

A Guide to Preparing the Arkansas All-State Audition Material

Trumpet - Set 1



By William Ratcliff

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Link to Video Lessons:

<https://billratcliff.com/all-state-lesson-videos/>

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Welcome to this book on preparing the All-State trumpet audition material for your All-Region and All-State tryouts. Specifically, we are going to be looking at the challenges presented by each of the audition etudes and examining some strategies for overcoming those challenges. We will look closely at each section of the etudes and dig in to see what fundamental aspects of trumpet performance are called for and what you will need to do to develop those traits needed for a successful performance.

Let's get started...

What are the Judges REALLY looking for?

In any audition situation it's helpful to understand what you are being evaluated on, and have a plan to develop those areas of your playing. In the broadest sense, whether it's a tryout for chair placement in your band, an honor band audition, All-Region, All-State, or a college audition, there are a few fundamental areas that are evaluated in any audition situation. Let's take just a few moments to look at each...

TONE

Your tone quality is the most fundamental and important aspect of your playing and in large part serves as the filter by which all other parts of your playing are evaluated. If your tone is not good, it really doesn't matter how high or fast or accurately you play, you're simply are not going to enjoy successful auditions.

Developing your sound, or tone quality, should be a major part of your daily practice. Breathing exercises, long tones and flow studies are all fundamental to building a great sound. Articulation is also an important aspect of tone quality. The way we begin a note has a major influence on how we perceive it's tone.

Perhaps just as important is regular listening to great players in all musical genres to develop you concept of sound and musical imagination.

RHYTHMIC UNDERSTANDING

"A right note, played at the wrong time, is a wrong note." Music is sound occurring "in time" and it's vital that you understand and perform all the rhythms in any piece correctly. Can you count all the rhythms in the piece accurately? In professional auditions it's rhythm that very often determines a players success or failure.

Tempo is a basic part of rhythm. Be sure that you are keeping a steady and appropriate tempo. Practice with a metronome often. While it can be a frustrating experience it will reap great rewards in your rhythmic development.

MUSICALITY

The definition of musicality is often vague. Even definitions in dictionaries are less than useful for helping to develop skill as a performer. Perhaps the best general definition I've seen is:

Musicality is a set of "inner skills" which let you freely and confidently express yourself in music.

So what are these "inner skills" that we need to develop? First, I would consider dynamics. As a performer we must observe the written dynamic levels, but those dynamic levels are dependent on many factors, such as the style of the piece, era that it was written, and who the composer is. A forte dynamic in a piece by Mozart should not be the same as a forte in a piece by John Philip Sousa! Additionally, we must consider crescendos and decrescendos, and even the volume difference between a note on beat 1 and a note on beat 4.

Articulation is also a part of musicality. The style of articulation must match the style of the piece. As an example, you would not generally use a hard articulation and short notes in a ballad. Knowing what type of articulation is appropriate is a part of musicality.

Tempo is also included in musicality. Sometimes some variation in tempo is called for. Knowing when the use of rubato is called for and how to use it are also part of musicality.

These are just some of the items we will be examining as we address the realm of musicality in the audition etudes.

To summarize, in any audition situation you will be evaluated on your tone, understanding and control of rhythm, and how musically you perform.

KEY TRUMPET PLAYING CONCEPTS

1. The imagination is the driving force behind music making. Hearing the desired result vividly in your imagination will activate whatever physical activity it takes to make that sound.
2. Every day and every repetition causes a more dependable result. Inconsistency eventually vanishes as the body makes a habit out of the most efficient way it finds to get the imagined result.
3. Most physical problems are air problems. When the air and the imagination are working, the embouchure, tongue, etc. can settle into balance. If the air never flows steadily the rest of your system will also be in a constant state of adjustment and compensation.
4. Physical and psychological tension are the trumpeter's greatest foes.
5. A trumpet player needs to be involved with every note they play in an energetic way-both physically and mentally. It takes a lot of energy to play well. It shouldn't take a lot of force. If it does you are fighting against yourself and/or the instrument.
6. We don't want our body to fight the physics and acoustics of the trumpet. Those natural laws don't change. Therefore, we have to change our approach.
7. Unnecessary tension comes when the body is working against itself. Isometric tension is created by opposing muscle groups which are at war.
8. Start the day by playing on the leadpipe/mouthpiece combination. Use plenty of air and try to get the most steady and resonant sound you can. On most Bb trumpets the concert Eb is the natural resonant pitch of the leadpipe.

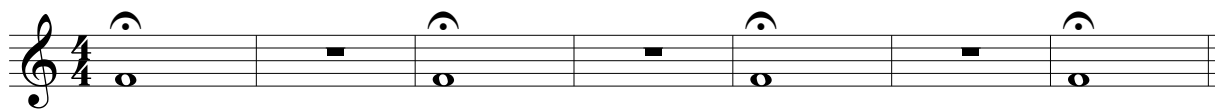
9. After you have set up the air flow and warmed up the embouchure (without creating undue embouchure tension), transfer that approach to the trumpet.
10. Start with long tones or slowly moving flow studies with smaller intervals. Every single thing you play all day is a tone study!
11. Establish a relaxed but energized airflow and a rich, resonant tone on every note from the very first note.
12. Start in the middle register and gradually expand up and down alternating higher/lower/higher/lower, etc.
13. Carry the beauty of sound and the free flow of energized breath into all the other contexts: expand register, expand dynamics, go through all the various articulations, lyrical playing, etc.
14. At all times remember to imagine a beautiful sound. Keep your attention on that sound. Keep your energy up but never tense. Move that energized air through your sound. Stay calm and mentally focused...never anxious.
15. Never get angry with yourself and never try to go so fast that anxiety is created. If you do those things, you are actually practicing being anxious and upset when playing. Of course that is how you will feel emotionally when you play if that is how you have practiced. Relax. It is supposed to be fun. We don't work music. We play music.


