

Missouri All-State Music Tips 2009

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Missouri All-State Band Audition Materials 2009 (Set 2) Bb Soprano Clarinet

Scales:

All scales are to be MEMORIZED.

Prepare them all slurred and all tongued in sixteenth notes at quarter note = 88, a minimum of two octaves, three when possible. Scales should be performed ascending and descending. Scales given are the starting tone. Do not transpose.

Chromatic: full range of the instrument

Major Scales: C, G, D, A, E, F, Bb, Eb, Ab

Melodic Minor Scales: a, e, b, f#, c#, d, g, c, f

Klose Exercises:

From Klose Method for Clarinet, revised by Simon Bellison (Carl Fischer edition)

Page 127 - E Major - line 5

Page 128 – lines 4, 8, 9, and bar 1 of 10

Page 129 – line 9, bar 2 thru line 10, bar 1

Rose Etudes:

From C. Rose, 32 Etudes for Clarinet (Carl Fischer edition)

Page 3, #2 – first 6 ½ lines

Page 23, #23

NOTE: The above information and All-State requirements for all instruments can be found at:
https://missouribandmasters.org/?page_id=25

General Practice Tips

Go very slowly when practicing and at the same time maintain good fundamentals such as relaxation, body position, embouchure, tone, counting, etc.

Develop and follow a good practice routine. (My routine is available at <http://clarinetmike.com/resources/>.)

The use of a metronome is an essential part of any practice session; however, it is important not to become overly dependent on it for maintaining a steady pulse. The small and inexpensive “credit card” type metronomes are great for students and other musicians who are “on the go.”

Record yourself. You can speed up your learning by spotting and fixing your own problems.

Learn dynamics at the same time you learn the notes and rhythms. It is even a good idea to “overdo” dynamics as you learn a piece. Since there is a tendency to play “coldly” in a performance or audition setting, an overdone-dynamically-learned piece will come out about right.

Plan and carefully mark your breathing on your scales, etudes, etc.! Never ever push yourself to “keep going” with respect to air. This will produce tension in your playing and can create significant flaws that will have to be addressed later. Also, a slightly oxygen-starved brain can result in mistakes. So, **PLAN YOUR BREATHING!**

Keep the air going as you play. A good trick is to play the first note of a passage and hold it while singing the music in your mind and following the music on the page with your eyes. (This is what your lungs should think is going on (long held notes) while your fingers are moving through a technical passage.) Then go back and play the passage with the same feeling of air support in your lungs as before, but with your fingers and the rest of your mechanism playing the passage as usual.

Always project your sound to the listeners. Don’t try to “fill the room” with your sound – pick a spot in the back of the room and play straight to it. When practicing in a small room, pretend you are in a familiar large hall and play to a spot in the back.

Clap and sing the music.

Check out additional practice tips at <http://clarinetmike.com/resources/>.

Tips on Scales

Prepare your scales as if they are etudes or solos. Don't just run through them quickly and thoughtlessly. The required etudes are built on scales, as is almost all music. Therefore, careful preparation of scales with good fundamentals (relaxation, tone, counting, etc.) will pay big rewards on the etudes and all the music you play.

Practice a scale slurred first, then work on the tongued version. Slurring will allow you to hear how smooth (or not) the connections between notes are.

Don't forget to practice the chromatic scale. Many consider it to be the most important scale. I suggest starting your scale practice with it.

Don't forget to work on cleanly going over the break! This is often neglected and results in a lack of smoothness in playing. The finger combinations for going over the break are tricky and must be addressed daily by clarinetists at every level. Also, DO NOT use throat tone resonance fingers (keeping right hand down, etc.) when doing scales. This will slow down the technique.

Use a good scale sheet that has all the scales on it. Don't just try to learn them in your mind. But do start working on memorizing them early.

Make sure you have good tone, relaxed body position, good breathing, etc. as you learn the scales. Otherwise, you will be memorizing flaws that will be harder to fix later.

I suggest learning your minor scales as relatives of the related major scales (i.e. share the same key signature). Practice your major and minor scales in a set based on the shared key. For example, think of and practice C major and A minor together.

Play the chromatic scale from lowest E up to high G (4th ledger line above the treble clef staff). The chromatic scale works out well if done in even triplets.

All scales that start on E, F, F#, and G should be played three octaves.

Tips on Klose Exercises

General Comments:

Keep the pulse very steady. Make sure the tempo you end with is the same you had at the beginning. The rhythmic objective here is to learn, and thus perform, the notes evenly – with each note equidistant in time to the next note. Don't rush off the first sixteenth of each set – make sure this first note is full value.

