your lesson, but you will not be required to play it.  
  
Exercise 6 is particularly challenging. When we have slurs followed immediately by staccato notes, the last note of the slur should be lifted, or, in other words, should end with an air hiss and be about the same length as the staccato eighth notes that follow. Saying and fingering this exercise several times is going to be absolutely necessary. Notice the patterns in the notes as you do--in the first four measures (the hardest in the piece), the pattern is note-down-note-up a third-down-down, and then the same pattern one note higher. Measures 5-8 consist mostly of just two notes each (C-E, B-D, A-C plus an F#) slurred and legato. Measures 9-12 are fairly simple in notes, but care with rhythm (don't rush long notes) and staccato.

**LESSON 20: STACCATO, VIBRATO, HIGH Ab, AND AN INTRODUCTION TO PHRASING**  
  
In this vital lesson, we will begin working on vibrato and staccato. Towards the end of doing these well, we have a new addition to the daily warm-up (students should also still do a minimum of a low D-half hole D-low D octave slur in half notes, and continuing to regularly do the long tone and reed siren is HIGHLY recommended).  
  
**DAILY EXERCISE:**  
  
Step 1: air pulse. Without tonguing, play a note, then go to almost silence but with the air hiss sound, etc. for several beats  
Step 2: tongue staccato. Add the tongue to the beginning of each note, but continue to listen for air hiss ends  
Step 3: air pulse. (Same as step 1; aim to keep the core firm the entire time, and listen for air hiss.)  
Step 4: vibrato pulse. Similar to air pulse, but instead of getting all the way to near silence, get to just a lower intensity/volume  
  
Use a mirror to **ensure the jaw does not move**. Aim to keep the core strong. Ideally, the physical movement for all of these should come either from the throat or from the intercostal (between the ribs) muscles. Avoid tension in the shoulders and neck, as those can choke out what would otherwise be successful vibrato pulsing (vibrato should be primarily a variation in the intensity of the sound, rather than the pitch).  
  
You will note that this exercise feels different on different notes, as they have slight differences in air support and resistance. I advise starting on a slightly higher note. You might try high F or half hole D, and see which seems easier to start with. If it proves difficult, try it on a middle note like Bb or A. It is important to try this exercise every day, and to be patient if it seems difficult at first. It is VITAL to avoid any movement in the jaw or embouchure.  
  
Exercise 1 is basically an F major scale, and focuses on eighth rests. Aim to hear the air hiss like in the daily exercise above in those eighth rests. Practice entirely without tonguing first--there should be no pulses between the repeated non-staccato notes, but rather a beat and a half of smooth, consistent sound. Then, add tonguing, continuing to play smoothly until each eighth rest, and listen for the air hiss in the rests. You may breathe in in only 1 of the rests in the exercise, and may not need even that. Be careful of the slightly changed rhythm in measure 5.  
  
Exercise 2 is also basically an F major scale. There should be staccatos added above the quarter note E's in the third measure, as on all the other quarter notes (please add them with your pencil if I haven't yet). Again, practice this exercise first without any tonguing (air pulse only), listening for air hiss both in eighth rests and after staccato quarter notes. Measures 1 and 2 should sound the same. Try to get vibrato pulses in the whole notes in measures 4 and 8 as well. Then, add the tongue (tongue the beginning of each note), continuing to listen for consistent air hisses. Remember, the tongue starts a note; the air ends it.  
  
Exercise 3 should also be practiced air pulse only (without tonguing) first. Be careful of the B naturals. In measures with repeated non-staccato notes, as the half notes in measures 4, 8, and 12, will be entirely connected and without space here, like the eighth notes in the first exercise were. Aim for vibrato pulse on half notes and whole notes. You will notice a difference in the way it feels to control high notes this way vs low notes. For the high notes, keep the back of the tongue high and picture the sound coming out of the forehead. For the low notes, imagine supporting the air almost more out than up from the core, and feel the ribcage staying open. After working on the exercise air pulse only, try it tongued (tongue the beginning of each non-slurred note as normal), but focus on keeping the air hisses after the staccatos, and listen for vibrato pulse on half notes and whole notes, especially in measures 4, 8, 12, 16, and 17.  
  