Daily Trumpet Fundamentals Routine


Level 2

1. Playing the Leadpipe

To buzz the leadpipe, remove the tuning slide. On a Bb trumpet, the mouthpiece/leadpipe should resonate at approximately an F. Cornets will resonate at different pitches. The sound should be a resonant, reedy buzz. Repeat until you feel your embouchure responding to the breath in a relaxed manner. Play exercise A plus one other each day.

A 

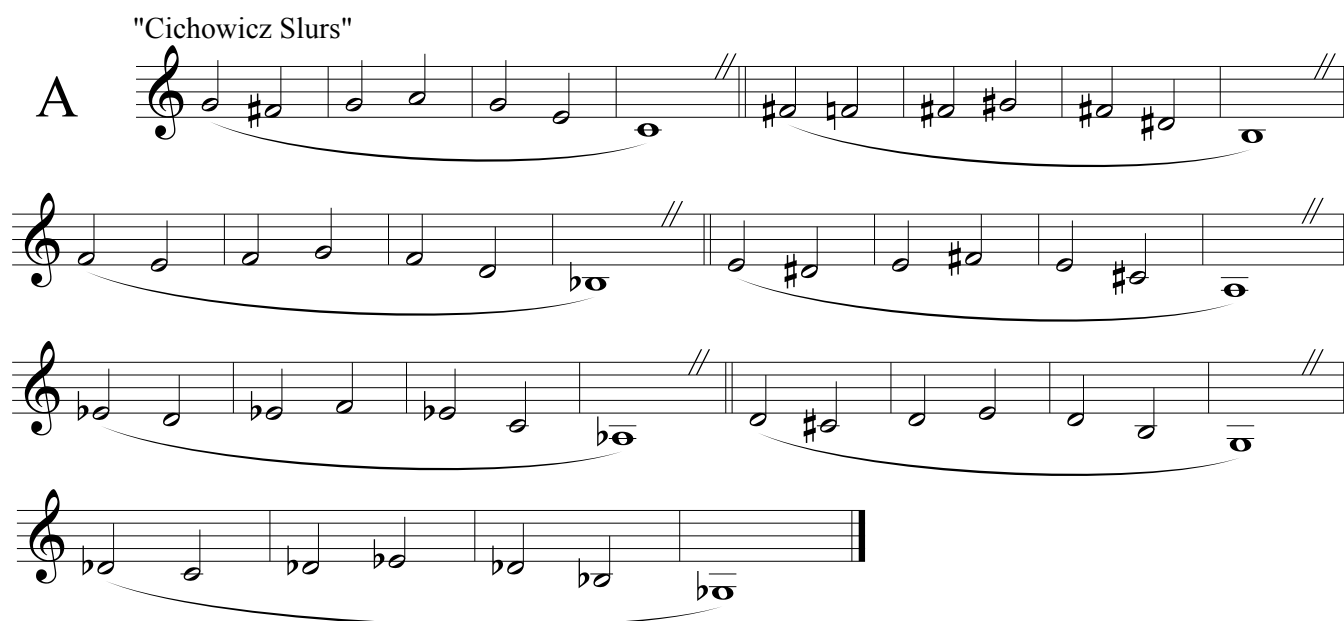
B 

C 

2. Long Tones/Flow Studies

Rest as long as you play & make sure you play each with a beautiful sound. Listen for breaks in the tone. Play exercise A plus one other each day.

"Cichowicz Slurs"

A 

B

Musical notation for section B, consisting of six staves of music. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music features a series of slurs over eighth and quarter notes, with repeat signs (//) at the end of each staff. The notes ascend and then descend across the staves.

"Arban Slurs"

C

Musical notation for section C, titled "Arban Slurs", consisting of six staves of music. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music features a series of slurs over eighth and quarter notes, with repeat signs (//) at the end of each staff. The notes ascend and then descend across the staves.

3. Flexibility/Lip Slurs

Each note must be flowing into the next one without hesitation. Think of a slight crescendo as you ascend.
Play exercise A each day plus one other.

