

Vibrato 101:

What is it/why should we teach it?



Why Should You Listen to A Single Word I Have to Say?

- 16 total years of teaching Band (collegiate flute - 5 years, high school - 4 years, middle school 16 years)
 - 16 years auditioning the Missouri All-State Band flute/piccolo (4 years as lead flute/piccolo judge)
 - 18 years of adjudicating solo/small ensemble (certified in Missouri, Illinois, and Iowa)
 - 20 years of teaching & performing flute/piccolo/keyboards
- 

What specifically is this session about?

- **Catie says WHATEVER I WANT. Thanks Catie!**
- **Three “hats” for today:**
 - Flute Educator and Performer - how to teach this and how to use it
 - Band Director - how to incorporate this into ensemble rehearsals
 - Solo & Small Ensemble Adjudicator - how this affects “successful performances”



Speak to us like we're five years old.

What is VIBRATO?



OK, so what is it?

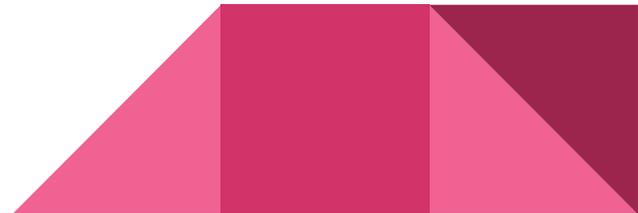
**Pitch fluctuations that are controlled,
measured, and used as tools for expression,
control, and the implication of dynamic
contrast.**



FLUTE TEACHER HAT

Let's make some ridiculous sounds. Come on, it's fun.

Start with a hum...



FLUTE TEACHER HAT

Let's make some ridiculous sounds. Come on, it's fun.

So...

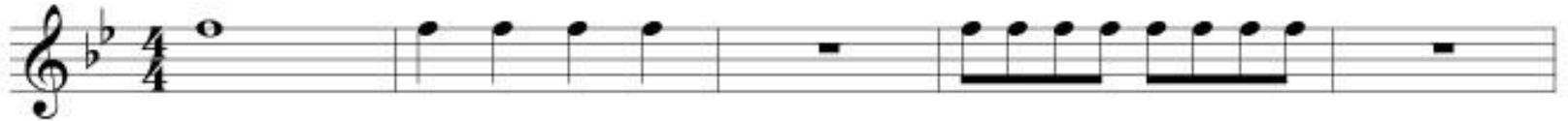
Hum, then "ma", then back to hum.

Weird, right?



FLUTE TEACHER HAT

Vibrato Exercise - Start Here!

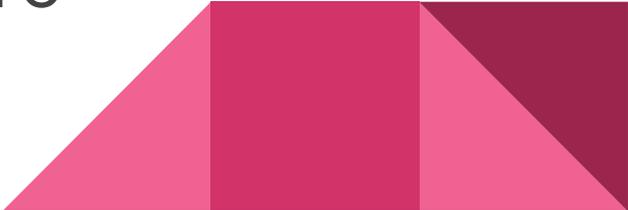


Vibrato Exercises - On Any Note (yay long tones!)



BAND DIRECTOR HAT

How do I use this during rehearsal?

- During warm-ups - sections can rotate
 - Designate rhythm, then let sections practicing vibrato be the drone while others are concentrating on long tones
 - Initially teaching gradual tempo changes...
 - LET THEM MODEL IT WITH VIBRATO
 - This also reinforces subdivision
- 

BAND DIRECTOR HAT

How do I (or how do they) know if they are doing it correctly?

- Just like Jazz Style, MAKE THEM LISTEN. THIS IS NO DIFFERENT. LIKE AT ALL. (links on final slide)
 - Jean-Pierre Rampal - specifically Bach Sonatas
 - James Galway - WARNING: lots of *easy listening*
 - Jeanne Baxtresser
 - Emmanuel Pahud



BAND DIRECTOR HAT

BUT WHY?!?

- Brooksie Collins says so, that's why.
- No really, her research says to!
- It has to do with "student success."
 - Let's all argue about this!



BAND DIRECTOR HAT

What does her research tell us?

- This all depends.
 - What does “success” mean?
 - Is it the process?
 - Is it the rating?
- Disclaimer: I am a MSHSAA judge.
 - There is NO guide on “how many” ratings given
 - Ask any two judges and they may differ
 - ***This is my takeaway from my own experiences***
 - For me, this is consistent with non-MSHSAA festivals too
 - “Is this format effective?” - that’s a different conversation...



BAND DIRECTOR/JUDGE'S HAT

“Most Often Played at Solo/Small Ens”...

LEVEL C (check last slide for full doc)

Mozart - Magic Flute - 22 (1 state qualifier)

Popp - Valse Gracieuse - 23 (3 state qualifiers)

Handel - Siciliana and Giga - 37 (4 state qualifiers)

Haydn - Serenade - 56 (0 state qualifiers)



SOLO/SM ENS JUDGE HAT

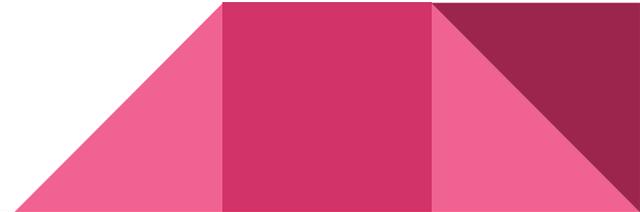
Why does vibrato relate to student (rating) “success” at solo/small ensemble?

- Vibrato on flute (and saxophone, trumpet, etc.) is a fundamental sound characteristic *AND* technique.
- Without it, the flute doesn't sound like the flute as the composers intended. Don't blame us, blame Bach.



SOLO/SM ENS JUDGE HAT

- WHY is vibrato a core part of flute sound? Because it is a tool for:
 - Intonation control/pitch correction
 - Creates the illusion of volume
 - Expression tool



TALK TO ME!

- Questions? Arguments? Inspired thoughts? Contact me!
 - lisabmcmahon81@gmail.com
 - lmcmahon@parkwayschools.net
 - 314.477.9184 (texting is faster)



Here's a bunch of resources...share them!

- [Vibrato Beginnings](#)
- [Vibrato Long Tones](#)
- Listening for Vibrato Style:
 - [Jean-Pierre Rampal](#)
 - [James Galway](#)
 - [Jeanne Baxtresser](#)
 - [Emmanuel Pahud](#)
- [Brooksie Collins - solo/small ensemble literature rating finding](#) (2019) - the last set of consistent MSHSAA data
- [Lisa's Nerdy Flute Playlist](#)
- YouTube Resources for lesson planning:
 - [Flutorials](#) (also check out Clarified, Saxplained, Brassified, etc.)
 - [The Flute Channel](#) (kids really like [this one](#) that unboxes an Amazon flute)
 - [Subcontrabass flute](#)
 - [Bach on 4 different flutes](#)
 - [Jane Rutter](#) (for your older students who need to laugh at how seriously flute players take themselves sometimes)
 - [Robert Dick - glissando headjoint](#)
 - [The Other Flute \(contemporary technique book\)](#)
 - [Greg Pattillo - flute beatboxing](#)
 - [Three Beats for Beatbox Flute \(beatbox basics\)](#)
 - [Beatbox Flute & Glissando Headjoint Jam Session](#)