Exercise 4 is simply a finger movement study. Note that high Ab is a FIRST OCTAVE KEY note, and be particularly careful about the half hole motion near high Ab (If the half hole leaks on high Ab, you'll certainly get a high squeak.) Letter A may seem difficult at first, but notice that almost every note is either Eb or Ab, and that from the second measure through the repeat, the high Ab-half hole Eb-low Ab pattern repeats. Letter B is more straightforward, but be very particular about the half hole transitions.  
  
You do not need to prepare exercise 5. We will use it to learn phrasing in your lesson, but you will not be required to play it.  
  
Exercise 6 is particularly challenging.  When we have slurs followed immediately by staccato notes, the last note of the slur should be lifted, or, in other words, should end with an air hiss and be about the same length as the staccato eighth notes that follow.  Saying and fingering this exercise several times is going to be absolutely necessary.  Notice the patterns in the notes as you do--in the first four measures (the hardest in the piece), the pattern is note-down-note-up a third-down-down, and then the same pattern one note higher.  Measures 5-8 consist mostly of just two notes each (C-E, B-D, A-C plus an F#) slurred and legato.  Measures 9-12 are fairly simple in notes, but care with rhythm (don't rush long notes) and staccato (listen for the hiss) should be taken.  Measures 13-15 are slurred, and should be quite smooth.  They basically consist of a C scale with some chromatic moments (F#, low C#).  The second-to-last note is a staccato quarter note--pay extra attention to the length of the note before the air hiss, as it should be longer than the staccato eighth notes were.  If you try singing the last two notes, you'll probably find a good length, which you should then try to match while playing.  All measures with staccato notes, especially the first four measures, should be practiced without tonguing first, and the tongue should only be added after full control of note beginnings, endings, and lengths with the air only is reached.

**Lesson 21: Decrescendos with vibrato, Decrescendos with tonguing, more staccato, chromatics, phrasing**  
  
Continue to do the four-step vibrato/staccato warm-up from last week daily. I would still, however, start each time with some slow D octaves, a reed siren, and/or a reed long tone.  
  
Exercise 1 works on decrescendos. Please try not to breathe at the end of every measure, and listen for a smooth decrescendo. You may find the second version, which is the same but with 4 articulated quarter notes per measure instead of 1 whole note, easier to start with, as you do not need to do vibrato on it. Think of the first beat of each bar as forte, the second beat as mezzo forte, the third beat, mezzo piano, and the fourth piano. Be careful to make the dynamics change gradually and smoothly, just like in the reed long tone, rather than choppily. Think of those dynamic suggestions as guidelines on a slide, rather than steps on a staircase. For the first version, with the whole notes, you should aim to use eighth note vibrato pulses (at a very slow tempo; perhaps 60 bpm). It will help you to practice just holding a note forte with eighth note vibrato pulsing, and then holding it at piano with eighth note vibrato pulsing.  
  
Exercise 2 reviews staccato. Students need only prepare the top part of the duet. The first note should NOT be staccato--notice how nice it sounds when held long (the same goes for the note on beat 3 of measure 8). However, the Bb on beat 3 of the first full measure SHOULD be staccato--you can tell one this is a misprint by looking at the second part, which does have a staccato there. All measures with staccatos should be practiced without tonguing (air pulse) first (add the tongue once you can manage the note lengths well without). Notice the difference in length between the staccato eighth notes and staccato quarter notes in the first four measures, and the extra attention accomplishing that requires. Measures 5-8 are slurred and should be quite smooth. Notice that the repeated G's between measures 5 and 6 are NOT tied (the F#'s between measures 7 and 8 ARE tied, and under the slur, so you can see the difference). Remember that when there are repeated notes under a slur that are not tied, the second note should be lightly tongued so that it can be heard as a separate note. In measures 9 through the end (which should also be practiced without tonguing first), counting is paramount due to all the repeated notes. I recommend writing the count above each beats where the note changes, and practicing counting and fingering with a strong emphasis on those beats. You can breathe after the staccato quarter note in measure 13. Be careful that you keep up the bouncy staccato/air hiss ending all the way through this last half, and don't let fatigue lengthen the notes.  
  