A

B

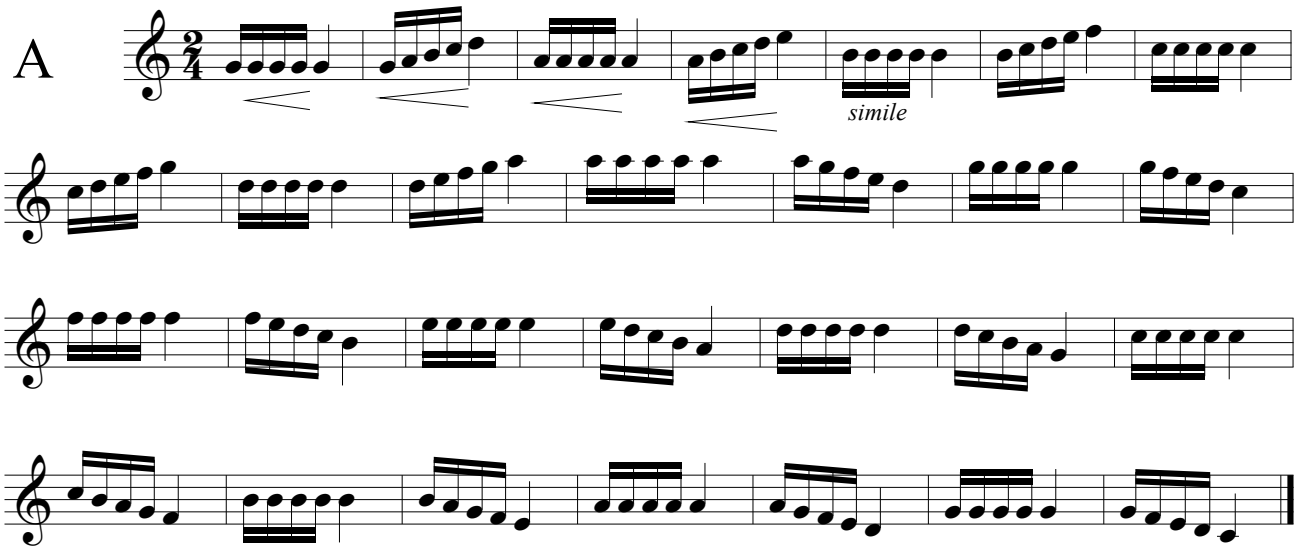
C

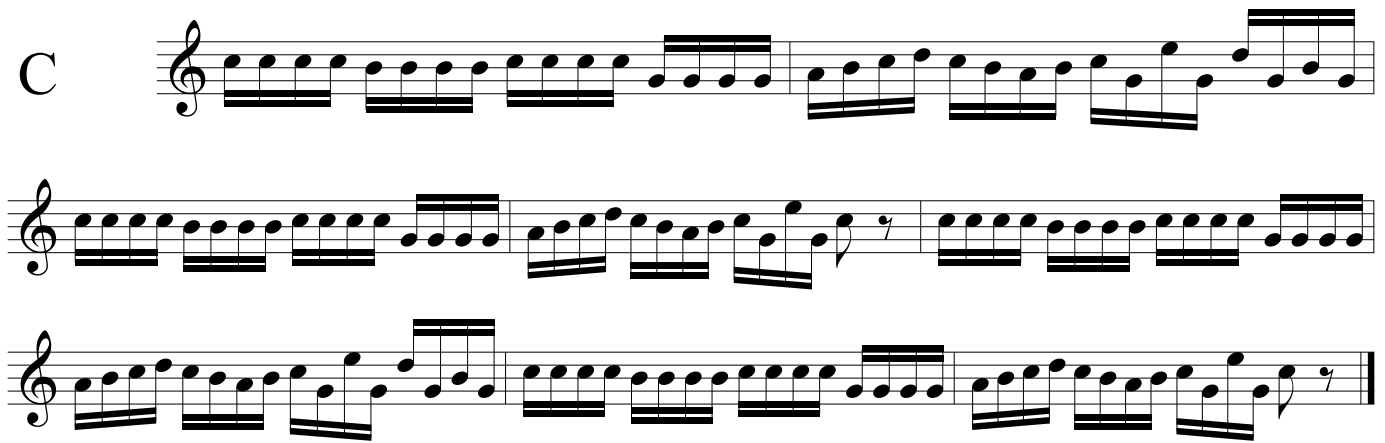
Articulation/Tonguing

PRELIMINARY EXERCISE: Repeat this as needed until you are comfortable and confident with your articulation. Use both TOO and DOO syllables



Choose one of the Articulation Exercises to play each day.





Expanding Scales/Range Development

The quality of sound must remain the same as you ascend. As with the Flow Studies, listen for breaks in the sound indicating a change in the air-stream. Only play as far as you can with consistent tone quality.



VOISIN 11 STUDIES FOR TRUMPET

1

Section 1

2

11 STUDIES

for Trumpet

ROGER VOISIN
(1918-)

I. *Moderato* *a tempo*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

mf *p* *ff*

You are going to want to take note of a couple of different musical elements in this etude. First note the key signature. Be sure that you are playing all of the A-flats as indicated.

Next, take note of the rhythm that occurs on beats two and three of the first measure. That rhythm will reoccur multiple times throughout the étude. You want to be sure to count and perform that rhythm correctly.

You will want to pay attention to all of the dynamic and articulation markings in this section of the étude. Notice the crescendos and decrescendo's that occur outlining the contour of the phrase. Start with a comfortably full sound for the mezzo forte opening dynamic. Take particular note of the articulation in measure 8 and 11. This is going to indicate a legato tongue. Use the syllable "du" rather than "tu" for this articulation.

Lastly, give particular attention to your pitch on the upper E-flats that occur in and measure 8 and measure 11 these notes tend to be on the flat side especially at upper dynamic levels. It may be necessary to use the second and third valve fingering here, depending on how flat those notes are on your particular instrument.

Section 2

In this next section, measures 15 through 28, you will find lots of variation, not only in rhythm but in style and dynamics as well. You will want to be sure that you are giving the half notes full value.

In measure 19 note the musical term “leggerio”, that means to play this lightly and delicately. Be sure to observe the tenuto marks over the dotted eighth notes. Give these notes full value.

In measure 20 observe the crescendo and decrescendo as it follows the contour of the musical line, and play the staccato eighth notes lightly. The tenuto marks in measure 22 are used to imply a slight lingering on those notes for added weight.

In measure 24 note the rooftop style accent. This is not to be interpreted as a short note as in a jazz or pop arrangement, but should be nearly full value and played quite strongly.

In measure 26 be careful to observe the articulation; slurring the 16th notes in groups of two. Also notice the accelerando and crescendo. You should speed up quite a bit and then return to the original tempo in the following measure.

Section 3

The image shows a musical score for Section 3, measures 29 through 42. The score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. Measure 29 begins with a piano (p) dynamic and a tempo change to *più mosso*, with a red annotation "Rather more motion, faster". Measures 30-31 continue the *più mosso* section. Measure 32 starts a new section with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. Measures 33-35 feature a forte (f) dynamic and a complex dotted 16th and 32nd note rhythm. Measures 36-39 continue with the mf dynamic and similar rhythmic patterns. Measures 40-42 conclude the section with a forte (f) dynamic and a rooftop style accent, indicated by upward-pointing 'v' marks under the notes.

