Starting Over Again

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Introduction:

* My focus on starting players over again comes from the uniqueness of my job as the trumpet teacher at Brigham Young University where a large percentage of my students leave school after their freshman year to serve a full-time mission for their church. They return two years later with no chops but a burning desire to play again, so my job is to make that transition as efficient, safe, and painless as possible.

What is lost when you stop playing for a year or more?

* Endurance (go figure!)
* Range
* Clarity in your sound
* Tongue (speed, clarity, and endurance)
* Flexibility
* Lip/finger coordination (flexibility issue)
* Some finger speed and evenness
* Some sight reading fluency
* Some transposition fluency

What is retained?

* Musicianship (It’s there. You just won’t have the mechanics to utilize it.)
* Some flexibility
* Some finger speed
* Basic tonguing skills
* Most of your ability to read
* Most of your ability to transpose
* Literature that you knew previously will still be there as your technical skills develop
* Range will be limited to the staff and below

Other considerations for the older comeback player:

* Your muscles won’t recover as quickly.
* Your wind capacity is usually somewhat diminished.
* Your sense of relative or perfect pitch may not be as accurate.
* A significant weight change may require an equipment change.
* A lighter weight trumpet might help you more easily duplicate your younger “glory days”.

Working your comeback to your advantage:

* This is the perfect time to reset a bad embouchure.
* Focus on developing a lighter pressure concept. Less is always better.
* Reset a bad hand position if it needs attention.
* Learn to use your first valve trigger if you haven’t already.
* Develop better breathing concepts.
* Expand your sound concept and refocus it if necessary.

Concerns about pushing too hard too soon:

* The first month is the danger zone where you run the risk of hurting yourself if you push too hard too quickly.
* Damage is rare but very real, and will usually manifest itself in one of the following three ways:
  + Rupture of the orbicularis oris
    - This is a tear or herniation in the muscle tissue of the lip and is a worst-case scenario. It pretty much shuts you down and is often career ending. You will have trouble holding a pucker and will have great difficulty controlling your embouchure. Surgery is the only real cure. With the surgery, there is an 80% chance of a full recovery (full motion and sensation) but only a 50% chance that you will successfully play the trumpet again.
  + Damage to the nerves in the lip
    - This usually manifests itself as a sharp zing in your lip, like someone just poked you with a needle (remember playing with zits?) If you recognize what is happening and back off on your playing for a while, you have a good chance of recovering from this. I had a little trouble with this about 20 years when I was playing full time and I switched to a smaller mouthpiece (Bach 1CH to a Bach 3C). The smaller diameter and the change in rim contour meant that it set slightly differently on my face and I could float the upper register with less pressure. The problem went away almost immediately and has not come back.
  + Soft tissue damage
    - This manifests itself as a residual soreness that doesn’t go away with a normal day off here and there. You might try a lighter playing schedule, but the best cure is to take time off from the trumpet so the tissue can repair.

Should you be concerned?:

* Admittedly, these circumstances are pretty rare. A lot of players just start playing again, push pretty hard, and never have problems, but it doesn’t hurt to err on the side of caution. In the 15 years that I have been at BYU we have had two casualties. One was a horn player, one of the best freshmen we ever recruited. He ruptured the muscle in his lip as he restarted after his mission. He had surgery and recovered fairly well, but never completely recovered. The other casualty was a trumpet player who had a muscle tear or nerve damage. He sounded great for about 30 seconds and then everything would fall apart. He chose not to see the surgeon in Toronto for a diagnosis and thought that he could solve the problem simply by practicing harder. It didn’t work and he eventually got frustrated and dropped out of the program.