Exercise 3 is short chromatic pieces. We will play 1. the lower octave of letter A, slowly, with the repeat; 2. the lower octave of letter A, fast (minimum of 120 bpm), with the repeat; 3. the higher octave of letter A, slowly, with the repeat; 4. the higher octave of letter A, fast (minimum of 120; watch the half hole transitions), with the repeat; 5. letter B, slowly, with the repeat; and then 6: letter B, fast (minimum 120), with the repeat. It will help to keep your fingers curved, especially the pinky, and it is vital to work for precise half hole transitions.  
  
Exercise 4 (check the key and time signatures) will be your first attempt at phrasing on your own.  The first phrase ends at the first breath mark in measure 8, and has its high point at the C in measure 5.  Find AND MARK the ends and high points of the other phrases in the piece (remember that it's more important to try than to be right, and that there is sometimes more than one good answer, and please do make the effort at home, even if you're unsure).  The other phrases are VERY like the first phrase, excepting the phrase(s) that begin(s) from measure 17-24.  Remember that beat 1 is always the most likely high point, and try saying/singing to help you hear where the phrases are.

**Lesson 22: Crescendos with vibrato, 2nd octave key, dotted quarter notes, and more phrasing**  
  
Exercise 1 is just like 21.1, but with crescendoes (getting louder; think p, mp, mf, f) instead of decrescendos this time. Again, you will likely find the second version, with articulated eighth notes (no vibrato), easier to begin with than the first, with whole notes and eighth note vibrato pulsing.  
  
In exercise 2, we begin to work on refining the 2nd octave key motion. It is important to avoid conflating this motion with the half hole (you don't want to end up accidentally half holed when you come off the 2nd octave key in the future). I recommend thinking down, not up, for this motion (notice that unless your hand position is incredibly low, the second octave key already extends to underneath where your first finger naturally sits), thinking of letting the wrist lead the motion rather than the finger (to avoid conflation with the half hole motion), and keeping the movement fairly small. This first exercise is fairly straightforward--all of the notes are either G or A. Remember that when the G finger is down, including on Ab, the note uses the 1st octave key, but when the G finger lifts up, it's time for the 2nd octave key. This exercise helps begin to teach your fingers that concept.  
  
Exercise 3 is also all about the 2nd octave key. Note the key signature, say and finger first, and continue to be very aware of the motion you use to get to the 2nd octave key.  
  
Exercise 4 works on the dotted quarter note. Ask yourself these questions: How long is a dotted quarter note in 4/4 time? How many eighth notes would fit inside a dotted quarter note? Play this exercise with eighth note vibrato pulsing, and be careful that the actual eighth note in each measure isn't too short.  
  
In exercises 5, 6, and 7, we will phrase (these also serve as a review of dotted quarter notes).  I will give you the first phrase or two of each (in case that didn't happen: #5--first phrase ends after beat 3 of measure 2, high point is beat 1 of measure 2; second phrase ends after the dotted half note in measure 4, high point is beat 3 of measure 3; #6: first phrase ends after the 4th measure, high point is the first beat of measure 3; #7: first phrase ends at the first breath mark, high point is beat 1 of the 3rd full measure, though as it's a waltz feel, all beat 1's have a little weight).  Some of these have words you might know, which can help you in finding AND MARKING the rest of the phrase ends and high points.  I also recommend counting these, as well as saying and fingering, to help build confidence with those dotted quarter note rhythms, especially in #7, which does have some tricky rhythms (and an actual forked F; watch the key signature).