The final section of the etude includes measures 29 through 42. This section holds a number of challenges. The first item of note in this final section of the étude is a change in tempo. Note the *più mosso* marking. For the purpose of recording this étude I have chosen to do the moderato at approximately 84 bpm and the *più mosso* at 96 bpm (that is the recommended tempo range for this piece).

Observe carefully the articulation in measures 33. This will require careful counting and attention to detail. Starting in measure 35 notice the rhythm. The dotted 16th and 32nd note rhythm will be performed the same as a dotted 8th and 16th note rhythm but twice as fast. Practice this section initially using the eight note for the beat and going much slower. Gradually speed up until you can play this section comfortably.

Throughout the last seven measures notice the rooftop style accent. Remember these are not short and should be played quite strongly with only a slight amount of separation. In the final measure each note has a rooftop accent with the last two notes having a tenuto mark added. Once again, play these notes quite strongly but very full valued.

VOISIN 11 STUDIES FOR TRUMPET

#11

Section 1

Quickly, stately, but not too fast
Allegro maestoso non troppo

The musical score is written for trumpet in 4/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'Allegro maestoso non troppo' with the instruction 'Quickly, stately, but not too fast'. The score consists of 24 measures, numbered 1 through 24. Measure 1 starts with a forte (f) dynamic. Measures 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, and 23 contain triplets of eighth notes, with the syllables 'TTK' written below them. Measure 6 contains a double dotted quarter note. Measure 8 contains a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. Measure 20 contains a forte (f) dynamic. Measure 22 contains a diminuendo (dim.) marking. Measure 23 contains a piano (p) dynamic. The score ends with a final measure (24) containing a whole note.

In this étude the first thing you will probably notice is the use of 16th note triplets. With the tempo indicated being between 88 and 100 bpm, you may find that it is necessary for you to triple tongue these notes, especially if you are going to perform it on the upper end of the prescribed tempo. If you have not used multiple tonguing techniques before, you will need to decide on the syllables that you will use. I have indicated on the screen my preference for this passage. Notice that I have used TTK or tu-tu-ku. Another version would be to use TKT or tu-ku-tu. I would recommend learning both variations on triple tongue technique. Each variation can be useful for you in different musical situations.

The next point of interest occurs in measure six. Be aware of the use of the double dotted quarter note. Remember that the dot adds half of the notes value, and the second dot add half of the half already added. Therefore, the double dotted quarter note will receive $1 \frac{3}{4}$ of a beat. You can also think of it as being just one 16th note shorter than a half note.

Section 2



In this second section of the étude, there are several points of interest. Be aware that at the end of the previous section the dynamic level was piano. That is the level that we need to begin with in this section.

Notice the rhythm and articulation in measure 26. The articulation of the last three notes should be a legato tongue. These notes are not triplets. Also, notice the use of the roof-top style accent. Remember that this is not to be interpreted as a short note. Play the note almost full value and quite strong. This style of accent will occur again in measure 31.

Be sure to count carefully and give the half notes in measure 29 and 30 full value. The 16th note passage that begins in measure 32 will need special attention to achieve correct articulation. The placement of the slurs changes from measure to measure and beat to beat. Don't be concerned with trying to play the staccato notes short. Simply articulate the staccato notes firmly and they will sound adequately separated.

The trill at the end of the passage will require careful attention. Be sure that the correct timing is used. Trills usually start slowly and increase speed. The three grace notes at the end should be played in time. This will require careful counting.

Section 3

Section 3 of the étude consists of measures 38 through 50. The music is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Measures 38 and 39 are marked *mf*. Measures 40 through 50 are marked *f*. The section features a variety of articulations, including slurs, accents, and staccato marks. The melodic line is characterized by rapid scale passages and intervals, with a focus on precise articulation and dynamic control.

This third section of the étude is all about scale passages. Notice the articulation in measure 41. Remember to apply a legato articulation. While some dynamic changes are notated, musically, you should follow the direction of the musical line with your dynamics. Crescendo as you ascend and decrescendo as you descend. Once again, be sure to count the half notes carefully and give them full value.

Section 4

Section 4 of the étude consists of measures 51 through 61. The music is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Measures 51 and 52 are marked *f*. Measures 53 through 61 are marked *p dolce*. The section features a variety of articulations, including slurs, accents, and staccato marks. The melodic line is characterized by rapid scale passages and intervals, with a focus on precise articulation and dynamic control.

2415

The final section of the étude begins with pick ups into measure 51. Use plenty of air on the 16th note passage in measure 51 and 52. Use your valve slides or alternate fingerings for the high A natural that occurs at the beginning of each measure. This note will be much easier to play if it is not sharp.

Be sure to notice the piano dynamic level at the end of measure 53. This provides a nice contrast musically and will allow you to relax slightly before the final passage. I recommend taking an early breath at the end of the half note in measure 55. This will allow you to play to the quarter rest in measure 60 in one breath with comfort. The articulation of the 16th notes in measure 56 will require special attention because they are different than any of the 16th note passages in the étude.

The low G of the last note is often troublesome for many trumpet players. One hint that may help is to maintain the same amount of mouthpiece pressure that you had on the previous two notes. Often players will over-relax in the attempt to play the low note with a full sound. Keep the corners of the embouchure firm and maintain normal mouthpiece pressure.

