

PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR IDAHO ALL-STATE ETUDES, 2010

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I. General preparation: The more prepared you are, the more confident you will be. Rather than leaving your practicing to the last minute, prepare early. At first, practice details. Stop to fix every mistake. Slow down. Mark suggestions in your music. Practice with a metronome. Record your playing on tape and listen for proper rhythms and dynamics. Eventually, you need to practice PERFORMING. In front of a small audience (your friend, teacher, parent, dog, or cat), go straight through each etude without stopping. Do this several times before the audition.

II. A mind-set for auditions: Everyone gets nervous, so you're not alone. Like sports, musical performance is 90% mental and 10% technique. Do this mental exercise before the audition: imagine every detail of the performance—how you walk into the room, how you stand, how you feel as you play. Get plenty of sleep the night before. Don't listen to the other flutists warming up (at such times, everybody always sounds better than they are). Instead of competing against others, give it YOUR best shot. Don't rush into your performance. Before you play, take time to get comfortable. Adjust the music stand if necessary. Don't let little mistakes disturb your concentration. Everyone makes mistakes, and if you dwell on them, you are probably blowing them out of proportion.

III. Chromatic Scale from C1 to C4 using slurred sixteenth notes ascending and descending (quarter=72): use an even quality of sound throughout—full and focused in the low register and not too strident in the high register. Keep a steady tempo. Especially practice the highest notes.

IV. Etude in B-flat Major, page 20: Ernesto Köhler is my favorite composer of flute etudes. His music is melodic, even operatic, allowing you to sing on the flute. He entitled this piece "In the Moonlight," and it requires a luminous tone quality, shimmering with vibrato. Everything must be legato, even the difficult wide leaps. There are few dynamic markings, but each phrase must have a definite shape (I have added nuances in my edition of the music).

Meas. 1-17: Throughout this piece, use thumb B-flat. If you are not used to this fingering, your initial reaction might be that it is more difficult, but persistence will pay result in a smoother legato. "Andantino mosso" is a little faster than "Andante" (walking). Practice at first in six eighth-note beats to the measure until you can play at eighth=144, then try it in two beats at dotted quarter=48 (the same tempo). "Dolce e con espressivo" means sweetly and expressively.

Crescendo to the downbeat of meas. 2, and in meas. 3, crescendo a little more. The grace notes are not fast; play them as thirty-second notes:



In meas. 5, build all the way to *forte*, then make a *subito piano* on the downbeat of meas. 6. For ease of fingering, keep the right-hand third finger down throughout the second half of meas. 5. Don't clip the ends of the slurs in meas. 6. Sustain the quarter notes so that they lead smoothly to the subsequent eighths. In meas. 7-8, duplicate the *crescendo-subito piano*. Don't whack the accents in meas. 8 to death. These are expressive markings; emphasize the F-sharp and G with extra vibrato.

Köhler marks meas. 8-10 with *diminuendo*, so I have marked the beginning of this up to *mezzopiano* to leave room for a gradual taper. Don't get too soft too soon! Keep the lower notes strong enough to match the high F's. Take extra care to achieve a perfect legato in these measures. Slowly practice each wide interval (E-flat-F, C-F, A-F) and work to eliminate unwanted grace notes by coordinating embouchure and finger changes.

In meas. 15, prepare the low C-sharp by moving your pinky to the C-sharp key while playing B-flat. Slide this finger back to the D-sharp key for the E; otherwise, this note will be flat. Note the crescendo in meas. 15; then relax the tone in meas. 17-18.

V. Etude in E Major, p. 33: Since the key of this piece is less familiar to many band students, spend some time playing E-major scales to become comfortable with the finger patterns. Practice this piece slowly at first, eventually working it up to the required tempo of quarter=120.

Köhler called this a Russian Dance. "Allegro vivo" means fast (literally cheerful) and lively, and "con allegrezza" means with cheerfulness. The etude starts on beat two, so think of this as a pickup, with a light tongue.

Alternate fingerings facilitate technique and correct pitch in this piece. Keep your right hand third (ring) finger (R3) down where an E-sharp falls between two F-sharps. Where there is a C-sharp in between two D's in meas. 17, substitute the right hand first three fingers for the pinky; I call this the "right-hand trick." For the loud high E's in meas. 2 and 20, removing the pinky (-R4) will prevent the pitch from going too sharp. For the high G-sharp in the final measure, adding the right hand second and third fingers (R23) will also improve pitch.

Dynamics are important here. A dynamic is not indicated at the beginning, but *piano* with a *crescendo* to *forte* is appropriate. Take care not to rush during any *crescendo* passages. In meas. 6-8 and 24-28, bring out the melody in the low register with a full, focused sound, and play lighter (*piano*) on the higher notes.

To make satisfying phrase endings, play eighth notes full length with vibrato on the downbeats of meas. 2, 4, 6, 8, etc. On the other hand, the grace note figures (second beat of meas. 8, 12, 14, and the last six measures) need a staccato lightness.

Drive through the coda for a “bravura” finish.

VI. Solo: You are required to prepare one minute from a solo of your choice. Select material that demonstrates your strengths. Please see my graded list here:

<http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~leonardg/appliedrep.html>

Please E-mail me if you need more advice:

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GOOD LUCK!