Be sure to keep the fingers and hand position relaxed and natural. Always work for smoothness in technical passages.

Remember that all accidentals in this older music count for every octave through the bar unlike modern notation where accidentals only count for the same octave. For example, on Page 128, Line 4, Measure 1, the first B \flat makes all the other B's in the measure into B \flat whether in same octave as on beat 2 or up an octave later in the measure.

Page 127 - E Major - line 5

Practice E major scale and E major arpeggio.

Play all third line B's with the left little finger. Use left/right little finger combinations in alternation – DO NOT SLIDE FINGERS!

On the high D#'s use the forked fingering. Practice making the move between forked D# to C# in measures 2 and 3 - it's tricky but worth it.

Use the overblow B \flat fingering for the high F# in measure 3.

Page 128 – lines 4, 8, 9, and bar 1 of 10

On the broken chords (arpeggios) on this page, practice them straight up and down before playing them broken as written.

Keep the air going as you play the passage.

Be sure to stay “locked in” mentally on which note is tonic (the first note of the chord) as you work on these broken chords.

Don't back the air off when going to the high notes. Using lots of air will help keep the pitch down. Be careful not to be too sharp on the high notes, especially on the high B's (second space above staff) and the high C#'s (second ledger line above the staff).

In line 4, the broken chords (arpeggios) are Eb major and C minor. Use forked fingering for the high Eb's at the end of measure 1 and start of measure 2. Thinking a "Dee" voicing will help the articulation on the repeated high Eb's. In measures 3 and 4 use left finger little finger for all third space C's.

In lines 8, 9 and bar 1 or 10, the broken chords (arpeggios) are B major, G# minor, E major, and C# minor.

In the first two measures of line 8, use left little finger for all the third line B's.

The next three measures (line 8, measure 3 thru line 9 measure 1) features two of the rare times that the lack of an Ab/Eb key on the left side is a problem. The problem occurs between the end of measure 3 and beginning of measure 4 and again the end of measure 4 and the start of the first measure on the next line. There are three ways to deal with this: 1)switch fingers 2) slide or 3) jump. Try all three and see what works for you.

1) "Switch Fingers" means to change the fingering while the note is playing. For example, in line 8 measure 4, I could switch fingers on the first note, B. This would mean that I start the note with the right little finger E/B key and then quickly change to the left little finger E/B key without any noticeable change in the tone. This must be practiced very slowly at first. Keep fingers very relaxed.

2) "Slide" means to slide off of one key and onto another smoothly with little interruption in the line. For example, in line 8 measure 4 I could slide my left little finger off of the final note, B, to the following G# in the next measure. Again, this must be practiced very slowly at first. Keep fingers very relaxed.

3) "Jump" is similar to "slide" in that the same finger moves to another key, except that it doesn't slip or slide there, it just goes there very fast. A useful trick in doing this is to shorten the note before the slide. This will hide it from the ear. For example, clip the last note of line 8 and then quickly move, or "jump" the left little finger from the B to the G# on the next line.

On line 8 measure 4 use the high D# forked fingering.

In line 9 measure 4 and line 10 measure 1 use the right little fingering for all third space C's.

Page 129 – line 9, bar 2 thru line 10, bar 1

The wedge indication used here means a half-value type staccato – not a very short staccatissimo. The idea is to play a note half value with the remaining duration being a rest – for example, a sixteenth note with a wedge should be played as a thirty-second note with a thirty-second rest. However, in the preparation of this or any short-articulated or staccato-type passage, be sure to not practice it slowly with the notes too short. In other words, when you practice slowly play the articulation with a normal or regular tongue stroke with not much separation. As you go faster over time and the passage becomes ingrained it will be easy to adjust the shortness of the articulation to

the desired shortness. Be sure to use your ears to help you decide how short to play the notes when performing at tempo. Playing the notes too short can sound bad.

The chords here are E major for line 9, measures 2 and 3 and C# minor for line 9 measure 4 and line 10, measure 1.

Use right little finger for all third line B's in measures 2 and 3 of line 9.

Use right little finger for all third space C#'s in line 9, measure 4 and line 10, measure 1.

This exercise (as above on **Page 128**) features a problem related to the lack of a left Ab/Eb key. The problem occurs between the end of line 9 and first part of line 10. See above on **Page 128** for help on this.

Tips on Rose Etudes

Page 3, #2 – first 6 ½ lines

Overview: This “technical etude” is mostly straight sixteenths in 3/8 time with articulation as a primary issue.