SECOND BOOK OF PRACTICAL STUDIES

#80

Section 1



The exercises in the second book of practical studies by Robert Getchell are arranged according to the rhythms that are used. In number 80 the use of the dotted eighth and 16th note is what is studied. That rhythm is used on various beats within the measures and with a wide variety of pitches and intervals.

However, the real challenge in this étude lies in its use of wide interval slurs. This is a melodic, and expressive étude. Care must be taken to perform each phrase in as musical a manner as possible. You will need to work out the phrasing and breathing points carefully. There is great opportunity to display musicality in this étude.

Beginning with measures 1 and 2, we have an interval slur pattern that will be challenging for most trumpet players. The octave D slurs must be performed cleanly, with good tone quality and correct rhythm.

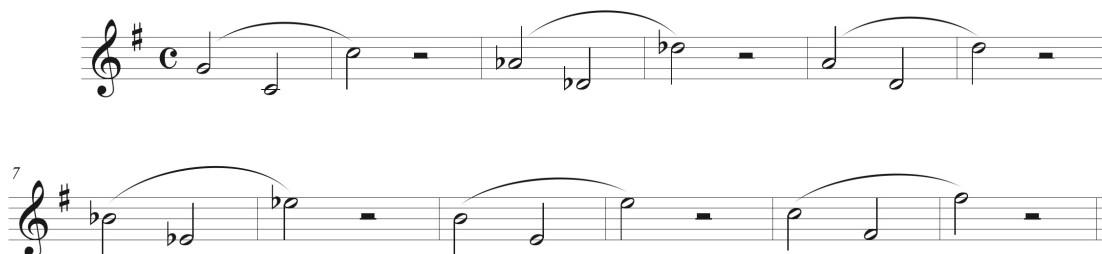
In order to help you prepare for the performance of these slurs, I have written the following brief exercise. Take the time to learn and practice this exercise accurately before spending an inordinate amount of time working on the opening measures. Time spent working on the fundamental slurs will yield positive results as you begin your preparation of the étude.

Take note of the staccato quarter note in measure eight. Be sure that this note is played separated but not too short. As in many of the exercises, this étude incorporates many half notes and ties. Be sure you are counting these very carefully.

Trumpet in B \flat

Getchell Study #80

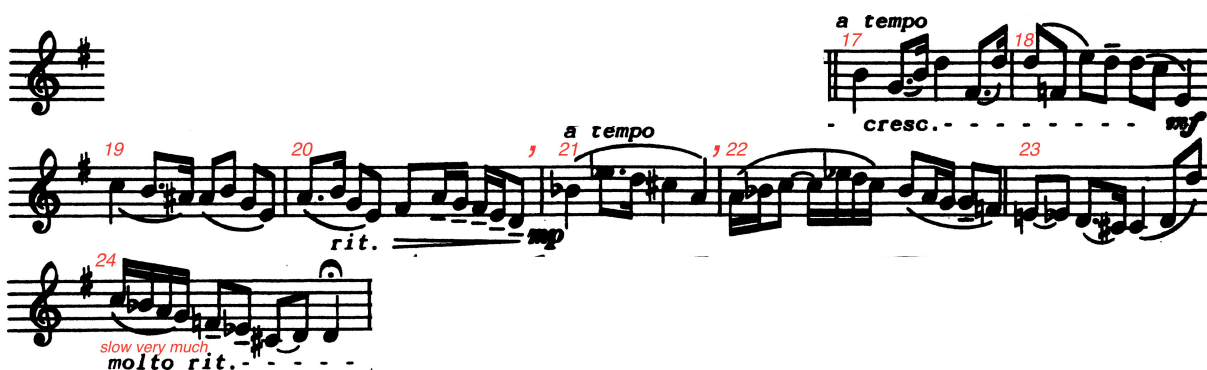
Preparatory Exercise



Measures 10 through 16 move the total center from G major to G minor. Be sure that you carry all accidentals through the measure.

Section 2

In many ways this section of the étude is the most challenging, and incidentally one of the most often selected sections for All-State auditions. Wide interval slurs and constantly changing rhythms help to make this section more difficult.



I have added some suggested breath marks. You will certainly want to breathe after measure 20 before the *a tempo*, and if you find it difficult to play the last four measures of the section comfortably in one breath, I suggest you take a breath at the end of measure 21 as marked. This breath works much better musically than having to break one of the slurred passages.

Take note of the rhythm on the first two beats of measure 22 and also notice the repeated G going into beat 4. You will need to re-articulate this G even though it is slurred. Finally, make sure that your low C sharps are low enough. Use a tuner to determine how far to extend your third and/or first valves slides in order to get this note in tune.

Section 3

25 *a tempo* 26 27 28

p *mf*

29 30 31 32 33

f *dim.* *molto rall.* *pp*

gradually growing quieter *gradually slowing very much*

E.L. 305

The musical score for Section 3 consists of two staves in G major. The first staff contains measures 25 through 28, and the second staff contains measures 29 through 33. Measure 25 is marked 'a tempo'. Measure 29 begins with a forte (f) dynamic. A crescendo leads to measure 29, which features a repeated E note. A steady crescendo continues through measures 30 and 31, reaching a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic in measure 32. From measure 32, the music gradually grows quieter (diminuendo) and slows down (molto rallentando) through measures 33 and 34, ending at a pianissimo (pp) dynamic. The score includes performance directions: 'gradually growing quieter' and 'gradually slowing very much'.

In this final section we return to the key of G major. You will likely notice as you prepare this section it's similarity to the opening section. It is a variation on the music of the first 4 measures. Be sure to notice the pattern of dynamics in this final section. It should begin softly and do a steady crescendo to measure 29. In measure 29, you will need to re-articulate lightly the repeated E.

There are several options for where to breathe in the section. You may do two or four measure phrases depending on your breath capacity.