**Lesson 23: Long tones with vibrato, long tones with tonguing, more 2nd octave key work, more phrasing**  
  
Exercise 1 is two variations on a long tone (crescendo, decrescendo), as we used to do on the reed alone. In each version, you will apply the pattern to the entire G scale ascending (the F# in the key signature is missing in the first version, but that is just a misprint). The second variation, with the tongued quarter notes, may be easier to start with. Be sure in the tongued version that the dynamics still move gradually, like a slope through each whole measure, and do not become choppy or step-wise just because we happen to be tonguing at some points along the way. In the first version, with the whole notes, you should use eighth note vibrato pulsing. Remember that beat 1 is always the goal of the decrescendo or crescendo, and should be the loudest or softest point each time. Try to breathe only every 4 bars if you can, rather than every 2. Notice how it feels to control the dynamics and vibrato on low notes, on middle range notes, and on high notes. Be careful not to crescendo or decrescendo too quickly.  
  
Exercise 2 is a technical exercise. Say and finger first. It may help you to put a mark where the jumps are, so that you have more usable note groupings (like words) to work with in the eighth note passages (i.e. after the first E, then after the D, then after the C in the second measure). Notice that this is entirely scales and arpeggios. Measure 6 is a Bb arpeggio, and measures 7 and 8 are mostly F arpeggios, with 1 C7 arpeggio (C arpeggio plus a Bb) in the middle. Noticing that can make them easier to play.  
  
Exercise 3 works on the 2nd octave key. Remember to aim down, not up, and to use the wrist a little. You will not need the thumb for any notes in this exercise except the very last one. 3 measures from the end, the B on beat 2 is a misprint, and should be an A.  
  
Exercise 4 is simple on your own, but can be tricky as a duet if you do not count carefully. In our lesson, you will play the second part, and enter two beats after I begin (this is a round). Count extra carefully in the rests in the fifth and sixth full measures.  
  
We will play the first half of exercise 5 four ways:  
1. lower octave slowly, with the repeat  
2. lower octave VERY FAST (at least 130 bpm) with the repeat  
3. higher octave slowly, with the repeat  
4. higher octave VERY FAST, with the repeat  
  
The second half will be played at a normal tempo. Notice that it asks you to tongue when you change octave mechanisms.  
  
  
You should phrase exercise 6, and watch the key signature closely.  The first phrase ends after the E on beat 2 of measure 4, and its high point is the C# on beat 1 of measure 3.  Try to find the rest of the phrase ends and high points.  Be careful of G# and C#!  Remember to tongue repeated notes under a slur.

**Lesson 24: backwards long tones, combining the 1st and 2nd octave keys, more phrasing**  
  
Exercise 1 is just like exercise 1 on the previous page, except the dynamics are opposite, starting loud and getting soft. Again, the whole note version should be played with eighth note vibrato pulse, but you might find it easier to start with the quarter notes. Be careful not to crescendo or decrescendo too quickly, remember beat 1 should always be the softest or loudest point and the goal of each cresc. or decresc., and try to breathe only every 4 bars if you can. Remember to relax the embouchure, neck, and shoulders for louds and to keep the air support very strong for softs.  
  
Exercise 2 combines the first and second octave keys. It does not matter to your oboe whether or not your thumb is down on the second octave key notes (it closes the actual first octave key for you if the second octave is down), so we will learn to do it both ways, to enable us to be able to make either choice later based on the music at hand. We will therefore do each letter 2 ways: once with the thumb moving off its key on the 2nd octave notes, and once with the thumb staying put the whole time, while the 2nd octave key moves. Remember to aim down, not up, for the second octave key.  
  