What to expect in the recovery process:

* The following expectations are based on a college music major who is practicing daily. This assumes that they were a pretty solid player when they stopped playing.
* Day 1
  + Response will be very poor.
  + Sound will be very airy.
  + Pitch will be unstable.
  + Long tones probably won’t work.
  + Your lip will probably tingle and swell in 3-5 minutes.
* Day 2
  + This will be much like the first day except that you will have less swelling and should be able to play for 5-10 minutes at a time.
* Days 3-6
  + The swelling will disappear.
  + Response will continue to get easier.
  + Notes will begin to stabilize and longer tones will be easier.
  + You will be able to add in simple lip slurs and slow chromatic movement.
  + As you begin adding the trumpet into your routines it may be very airy. Don’t fight it. It is a natural part of the recovery process.
  + Flexibility will be questionable beyond small intervals.
  + You will be stronger each day and should be able to handle two 15-20 minute sessions by the end of the week.
* Week 2
  + Response will continue to improve.
  + Sound will gradually become less airy in the middle register.
  + Pitch will become more stable in the middle register.
  + Flexibility can now include open lip slurs.
  + Lip/finger coordination will begin to stabilize.
  + Upper range should work up to the top of the staff.
  + Lower range will begin to work but will continue to be stuffy for a while.
* 1 Month
  + Response will be fairly good.
  + Sound will be clear through the middle of your range. The low register will be the last to come around.
  + Pitch will become more stable beyond the middle register.
  + Faster flexibility becomes more realistic.
  + Finger speed improves because the flexibility can now keep up.
  + Upper range will begin to push above the staff.
  + Lower register will probably still be a bit stuffy.
* 2 Months
  + Response should be good.
  + Sound will be clear and focused through a good two octaves.
  + Flexibility will be pretty solid in that same range.
  + Fingers speed will be where it was before you stopped.
  + Lip/finger coordination will be continue to improve.
  + Range will be wide enough to cover most previous literature.
  + Endurance will be able to handle short periods of stressful playing.
* 6-12 Months
  + Sound will be clear and focused through your entire range.
  + Flexibility will be solid through your entire range.
  + Fingers will be faster than they were before you stopped.
  + Lip/finger coordination should be locking down nicely.
  + Range will be comparable to former range.
  + Endurance will be strong enough for all regular ensemble work and a recital becomes a possibility.

Before you start:

* Check your trumpet for any needed repairs. Nothing will dampen your enthusiasm faster than having to send you trumpet off to the repair shop just as you plan to get started.
* Replace broken water key springs.
* Check valve felts for excess wear and/or rubber rings for swelling or shrinking.
* Free up frozen valves.
* Slides often oxidize and will need to be unstuck.
* Check braces for broken solder joints.
* Open the case and set it out in the sun for several days to help clear the musty smell.
* Silver horns will have tarnished and should be polished.
* Scrub out the inside with soap and water.
* Lubricate all slides and valves.

General practice guidelines:

* Break you practice into 2-4 short sessions. These can gradually be combined as you get stronger.
* Limit yourself to exercises that are 3-4 lines in length for a while.
* Avoid etudes and solos for a while.
* Gradually increase the length of your practice sessions.
* Gradually push range in both directions.
* Once you get past the first week, all aspects of playing (tonguing, fingering, etc.) should be covered at least once a week.
* I will suggest patterns from various method books. Use them as a starting point and adapt to your specific needs.
* Many of the patterns can/should be played on both the mouthpiece and the trumpet.
* The first couple of days are all on the mouthpiece. It shifts to a 50/50 ratio for a couple of weeks then gradually changes the focus so that about 90% of your time is on the trumpet.

Thoughts on ensemble playing:

* Positive: Range and endurance will come back more quickly because an ensemble will push you out of your comfort zone.
* Negative: Old habits are more likely to resurface if ensemble playing is started too soon.
  + Too much pressure is the most common problem.
  + Embouchure changes should be given time to settle in before starting serious ensemble work.
* Ideal: Work for about a month on your own and then add an easy ensemble as part of your recovery efforts. I always place my returned missionaries in an ensemble regardless of how long they have been back, but I put them on a lower part if they haven’t been playing long.