Key: A Minor (with some C Major)

Tempo: Dotted Quarter = 54-60 (Spend a lot of your practice counting the eight note as the beat – thus you will be counting this in three quite a lot. You may find that counting this in three works better for you. See comments on tempo under General Comments below.)

Problem Passages: Measures 27 and 29 are tricky. Also, measure 12 (it is a fully diminished 7th chord) will require work.

Breath Marks:

Measure 5 – optional breath after first note

Measure 9 – optional breath after first note

Measure 11 – take a quick breath after the first note

Measure 13 – optional breath after the first note

Measure 16 – on the rest

Measure 21 – take a quick breath after the first note

Measure 28 – replace F on beat 1 with a rest and breathe

Measure 30 – replace E on beat 1 with a rest and breathe (even though you may not need it, it works good for the phrasing)

(**NOTE:** In a work like this where there are few good spots to breathe, you have to make do as best you can. This may mean that a breath disrupts the pulse a little. Also, see comment above on breathing and breath marks under **General Practice Tips.**)

General Comments:

“Allegro” means “fast”; however, I have found that it is often useful to think of “Allegro” as also meaning “cheerful, joyful,” i.e. “happy.” And such is the case here.

Begin work on this etude by practicing it in three (eighth note gets one beat). Go in one as the work becomes ingrained and comfortable. Speed is the final factor to worry about.

On the staccato notes in this work, remember that “staccato” does not mean “short.” This Italian term actually means “to detach” or “to separate.” In the preparation of this, or any staccato-type passage, be sure to not shorten the notes when practicing slowly. In other words, when you practice slowly play the articulation with a normal or regular tongue stroke with not much, if any, separation. As you go faster over time and the passage becomes ingrained and learned it will be easy to adjust the length of the articulation to the desired shortness. Be sure to use your ears to help you decide how short to play the notes when you play at tempo. Playing the notes too short can sound bad and cause other problems.

This piece is mostly composed of arpeggios and scales. Since the work is in A minor, work carefully on this arpeggio and scale. Here is a list of important arpeggios to practice:

A minor: measures 1, 2, 9, 17, 29, and 31.

G major: measures 3 and 14

F major: measure 11

F# fully diminished 7th: measure 12

C major: measure 13

E dominant 7th: measure 24

D minor: measure 27

B fully diminished 7th: measure 28

Don't rush off of the first note in the measures with straight sixteenths. A good way to help fix this is to put a tenuto mark over the first sixteenth of each measure and make sure you play this note full value. This will help even out the spacing of the notes and help keep you in balance.

Add some dynamics to the piece. Try to stay away from just playing the whole thing mezzo-forte. I have offered a few dynamic suggestions below – some of which were adapted from the Hite book listed below under **Additional Help**. (Hite's book offers additional possibilities for dynamics and phrasing.)

Details:

Measure 1: Start with a solid mezzo-forte and good tone. Remember, every piece is a “tone piece.”

Measures 3 and 4: Consider a crescendo to measure 5

Measure 5: Maintain dynamic throughout measure. (this is known as “Delayed Decrescendo”)

Measure 6: Decrescendo whole measure.

Measure 11: Consider a crescendo starting on the second note to first note of measure 12.

Measure 12: Consider a crescendo starting on the second note to first note of measure 13. Play the second third space C with left little finger.

Measure 13 and 14: Maintain a forte dynamic in these two measures.

Measure 15: Decrescendo on last half of the measure.

Measure 16: Start the new section after the rest on beat 3 at mezzo piano. Playing the first part of the second section at a softer dynamic will give some nice contrast.

Measure 17: Play the third space C with left little finger.

Measure 19: End slur from previous measure on first note, G#. Articulate the next note, E, and slur remainder of measure. Mark a small “T” above the first E to remind yourself of the articulation. Consider a small crescendo starting on the second note going to the first note of the next measure.

Measure 20: Consider a small decrescendo beginning on the second note going to the first note of the next measure.

Measure 24: Crescendo this measure starting on the second note.

Measure 26: Decrescendo this measure.

Measures 27 and 29: The articulation in measure 27 should be changed to that found in measure 29. The rhythm in measure 29 should be changed to that found in measure 27. Crescendo each of these measures to a full dynamic on beat 3 and count carefully. Lots of slow, careful practice needed here.

Measures 28 and 30 – As mentioned above under Breath Marks, replace the first note on beat 1 with a rest and breathe. (It is often a good idea to renotate the music to aid breathing, phrasing, etc.) Even though a breath it likely not needed in measure 30, the rest on beat 1 will help in phrasing. Decrescendo in measure 28 starting on first D going until end of measure.