We should phrase exercise 4. There are a few ways that might work here, but it may be helpful to listen to the song sung with words to help get a feel for the phrasing (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lMlGDZ5xBo). Remember to try to find both phrase ends and high points. There may be more than one phrase between breath marks--the slurs may be a hint here--and remember that the most likely beat for a high point is beat 1, and the second most likely in common time is beat 3.  
  
You should also phrase exercise 4. It's hard to go wrong here, as long as you remember that beat 1 is always your most likely high point, and it's a good demonstration of the fact that it's always better to make some sort of phrasing decision, even if it's not perfect, than to make no decision and leave the music expressively flat.  
  
Exercises 5 and 6 are simply scale studies.  Note that they have kindly marked the octave transitions for you here, so be sure they are correct.  In these pieces, it will be easiest to put both the 1st and 2nd octave keys down on the 2nd octave key notes, as it means one less finger to move at the transitions.

**Lesson 25: staccato review, more 1st/2nd octave key work, counting**  
  
Exercises 1 and 2 review staccato (exercise 1 is simply variations on the F scale--use right F's and read the fine print at the top. You may pause for a bit after you play and repeat the first four measures, and you may want to treat the two halves separately in your practice to make things easier). Practice them first without tonguing, then with. Remember to always lift (same length and ending as a staccato, even if the beginning of the note is slurred) the last slurred eighth note before staccato notes in exercise 2. Say and finger them first, especially exercise 2 (looking for patterns and sneaky bits of scales will also help here), and remember to use right F's.  
  
Exercise 3 has some tricky counting. I would encourage you to write in the counts in the last four measures, and make sure you are ready to count the whole thing (we will count only where we play, rather than counting like a metronome, during the lesson). To help with the entrances on the "ands," it can help to think of accenting the rest that is on the beat.  
  
Each letter in exercise 4 will be played two ways: once with the thumb going away on the 2nd octave notes, and once with it staying down the whole time. As always, be careful of how you hit the 2nd octave key.  
  
In exercise 5, notice the jumps from B to high A, followed by G. You have a choice to make here: Do you want to play that A with only the 2nd octave key, or with both octave keys? Try both, and see which is easier for you--then make a note of which you chose, and be sure to play them all the same way. In measure 13, you should play the notes with both octave keys down, as this makes the transition from the high G before and to the high G after easier; while you could choose either way for measure 9, you should probably pick using both octave keys, so that it matches the very similar measure 13.  
  
You should try phrasing exercise 6.  Brahms is weird, though beautiful, and often breaks the conventions we've learned about high points.  While phrasing is subjective, I think the first phrase ends after the half note G in the second full measure, and I think its high point is the E quarter note on beat 3 of the first full measure.  The second phrase is more predictable.  Try singing it to help you get a feel for the phrases.

**Lesson 26: Staccato with dynamics, chromatics, 1st/2nd octave key, phrasing**  
  
Exercise 1 is in D major, and mostly scales. The goal here is to be able to play a good, consistent staccato with crescendos and decrescendos. You should certainly play it without tonguing first, and only add the tongue once you have good control over the note lengths and dynamics without. If you notice yourself struggling with any specific part, i.e. the low E and F# staccato and quiet, isolate that and practice just those notes at those dynamics for a bit before putting it all back together again.  
  
Exercise 2 is more short chromatic noodles. We will always play it as before, first the lower octave slowly with the repeat, then the lower octave VERY fast with the repeat, then the higher octave slowly with the repeat, and finally the higher octave VERY fast with the repeat. Be careful with octave transitions. In the higher octave of the first one, I advise starting with both octave keys down, so all you have to do on that front for the G# is come off the 2nd octave key.  
  
Exercise 3 involves a lot of chromaticism. Remember, as always, to replace all unnecessary F(forked) F's with L(left) F's, with your pencil. As the rhythm is sometimes tricky here, I would recommend counting it first, then saying and fingering, then trying to play it. Always consider isolating any challenging parts. Be careful of the lengths of the staccato notes, and remember not to play the staccato quarter note near the end too short.  
  