Specific practice guidelines:

* Day 1
  + You should be able to practice 15-20 minutes the first day. It will be broken into two sessions.
  + Your first session will only last 4-5 minutes so do it early in the day. After a few minutes of easy playing, your lip will get puffy and you should stop until the swelling goes down.
  + The second session will be later in the day after the puffiness in the lip goes away. It will be a longer session but you should stop when your lip swells or at 15 minutes, whichever comes first. Do not play until you are tired.
  + This first day should be on the mouthpiece with very light pressure.
  + It is better to start these exercises without a reference pitch. This will let you more naturally focus on finding your comfort zone. Many of the suggested exercises start on second-line g, but you should start where you are comfortable.
  + Play simple half-notes in the first session. You will probably have trouble sustaining anything longer than a half-note so don’t frustrate yourself trying.
  + Rest as much as you play (buzz 2 beats, rest 2 beats, etc.). Develop a slow easy rhythm with your breathing. Exhale – Inhale – Play. Repeat in rhythm.
  + The second session should be better. Mix in a few whole notes. Add simple half-step slurs both up and down and stop before you get tired.
* Day 2
  + You should be able to practice a total of 20-30 minutes on your second day. Like the first, it will be broken into two sessions.
  + Your first session will be 10-15 minutes long. Stop if your lip swells up and before you get tired.
  + You may get tired sooner so the second session may be shorter. Again, stop before you get excessively tired.
  + This second day will also be just on the mouthpiece.
  + Start with the patterns from Day 1, but start looking for the sweet spot in your embouchure. It may not be where it was before. This is a good time to experiment with placement and jaw angle.
  + Most of your work will focus on second-line g and down.
  + Add descending open slurs (g – g – c).
* Days 3-6
  + Schlossberg’s *Daily Drills and Technical Studies* is a great place to find exercises to use at this early stage, but feel free to adapt to your own personal tastes, method books, and needs.
    - Restrict yourself to the first three pages for this first week.
    - Focus on a range from third-space c and down.
    - These patterns can be done on either the mouthpiece or the trumpet.
    - Rest between measures or patterns.
    - Pay attention to the dynamics.
    - Suggested Schlossberg exercises: #13-15.
  + Clarke’s *Technical Studies* or Vizzutti’s *Technical Studies* are crucial to your recovery efforts and should be started this first week.
    - Begin in the middle register but stay below third-space c for this first week.
    - Use them as flow studies not finger studies, slow and smooth.
    - Suggested Clarke exercises: #7-13 and #1-6 in inverted form.
  + This is a good time to add early Arban exercises: p. 12-13, #9-10.
  + As you progress through the week, keep adding time to both sessions (15-20 minutes per session by the end of the week).
* Week 2
  + Add a third shorter session each day as endurance improves and time permits.
  + Half of your time should still be on the mouthpiece.
  + Expand your upper range to the top of the staff.
  + If you are doing three sessions, you should be able to get close to an hour of total time. If you are doing two sessions, you may want to do a bit less.
  + Add drones to your routines (see notes on Drones near the end of this document).
    - They provide a reference point that will help stabilize your sound.
    - Work on tuning intervals as well as matching pitches.
  + Add p. 4 of the Schlossberg into your routine.
  + Colin, *Endurance & Elasticity* #1-3.
  + Irons #1-9
  + Expand Clarke and/or Vizzutti up to “e” at the top of the staff.
  + Begin incorporating simple single-tongue patterns into your routine.
* Weeks 3-4
  + By now you need to begin focusing on all aspects of your playing, namely air, embouchure, flexibility, articulation, fingers, and range. These are the building blocks of your playing and they all need regular maintenance. Let me break them down.
  + Air: This is the foundation of your playing and needs a few minutes of daily attention. Below are a couple of resources that you can easily access:
    - Kimball, Will. *Breathing*, kimballtrombone.com. Will is a trombonist who avoids anecdotal stuff and gets right to the point of how the body works physically to produce a good breath. This is all accessible on his website.
    - Sheridan, Patrick & Pilafian, Sam. *The Breathing Gym.* This is a great source of exercises that you can use to develop your breath capacity.
  + Embouchure strength:
    - This comes from strong corners and a strong tongue combined with light mouthpiece pressure.
    - This is obtained the most quickly through speed drills for the corners of the mouth.
      * Colin. *Endurance and Elasticity.*
        + Colin starts with great patterns in an easy range.
      * Mouthpiece trills on diatonic intervals.
        + Start with the interval of a 3rd as this is the easiest interval to trill quickly on the mouthpiece.
        + Add 2nds, 4ths, 5ths, 6ths, 7ths, and finally the octave.
        + These can be played in any range. They put very little stress on the center of the embouchure, yet build corner strength very quickly making them great recovery exercises.
        + Use drones to stabilize the pitch.
        + Start slowly so they are even and in tune.
        + Gradually increase the speed until they approach trill speed. This can take 6 months to a year so be patient.
      * Three-note patterns. This is a set of patterns based on a simple triad that I have written for my students. They are not published yet so I will try to explain how they work. They are a takeoff on the Third Study in Clarke’s *Technical Studies.*
        + Play the first two measures of #52 in the Clarke book. Cadence on “c”.
        + Move down a half-step and repeat.
        + Continue this pattern sequentially down to low F#.