Measures 30 to 32 – Decrescendo starting on first F of measure 30 going until end of excerpt.

Summary Comment:

The etude excerpt is only 32 measures long. If you learn 1 measure a day, you can learn it in a little over a month! Consistent daily practice is the key. (Fyi, I suggest 5-6 days of practice per week – take at least 1 day off a week to rest your chops and limbs.)

Page 23, #23 [prepare all of it]

Overview: This “slow” etude offers much opportunity for expressive creativity in a romantic style.

Key: Eb major

Tempo: Andante con moto (Measures 1-8) Quarter note = 76 – 88 (I like it at about 80)
Adagio (Measures 9 to end) Eight note = 84 – 100 (I like it at about 92)
(see below under General Comments)

Problem Passages: Measures 11, 15, 22, and 26 have some technique concerns. Measures 31 and 32 have some tricky leaps.

Breath Marks:

There are lots of good places to breath in the etude and some are marked on the music. Here are a few others to consider:

Measure 10: Rewrite the Bb on beat five as a sixteenth note with a sixteenth rest and breathe on the rest.

Measure 12: Breath after D. (Consider changing slur as suggested below.)

Measure 34: Same as Measure 10 - rewrite the Bb on beat five as a sixteenth note with a sixteenth rest and breathe on the rest.

General Comments:

The opening tempo indication “Andante” means a “very moderate ‘walking’ speed between adagio and allegretto.” “Con moto” means “with motion,” i.e. a little faster. So, perform this opening at a walking speed that “moves a little.” **(Make certain you know the meaning of all the words written on the music. If you are unsure about the meaning of a word, be sure to look it up in a music dictionary.)**

The tempo indication at measure 9, “Adagio”, means “slow.” The word, “dolce” is also written here. “Dolce” means “sweetly.” However, I generally like to think of it as meaning “tenderly.” (Dolce can have some muscle to it – see Brahms, for example.)

Always play with the most beautiful tone possible. In an audition, tone quality is usually considered one of the most important factors.

It is often a useful and good idea to renotate the music a little to aid in breathing and phrasing. In Measure 10, for example, the Bb on beat five can be rewritten as a sixteenth note with a sixteenth rest. (FYI, the legendary clarinet player and teacher Daniel Bonade did this quite a bit in his edition of these etudes – see below under **Additional Help**.)

Notice that this etude is comprised of an introduction and four main phrases. Interestingly, the introduction and the four main phrases are all 8 measures long. [This is a remarkable amount of symmetry for a romantic etude. The form reminds me of a jazz standard!]

Introduction: beginning to measure 8
Phrase 1: measure 9 to measure 16
Phrase 2: measure 17 to measure 24
Phrase 3: measure 25 to measure 32
Phrase 4: measure 33 to end

Thinking of this etude in terms of an introduction and four phrases will simplify your preparation. Try working on either the introduction or one of the phrases each day. Listen to how each sounds and how it musically works.

If there is a chord (arpeggio) in a measure, practice it slowly away from the etude and then incorporate it back into the etude. (Daily practice of scales and arpeggios is an essential part of study on the clarinet or any instrument.)

I suggest consulting a least one of the other editions of the etude listed below under **Additional Help**. (These resources influenced my suggestions, especially the excellent Bonade edition.)

Details:

(NOTE: Be sure to look at the breath marks suggested above as you consider the following.)

Introduction:

Measure 2: All but the last note of this measure is an Eb major chord. Play high Eb with forked fingering.

Measure 3: Consider delaying decrescendo until last half of measure.

Measure 5: The second note is a C#.

Measure 4: Slur to the high Bb at end of measure. Arrive at this high Bb at about piano or mezzo piano and then decrescendo to pianissimo. The measure is a Bb major chord.

Measure 6: All but the last note of this measure is a Bb major chord.

Measure 7: Consider delaying decrescendo until last half of measure.

Measure 8: Slur to the high Eb at end of measure. Arrive at this high Eb at about piano or mezzo piano and then decrescendo to pianissimo. Use forked fingering for high Eb. This measure is an Eb major chord.

Phrase 1:

Measure 10: Don't clip the staccato notes short. Consider only a slight detachment or even no separation at all (trust your ears in a spot like this – as a general rule in interpreting music, trust what you ears hear more than what your eyes see.) I put a small "T" above the repeated Eb on beat 4 to remind myself to re tongue it. As noted above, rewrite the Bb on beat five as a sixteenth note with a sixteenth rest and breathe on the rest.