Be careful to follow the written directions of the last three measures. Remember to gradually play quieter for the diminuendo and to slow down a great deal on the molto rallentando.

SECOND BOOK OF PRACTICAL STUDIES

#81

Exercise number 81 from the second book of practical studies by Robert Getchell is one of my all-time favorite exercises from the All-state audition material. Why you might ask? This exercise affords the player multiple opportunities for musical expression. Each section of the étude provides a contrast in styles that can allow the player to mentally construct a story line that goes with the music. It is in the building of this mental storyline that the musician finds the tools to play with great expression and musicality. The telling of a story makes music happen!

Section 1

81

"Grand, noble, magnificent"

Grandioso 1 2 3 4 rit. - - - -

5 a tempo 6 7 8 dim. - - - -

9 mp

In this opening section of the étude take note first of the key signature. We are in the key of D minor. The opening style marking says "Grandioso," and should be performed with a full sound, in a fanfare like style. As we get into the piano dynamic marking at measure 3, think of this as a quiet comment, being whispered to someone nearby.

Notes that are followed by rests should be played full value. Also notice the ritardando in measure 4, and notice that in the next phrase in measures 6-9 the same musical idea occurs but there is no ritardando.

Throughout this section be aware of your intonation. The fourth line D can be especially flat at higher dynamic levels. Be sure you are playing that note high enough. Also, be sure that the top line F is not allowed to go sharp. You will need to either use a first valve slide or lip the note down.

Section 2

In the second section, several alterations to the music are made. We change key signatures, going now to the key of D major, and we are instructed to play at a slower tempo. Additionally we have the style marking *dolce*. This means to play in a sweet and delicate manner. Accomplish this by using a more legato “du” articulation and sustaining notes full value. The use of vibrato would also be appropriate.

You will have opportunity here to make use of rubato. Do not be afraid to alter the tempo as you feel the music demands. Slowing the tempo slightly just before the climax of the phrase, such as the end of measure 13, and going into measure 14, will help to build emotional tension into the musical line. In measures 18 through 20 it would be appropriate to increase the tempo slightly, and pulling the tempo back to increase the tension as you go to measure 22.

This section of the étude contains several accidentals. Be sure that you are carrying the accidentals through the measure as indicated. In the last two lines of the section, there are multiple times where you will need to play a low C-sharp. Make sure that this note is low enough. This is perhaps the worst note on the trumpet for intonation. Check this note with a tuner while playing the line multiple times. Make the necessary changes using either the third and/or first valve slides.

Section 3

Leggiero *Light, swift, delicate*
mf *piu mosso* *more motion, faster*
Original tempo
Tempo I
p *mf* *p* *f*
molto rit. *slow down very much*
molto rit.

Measures 26-51 are shown. Measure numbers 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51 are indicated above the staff.

E.L. 305

As we begin the final section of the étude, once again nearly everything changes. While the key signature still contains two sharps we are now in the key of B minor. We have a marking “*piu mosso*” that tells us to play with “more motion” or faster. I would use the upper end of the prescribed tempo for this section. Additionally, we have the marking “*Leggiero*” that tells us to play in a light, swift and delicate style. During the first line of the section, eighth notes are marked with a staccato. Carry that style throughout measure 45, but be sure to play all quarter notes full value.

Once again, you will encounter numerous accidentals. Measures 35, 36, and 40 will require some time and slow practice to become comfortable. As mentioned in the second section, there are multiple low C-sharps to be performed. Make sure that you are getting these notes low enough. Use a tuner and your valve slides.

In measure 42 through 47 there is a interplay of dynamics. During this “question and answer” section, experiment to see how quietly you can play the piano dynamics. Don't be afraid to play the mezzo-forte dynamic a little closer to forte to help with contrast.

The last line of the étude returns us to the original D minor key, tempo and style. All of the same comments from the first section will apply here. So that you do not have to overplay the volume of the accented notes, play them with a little bit more separation. That will allow them to stand out as accented.

SECOND BOOK OF PRACTICAL STUDIES

#84

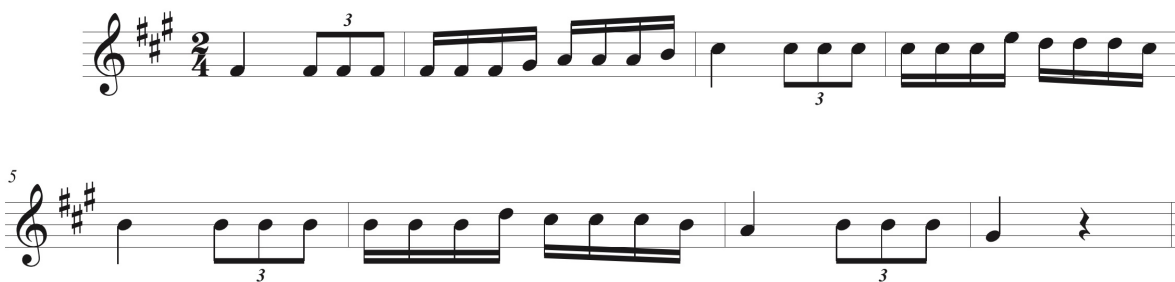
Section 1

Exercise number 84 by Robert Getchell is all about rhythm. Particularly the combination of eighth note triplets and dotted 8th and 16th notes. Going back and forth between a triplet feel and a duple feel can cause variations in tempo. The tendency for most players will be to slow this down.



The other danger in this exercise is allowing the dotted 8th and 16th figure to sound like a quarter and eighth triplet. In order to develop the correct feel for this rhythm consider the following exercise. Practicing with a metronome is a must.