Exercise 4 works on the 1st/2nd octave transition. In letters A and B, we will play first the lower notes (with the repeat), then thigh higher notes with the thumb going away on 2nd octave key notes (with the repeat), and finally the higher notes with the thumb staying down the whole time (with the repeat). In letters C and D, there is no need to use the thumb at all.  
  
We should phrase exercises 5 and 6 (and, as always, change the forked F's to left, with your pencil).  #6 is fairly straightforward, especially if you know the words and let them help you, but notice that some of the phrases in #5 may be a bit odd.  It is fine for some phrases to be significantly longer than others (i.e. around measures 12-18).

**Lesson 27: scales, scale patterns, 2nd octave key/half hole transitions**  
  
Lesson 27 is largely scales and scale patterns. Please do fill in the scale name when the exercise asks (1, 2, 4, 5, 8). Remember that all F (forked) markings should be replaced with L (left), UNLESS a forked F is actually needed, as in the fourth measure of exercise 8). If you have forgotten the meaning of the symbol in exercise 2, look back to lesson 25. In the scale studies, always aim for your best hand position, with curved third fingers and pinkies, and excellent half hole pivots and octave key transitions.  
  
Exercise 3 works on combining the half hole and 2nd octave key movements. You should feel here that you are mixing two separate movements--the finger pivot to open and close the half hole, and the wrist drop to get on and off the 2nd octave key. Remember that we don't want to find ourselves half holing by default when we come off the 2nd octave key, so try to feel that this is a blend of 2 motions, not just 1 motion.  
  
Be sure to carefully say and finger exercise 7 before playing it, and remember that there are no flats in the key signature, so the B's in measure 13 are natural, not flat.

**Lesson 28: dynamics, 3/8 time, left Eb/D#**  
  
Exercise 1 works on dynamics, with faster decrescendos than we've yet had, on a G scale. Be careful to spread out the decrescendo out evenly over the full two beats--the second beat should not be your softest playing yet as it's only the halfway point. Avoid either putting spaces at the end of each note or crescendoing accidentally at the end of each note.  
  
In exercise 2 and 3 we learn about 3/8 time. In its more basic slow form, we take the time signature at its word--3 beats per measure, the eighth note gets the beat. It is, however, also common for 3/8 to be a shorthand way of writing in triplets. In that form, fast 3/8, the dotted quarter note gets the beat, the quarter note 2/3 of a beat, and the eighth note 1/3 of a beat. 3/4 sometimes also works this way, though it's less common, with the dotted half note getting 1 beat, the half note 2/3, and the quarter note 1/3. Therefore, exercises 2 and 3 will sound identical. Here is the order in which we will try these things:  
1. Count #2 in slow 3/4  
2. Play #2 in slow 3/4  
3. Count #3 in slow 3/8  
4. Play #3 in slow 3/8  
  
5. Count #2 in fast 3/4  
6. Play #2 in fast 3/4  
7. Count #3 in fast 3/8  
8. Play #3 in fast 3/8  
  
Exercises 4 and 5 continue to work on 3/8 time. Practice both in slow 3/8 first. Practice counting and saying and fingering before playing. Remember to change F(forked) to L(left) in #5. I would like you to try at least #4 in fast 3/8 (not a fast tempo, but dotted quarter getting the beat) as well (count first, then say and finger, then play).  
  
Exercises 6, 7, and 8 introduce left Eb/D#. Be very careful to keep the G finger curved and centered over its hole, as any squeaks on left Eb are usually its fault, and note that it should feel almost more like you're pushing in rather than down with the pinky--careful not to raise the hand up or move the wrist (except of course for bringing it back down where it should be if it's wandered up, and then keeping it still) to hit the pinky key.  
  