Measure 11: Use forked fingering for high Eb. Don't rush off of the first thirty-second note on beats 7 and 8 (this is not a fast lick, it only looks fast).

Measure 12: Consider breaking the slur and slurring to D, taking a breath, and then slurring from next note, Eb, to first note of next measure, G.

Measure 13: Either delay your decrescendo in this measure or, possibly better, play the decrescendo as written, except do a crescendo on the last three notes of the measure.

Measure 14: Decrescendo first half of measure.

Measure 15: Don't rush this! Also, keep the dynamic full for the first 6 beats. Consider a small detachment between the low A and high Eb. Use forked fingering on high Eb.

Measure 16: Arrive at piano (or even pianissimo) on the last note of measure not on the first note.

Phrase 2:

Measure 17: This measure is a D half-diminished 7th chord (ask your music teacher).

Measure 18: This measure is an Eb major chord.

Measure 19: Consider a slight separation between the first two notes or, maybe better, rewrite the first note as a sixteenth note with a sixteenth rest. Exaggerate the decrescendos in the measure by starting each with a full dynamic and coming down to a good piano.

Measure 22: First five beats are an Eb major chord. Use forked fingering on high Eb. Last note of the measure should be a top line F instead of a G.

Measure 23: Consider a crescendo on the last three notes of this measure.

Measure 24: Decrescendo measure with pianissimo at the end of the last note and not on the first.

Phrase 3:

Measure 26: Use forked fingering on high Eb. Use left little finger on third space C. Be sure to play the last A in the measure as an A natural and not an Ab. Last note of measure should be a G natural instead of a Gb.

Measure 27: Crescendo from first D to high Eb. Use forked fingering on high Eb.

Measure 28: Decrescendo from first note to first space F (right before the breathe mark).

Measure 30: All but the last note of this measure is an Eb major chord.

Phrase 4:

Measure 34: I put a small "T" above the repeated Eb on beat 4 to remind myself to retongue it. Same as Measure 10 - rewrite the Bb on beat five as a sixteenth note with a sixteenth rest and breathe on the rest.

Measure 35: Use forked finger on high Eb.

Measure 36: Consider a very small crescendo and decrescendo on the thirty-second notes.

Measure 37: Do not rush this measure.

Measure 38: Use forked fingering on high Eb.

Measure 39: Start the G on beat three at a mezzo piano dynamic. Consider a small crescendo on the last two notes.

Measure 40: Delay decrescendo as long as possible on F before decrescendoing rest of measure.

Summary Comments:

Play this etude with real confidence and with your very best tone.

Practice starting and stopping this etude in different spots. It is fairly certain that no judge will ask you to play the whole etude.

Additional Help

[NOTE: The following offer good suggestions on the music – some of which I have used above.]

Bonade, Daniel. Sixteen Phrasing Studies for Clarinet. Kenosha, WI: Leblanc Pub., Inc., 1952.

Legendary clarinet player and teacher (taught Mitchell Lurie, Robert Marcellus, etc.) offers phrasing and other help on the slow etudes from the Rose 32 Etudes. Available for **free download** at <http://www.leblancclarinets.com/resources/>.

Hite, David, editor. ARTISTIC STUDIES, Book 1 - From the French School for Clarinet. San Antonio, TX: Southern Music Co., 1986.

This book contains the Rose 32 Etudes, 40 Studies, and 9 Caprices with editing and performance suggestions from David Hite. In some places (Texas All-State, for example) this is the preferred version over the traditional Carl Fischer edition. Available at local music stores or <http://www.luybenmusic.com/>.

Larsen, Henry. The 32 Rose Studies: An Analysis and Study Guide. Avon, CT: Larsen Audiographics, 1998.

Each of the 32 etudes (studies) is accompanied by extensive notes and suggestions. Available at <http://www.vcisinc.com/clarinet.htm>.

Trente Deux Etudes de Rose d'apres Ferling. Revues, corrigees et annotees par Pierre Lefebvre. Paris: Leduc, 1946.

French edition of the Rose 32 Etudes edited by Pierre Lefebvre. Available at some university libraries or use Interlibrary Loan.

Warner, Melvin. The New Rose Studies for Clarinet. New York: Carl Fischer, 2002.

This is the Rose 32 Etudes with many of the etudes “fixed” by Warner. Changes made include incorrect time signatures, wrong number of beats in a measure, and questionable notes. He consulted all available versions in preparation of this edition. Available at <http://www.vcisinc.com/clarinet.htm>.