Getchell #84 Preparatory Exercise



Section 2

There are a few accidentals that will require your attention. This exercise is in the key of F sharp minor. There are a few passages that may require slow practice, particularly measure 14, measure 22, and measure 32. Take the time to work these out slowly until they are comfortable under your fingers. Take note that the last four measures are an F sharp minor scale in it's melodic form.



Intonation on this exercise will not be a major challenge, however, be sure that the low C sharp and measure 15 is low enough. And as always, be sure to lip up all 4th line Ds.

While only one dynamic level is specified, it is important to allow your dynamics to follow the musical line; crescendoing as you ascend, and decrescendoing as you descend. While this formula does not work equally well for every phrase, it will serve as a good starting point as you develop the musical feel for this piece.

SECOND BOOK OF PRACTICAL STUDIES

#105

Exercise number 105 is very brief, only 12 measures, but holds numerous musical challenges. First take note of the key signature. Be sure that you are playing all of the A-flats as notated. While there are numerous accidental A naturals, be sure that your thinking remains in the key of E-flat.

105

Calmly
mf
f
rall.

E. L. 305

The next challenge will be the time signature. 6/8 time will be counted in different ways depending on the tempo. In this exercise the time is counted with the eighth note receiving one beat. You will need to be very careful to remember that a quarter note will now receive two beats. The rhythm in the second half of measure 2 is counted just like a dotted quarter and eighth note followed by a quarter note in 4/4 time. Give special attention to the rhythm in measure eight. The tie creates the same sound as a series of dotted 8th and 16th notes.

Phrasing in this exercise will be extremely important. You will need to decide if you are comfortable playing four measures in one breath. If this exercise is selected for an audition, they will select at least two lines. If you are playing four measures per breath, be sure that you can do the second phrase comfortably. If you feel like the second line is too difficult to do in one breath due to the crescendo, I recommend that you take a quick breath after beat four with the E-flat eighth note in measure six. Breathing just before the peak of the crescendo is incorrect musically.

As noted in other exercises in this series, feel free to vary your dynamics according to the movement of the musical line, crescendoing as the line ascends and getting softer as the line moves downward. While there is no indication to slow down at the end of lines one or two, it would be appropriate to take a small amount of time as you complete the phrase. If you do slow down very slightly at the end of the first two lines, make sure that your rallentando in the last two measures is more dramatic.

SECOND BOOK OF PRACTICAL STUDIES

#109

Section 1

The marking at the beginning of exercise 109 says it all, “Rhythmically”. In contrast to the previous exercise, number 105, this 6/8 music is what is called a compound meter. In a compound meter eighth note subdivisions are grouped in threes rather than in twos, and the dotted quarter note receives one beat. The many eighth rests on beat one and the use of ties make for multiple rhythmic challenges.

109

Rhythmically

The musical notation for exercise 109, Section 1, is presented on two staves. The first staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. The second staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. The music is in 6/8 time and features eighth notes, eighth rests, and ties. Measures are numbered 1 through 10 in red.

I strongly recommend that you approach this exercise by working slowly, giving the eighth note one beat and gradually speeding up until you are comfortable feeling the dotted quarter note beat. As you move into the feeling of two beats per measure, be sure you are identifying which notes are on the beat and which are off the beat. This becomes especially important as you near performance tempo.

Section 2

The opening section of this exercise is in the key of G minor. Be sure to take note of the F sharp accidentals and the occasional E natural. While the opening is indicated to be played softly, don't play so quietly that you do not have confident response and a clear sound. As you do the crescendo in measures 5 and 6, think of each entrance being slightly stronger than the one before it.

The musical notation for exercise 109, Section 2, is presented on two staves. The first staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. The second staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. The music is in 6/8 time and features eighth notes, eighth rests, and ties. Measures are numbered 11 through 20 in red.

Section 3

The last two lines of the exercise change to the key of G major. Be sure that you are giving great contrast in dynamics in this section. It will take great control and practice to effectively go back-and-forth between the forte dynamic and piano dynamic. Play the fortes very full and in a singing style. Be careful not to play the eighth notes too short. Notice the last measure of the exercise. The only eighth note marked short is the last eighth note.



Forty Truths About Practicing and Performing

by Dr. Betty Scott, University of Missouri-Columbia

1. When you're not motivated, you have to be disciplined.

When you mention discipline to most students, they groan and roll their eyes, but discipline is a good habit to develop to get us through those times when our motivation is at low ebb. The word "discipline" comes from the Latin disciplina, which means "instruction" or "knowledge." Couldn't you use a bit more knowledge?

Ernst Bacon: "The greatest freedom in playing results from the most disciplined preparation."

2. Nothing takes the place of daily practice, which is both intensive and comprehensive.

Intensive means focused and fully present, working thoughtfully and meticulously on passages that need detailed dissection, Comprehensive means that your practice covers the broad spectrum of skills, techniques and musical styles needed to increase your gifts as a performer.

3. "Practice makes perfect" is false. Only correct practice makes perfect.

If you're not sure what constitutes correct practice, consult with a teacher or a professional player.

4. Learn it correctly so that you don't have to unlearn it to relearn it.

I once asked Steve Geibel, flute professor at the University of Missouri, how it was that he missed so few notes on his recitals. He answered by saying that when he was learning to play, he had a teacher who told him that it was just as easy to play it right as it was to play it wrong. Steve believed him. So should you.

5. The map (music notation) is not the territory.

Maps are visual symbols that show us how to get to where we want to go. They don't show us the curves or inclines of the road itself. These are things we experience as we drive on the highway. Music notation, too, represents symbols, which offer us possibilities for interpretation. The rest is up to us.