Exercise 6 is a finger movement study--use left Eb/D# for everything for practice here, even if it's not needed, and work on each set until its clean.  In exercise 7, note that you must use forked F before left Eb (measure 4 and the last note of measure 6), but you should change the one marked F (forked) to L (left), as left F works fine there.  Right and left Eb's have been marked for you--notice that it would be impossible to play a right Eb before a low C.  In exercise 8, note the key signature, and try to be able to play in fast 3/8 (though not at a fast tempo).

**Lesson 29: dynamics, 6/8 time**  
  
In exercise 1, we work on changing quickly and smoothly from forte to piano and back. Work to avoid holes in the sound, and try to get the dynamic changes close to instant, avoiding too much crescendo or decrescendo.  
  
Next, we begin working on 6/8 time, which is like 3/8, except that the slow version has 6 beats per measure and the fast version has 2. In exercise 2, notice the dynamics, and use slow 6/8. Try to play exercise 3 in fast 6/8, but be sure to count first, and be careful about the rhythms in measures 4 and 12.  
  
Exercise 4 simply works on an Ab scale, with some third patterns for the last half. In the first four measures, you will need forked F's and left Eb's. Notice that you have a low Db going to a low C--use the tip of the curved pinky for the Db, and then collapse the pinky joint to catch the C key, and try to uncollapse it to get back to Db (good pinky, bad pinky, good pinky). This is tricky, and worth isolating for a bit. Notice that if you happen to hit both the Db and C keys, you will get a normal Db. In the last four measures, all of the F's are either right or left, not forked.  
  
Try to play exercise 5 in fast 6/8 (and notice the key signature). Remember that means two beats per measure, each subdividing in threes, not necessarily a fast tempo at all. The staccato eighth notes here are about as fast as it's possible to do a good air-pulse staccato, but it's smart to practice air pulse only some before adding the tongue, even if you don't make it all the way to silence after each eighth notes (the quarters should not be any trouble, on the other hand). Notice the first and second endings near the beginning.  
  
In exercise 6, notice the key signature, and find your phrase endings and high points.  Remember to tongue repeated notes under a slur--if you'd like to redraw some slurs to make it clearer, that's okay, as long as you remember to play very legato.

**Lesson 30: Accents, sixteenth notes, half holed left Eb**

Exercise 1 focuses on accents.  The beginnings of notes should be emphasized.  This should be accomplished with air, not tongue.  Try playing the line, especially the last four measures, without tonguing, and see if you can hear the accents and the difference between the accented and unaccented notes.

In line 2, we begin to play sixteenth notes.  Notice the two flags or bars. These will be half the length of an eighth note, so, in 2/4 time, one fourth of a beat.  Many people count four sixteenth notes as 1 e + a (one eee and ah).  Try counting line 2 before playing it.  Notice the key - this is basically a G scale.  Don't let the sixteenth notes scare you - strong, constant air (NOT stopping between notes) and a light tongue (small movements are faster than big ones) are the key to clean fast tonguing.

Line 3 has us working on left Eb, this time in the higher octave.  Like normal/right Eb, this is a half hole note.  Be sure to half hole all the left Eb's - a relaxed hand will help - and remember that a straight, slipping G finger can cause squeaks on Eb.  Remember you don't need the thumb on second octave notes; remember that Db is also a half hole note.

Line 4 is in the key of Ab, a key that often requires the use of the left Eb key.  The marked forked F should really be left F - change the marking to L with your pencil.  There is one forked F in the second line; see if you can find it.  This tune should be familiar.  Phrase it just like you did when it was in lesson 22.  Mark your phrases with your pencil.

Line 5 is another opportunity to work on sixteenth notes, with strong air and a light tongue.  Watch the key signature, and remember that barlines cancel accidentals, including naturals.

Line 6 has more sixteenth note practice.  Note the key.

**Lesson 31: Sixteenth note rhythms, left Eb and other finger practice**

Exercise 1 features both ♪♬ and ♬♪ rhythms.  Notice the difference, and practice counting it before playing it (1 +a  vs.  1e+ ).  Also notice the staccato eighths, and listen to their bouncy endings.

