

Bassoon

Each band lesson will consist of four elements:

1. Students will perform all of the material they were assigned to prepare.
2. Students will receive feedback about what was good/bad/indifferent about the student's performance. The teacher will evaluate the student's performance using the language and concepts listed in the performance assessment rubric.
3. Students will learn how to do something that they were unable to do when they walked in, whether it be a new concept, refinement of technique, or a new skill.
4. Students will receive a clear assignment of what to prepare for the next lesson.

Bassoon is not a 5th grade starter instrument. When looking for candidates to switch, watch for students who show independence, both musically and in personality. Also look for longer fingers, double-jointedness, and thinner lips.

Grade 6

1. Demonstrate correct instrument assembly.
2. Demonstrate ability to "crow" on the reed.
3. Develop a good embouchure—bottom lip straight and not over the teeth, lay the reed on the lip and push into mouth, to the midpoint of reed. Jaw should be slightly back in the overbite position and chin flat. Top lip down on the reed close to the first wire, not near the tip, and slightly covering the teeth. Teeth should be apart, allowing the lips to form the embouchure, keep the "O" shape in the mouth, corners should be in, to avoid "biting".
4. Develop good tone that comes from proper embouchure, breathing, and a good reed.
5. Develop good pitch. Use of a #0 or #1 will be an invaluable aid. The placement of the reed in the mouth determines pitch (in and out, sharp and flat). Never pull out the bocal to adjust pitch. Bocal should always be all the way in.
6. Learn correct sitting position, using a seat strap. Seat strap should be under the thighs and forward on the chair. The bocal and reed should enter the mouth straight, not requiring the student to reach up or down. The bassoon should rest across the body at

a 45 degree angle.

7. Learn good hand position. Curved fingers and floating thumbs. Do not use the crutch.

8. Use long tone exercises in everyday playing.

9. Learn the proper use of the tongue. Start the tone by releasing the tongue from the tip of the reed. The tone also ends with the tongue stopping the reed.

10. Practice to control all technical aspects in solid rhythmic contexts.

11. Practice good breathing technique and air support for proper tone quality.

12. Establish good practice habits.

13. Know good instrument maintenance, cleaning of the bocal and wing joint.

14. Learn the importance of good reed care. Reed life is 6-8 weeks and they need to be changed regularly. Use of a reed carrier will aid the reeds in drying properly between uses. Reeds should be soaked well before using, about 5 minutes in a small cup of water is best, and the entire reed should be wet. Rotation of 2 or 3 reeds at a time also improves tone and reed life.

15. Know chromatic fingerings from low F to middle C.

16. Learn correct use of the half-hole for Gb, G and G#.

17. Understand importance of frequent rests to preserve good embouchure and pitch control.

Grade 7-8

1. Know chromatic fingerings from low C to high F, including correct use of whisper key lock and half hole techniques.

2. Continue to development thumb and finger dexterity.

3. Refine tone using long tone exercises, including octave slurs, dynamics, crescendos and diminuendos.

4. Improve articulation patterns and use of the tongue to start and end the tone. Continue to improve slurring using the half hole and whisper key.
5. Strive for control at faster speeds.
6. Continue to develop solid rhythmic concepts and control.
7. Improve accurate and reliable reading of music. Develop a more self-assured approach to newly assigned music.
8. Perform solos publicly.
9. Perform in small ensembles.
10. Continue to learn good reed management, including purchasing reeds and rotating their use.
11. Continue to refine pitch control.
12. Continue good breathing technique and air support.
13. Continue good practice habits.

Grade 9 –12

1. Develop more sophisticated tonal concepts and control, beauty, dynamic flexibility, awareness of perfect intonation.
2. Make change to longer vocal # 1 or 2.
3. Experiment with various techniques to create a mood experience for the listener. Avoid lackluster mechanical playing.
4. Improve proficiency in sight-reading.
5. Extend range from low Bb to high B flat, including use of alternate chromatic fingerings in thumb and pinkie fingers.

6. Continue to learn uses for triller keys (e-f# ad c#)
7. Perform major solo works publicly.
8. Perform in small ensembles.

Methods and Materials

Grade 6

- Student Instrumental Course - Level One - Bassoon Student pub. Warner Bros.

Grades 7–8

- Student Instrumental Course, Level 2, Bassoon Student pub. Warner Bros.

Supplemental/Alternative Material Grades 7-8

- Essential Elements 2000 Level 2 pub. Hal Leonard
- First Book of Practical Studies for Bassoon pub. Belwin
- Bassoon Studies for Beginners, opus 8, #1 J. Weissenborn pub. Fischer
- My First Weissenborn pub. Fischer

Solo Material Grades 7-8

- Classic Festival Solos Volume 1 and 2 pub. Warner Brothers

Grades 9 – 12

- Practical Method for the Bassoon J. Weissenborn, pub. Fischer

Supplemental/Alternative Methods Grades 9-12

- Advanced Method for Bassoon Vol. 1 and 2 pub. Rubank
- Bassoon Studies 1 and 2 Weissenborn, Fischer

Solo Material Grades 9-12

- Contemporary French Recital Pieces, International

- Prelude and Fugue by Bermann Schott
- Lyric Suite by Dunhill Boosey-Hawkes
- Four Pieces by Starakadomsky Cundy-Bettoney
- Six Sonatas by Galliard McGinnis-Marx
- Premier Solo by Bordeaux Rubank
- Concerto in Bb, K. 191 by Mozart Hofmeister