Pablo Casals: "The written is not like a straight jacket whereas music is, like life itself, in constant movement."

Phil Smith: "Music is not just the black dots on the white paper—it's what happens when those black dots on the white paper go into your heart and come out again."

6. Go from the general to the specific back to the general.

To get an overview of an unfamiliar piece of music, read through it from edge to edge, regardless of the mistakes you make along the way. Then proceed to consciously analyze the music, work on specific measures and train your muscles to respond accurately when playing this music. Following methodical practice, return to the music, this time letting your muscles respond unconsciously to the new training as you move to a new level of understanding and musicianship.

7. When correcting a problem, start at the core of the problem.

And work in concentric circles outward. Too often we return to the beginning of the piece rather than dealing with the troublesome passage itself. Massage the problem—get it worked out—before beginning the piece anew.

8. Some things need more practice than others.

Such as beginnings, endings, retards, pauses, transitions (especially to new keys or tempos), repeats, D.C.s and D.S.s.

9. Being able to distinguish the significant from the insignificant is important.

Sometimes we spend time on passages that we can already play. This can be a waste of valuable rehearsal time. Spend your time working on what you can't play so that you will eventually be able to play it. Play the things you can already play when you need a little bit of ego boosting or want to maintain learned skills.

10. Slower is sometimes faster.

When you play fast, avoid sounding frenetic. Slowing down a passage by several metronomic notches has an immediate impact, especially to your listeners. One tempo will sound secure; the other will sound frantic.

11. Hearing is selective.

There's a difference between hearing and listening. Learn to listen more carefully to what you and others sound like, especially professional players. Buy CDs and immerse yourself in the sounds and music. Better yet, attend live performances.

12. Bad starts = bad timing.

Know the tempo beforehand and breathe in that tempo.

13. You want to have enough technique so that you don't have to think about it.

Did you know that the word "technique" comes from the Greek word *tekhne*, which means "art" or "skill"? This means that all passages should be played artfully or skillfully, no matter what the speed.

14. "Almost" being able to play a piece isn't enough.

Like climbing to the peak of a mountain, there's a difference between being there and almost there. Keep practicing.

15. Effort must eventually turn into ease.

The idea is to make the most difficult measures sound easy. I often call this the principle of "maximum utilization with the least amount of effort."

16. Your reality as a player is constructed one practice session at a time.

Think about what you want to accomplish before you begin.

17. Deliberately conceive, meticulously plan and methodically execute.

Pre-plan and visualize your success.

18. Put your focus on the piece and the outcome you want.

Know what you want and, as the Nike ad says, "Just Do It."

19. Practice as if you have no limits. Perform as if this were true.

What do you have to lose by thinking this way? What do you have to gain?

20. When you play, play.

Go all-out and have a good time. Enjoy yourself.

21. When in doubt, breathe.

Few directives are more important than this one.

22. Everything is energy.

With imagination you can transform your ideas into physical manifestation; i.e., you can create their happening in the physical world.

23. Energy flows where attention goes.

So keep your attention on the music and how you intend to express yourself.

24. Listen to the words you use; listen to the words others use.

Are they positive and constructive? If not, change them.

25. Neither justify nor tear down yourself or your performance.

Louise Hay: "What we think about ourselves becomes the truth for us."

26. Fear is either a motivator or debilitator.

Spiritually, it is sometimes said that the definition of fear is "Forgetting Every Available Resource" or "False Evidence Appearing Real." If you get nervous performing, seek help in learning to cope or reframe the emotion.

Sir Edmund Hillary: "It's not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves."

A Crow (American Indian) saying: "One has to face fear or forever run from it."

27. If you're on time, you're late.

In professional groups, starting at 10:00 a.m. means being in your seat and ready to go by 9:50 a.m. at the latest.

28. When you play, have something to say.

Otherwise you will bore your audience.

29. A safe performance is a dull performance.

Franz Liszt: "Dullness is the cardinal sin of performance."

30. Performances are either educational or entertaining—or both.

Can you make your performance a combination of both?

31. Playing musically is more than playing accurately.

Playing accurately is important. But many other factors are equally important, such as intensity, emotion, and dynamics.

32. A deadly combination: missing notes and playing unmusically.

You know you are in trouble if you see someone in the audience counting your mistakes!

33. The less interesting a piece, the more imaginative and convincing you must play it.

Not all compositions are created equal. Some are better than others. For those on the bottom end of the spectrum, create imaginative interpretations.

34. Always do the best you can if not the best you are capable of.

Some days are better than others. All you can do is to play up to fullest ability in any given moment. Forgive yourself if it's less than what you are capable of.

35. Everything is experience.

This means that you can learn a lot from any performance, whether it be mediocre, miserable or magnificent.

36. “Never surrender. Never give up.” (Galaxy Quest, the movie)

Nearly everyone has moments when they want to stop playing. Don't.

37. Being successful takes practice, patience and persistence.

Ralph Waldo Emerson: “That which we persist in doing becomes easier—not that the nature of the task has changed, but our ability has increased.”

38. There are few limits except those we impose on ourselves.

Walt Disney: “Somehow I can't believe that there are any heights that can't be scaled by a person who knows the secret of making his dreams come true. This special secret, it seems to me, can be summarized in four C's. They are curiosity, confidence, courage and constancy and the greatest of these is confidence.

When you believe in a thing, believe in it all the way.”

39. “Perfection is always seeking to surpass itself.” (Jane Roberts)

Playing perfectly in one moment of time may be different than playing perfectly in another moment. Perfection changes as you mature as a performer.

40. There's more to music than music.

To be a really fine musician, immerse yourself in other pursuits. Learn about history, art, literature, and poetry—culture in general. The more you know, the better you'll play.