Exercise 2 also has both types of eighth-and-sixteenth rhythms.  Notice the difference between the first and second lines as you count and play this exercise.  Change both F's into L's with your pencil.  Notice the D.C. al Fine and the Fine, as well as the first and second endings.  Note that on the D.C., you only play the second ending; no repeat.  If you've forgotten D.C. al fine, either google it or look back at lesson 14.

Exercise 4 features a range of finger exercises.  In the first line, we work on half holed left Eb.  Make sure to half hole consistently, with a good pivot and a relaxed hand.  Avoid squeaks caused by the G finger falling off its hole.  The second line has some half hole and some octave exercises, now in sixteenth notes.  Remember that the first octave key is not required on second octave notes, but can be kept on when it's easier (first half of letter b would be easier with the thumb down on the high A's; the rest without).

Exercise 5 starts deceptively simple, but notice how the second line and the first half of the third line focus on tricky intervals (half hole transitions, octave transitions, A-C cross fingerings).  Remember that you can keep the thumb down along with the second octave keys on second octave notes.

Exercise 6 is another opportunity to focus on your fast sixteenth note tonguing, with constant strong air and a light tongue (it sometimes helps to imagine using only one taste bud to touch the reed). Notice the key!  There is a repeat at the end of the first line.

**Lesson 32: Some new tempo markings, dynamics, putting it all together**

Exercise 1 has a lot of complex new challenges.  Start practice on this slow so that you can pay attention to all the details.  Notice the staccato eighth notes, the accented half notes, the fermatas.  Notice the wide variety of dynamic markings (mf, p, crescendoes written two ways, a decrescendo.  Remember*cresc.* means crescendo, or gradually get louder.Notice the *ritard*(short for ritardando, which means to slow down over time) and *a tempo*markings.

Line 2 is simply an Ab Major scale and arpeggio, though the last half is complicated by being in 6/8 rhythms.  Count it first, in "fast" 6/8, with two beats per measure.  This scale requires left Eb and forked F, while the arpeggio uses regular Eb once more.  Remember*dim.* means diminuendo, or gradually get softer.

Exercise 3 is in the key of Ab.  Notice the staccato quarter notes, which should have an "up" inflection, putting the high points of their phrases on the following note, beat 2.  Mark your phrases!

Exercise 4 is a bit of a finger exercise.  You can start practicing it in "slow" 6/8 (6 beats per measure), but try to work it up to "fast" 6/8 (2 beats per measure). Notice the finger challenge for each measure (half hole transitions, first to second octave transitions, etc.)  Remember how we've worked on doing each of those well, and remember that we can keep the thumb down on second octave notes.

In exercise 5, change all the F's for forked into L's for left.  Some of those sixteenth notes run your cross fingerings (Ab-Bb, G-C, Ab-C.  Notice the key.

**Lesson 33: Putting it all together**

Exercise 1 has a number of staccatos; keep them bouncy.  You may also want to lift some of the quarter notes, especially those at the end of slurs.  Experiment with length - singing should help.  Notice the key.  Mark your phrases.  Change the F for forked to L for left, and don't let it make you forget the key signature.

Exercise 2 also has no forked F's - change the F to L with your pencil.  Notice the repeat on the first line.  Don't let the f#'s make you forget the Eb's in key signature (this is in g minor).  Practice first without tonguing to perfect the air lifts on the staccato eighth notes.  Also lift the ends of slurs before the staccatos.

In exercise 3, keep your fingers curved and close, and the movements small.  Especially focus on curving the pinky.  Remember that you can keep the thumb down on second octave notes.

In exercise 4, remember to tongue repeated notes under a slur. Notice the marked dynamics, and try to plan and mark phrases and shaping.  Notice the first and second ending, and the backwards repeat sign in the middle of the second line.

The final three pages consist of several finger exercises and scale patterns, and make for very beneficial practice.  Apply the skills we've thus far worked on, especially in the finger movement studies.