Now move the pattern up to the first inversion (e-g-c-g) and descend through seven sequences, just like you did on the first pattern.

* + - * + Move the pattern up to the second inversion (g-c-e-c-) and descend through seven sequences.
        + The next pattern is like the first root position pattern only up an octave.
        + The next pattern starts on fourth-space e and includes the Bb above the staff so it is not a true first inversion.
        + Continue moving the pattern up as far as your range will accommodate.
      * Variation on the Three-note pattern:
        + Play as described above but substitute an Alberti bass pattern for the simple triadic pattern (c-g-e-g).
  + Tonguing exercises must be included in the strengthening process.
    - This first pattern is simple but effective.
      * Start on third-space “c” and play eight 16th notes followed by a half note on each pitch. Repeat this on each pitch and work your way chromatically down to low “g”.
    - Focus on air direction.
    - Connect all of the notes.
    - Drive to the long note.
    - Use the upper patterns as a model for the lower patterns.
    - Start working pp. 14-22 in the Arban’s book. Play these in cut-time at 120 bpm.
      * Focus on consistency in articulation, note length, and connecting the notes.
  + Fingers: I am a firm believer in the following three books. I rotate through them and doctor them up to keep them fresh. (see *Extended Clarke* later in this document)
    - Clarke, Herbert. *Technical Studies*
    - Vizzutti, Allen. *Technical Studies*
    - Nagel, Robert. *Speed Studies*
  + Range: I have written a series of patterns that work particularly well with my students. They aren’t published yet so I will attempt to explain the first one.
    - Major scale. Sweep up the scale in 16th-notes into a half-note on the 9th and tie it to a relaxed descending 8th-note scale. This needs to be slurred and all in one breath. Push for sizzle going up and switch to a more relaxed sound coming down.
    - Start in a comfortable range to develop the air and sound concepts, then push them into the upper register.
* 1 Month
  + Congratulations! You are past the toughest part of your recovery.
  + You should be able to play for about 90 minutes a day if you break it into multiple sessions.
  + Your greatest concern at this point is not injury, but slipping back into old habits.
  + At this point you should consider playing in an ensemble to aid in your recovery.
  + Diverging paths:
    - If you are a college music major, you should continue increasing the length of your three practice sessions.
    - If you are a Comeback Player and are working around a full time job, you should start combining your practice sessions so that you are only doing two sessions. Be creative with your practice time. Your first session may be on your mouthpiece in the car on the way to work.
  + At this point you should start thinking about playing in an ensemble of some sort.
    - Community Concert Bands and Jazz Bands are great because you can bury yourself down in the section until you have fully recovered.
    - Jazz Combos are an equally good bet because they allow you to play within your comfort zone.
    - Community orchestras should be considered carefully based on the repertoire that they play. They could push you too hard at this early stage.
    - I recommend avoiding the Brass Quintet at this point. The music is often very demanding and may push you too hard at this stage in your recovery.
  + Air:
    - Continue working through *The Breathing Gym* exercises.
    - Add the Cichowicz *Flow Studies.*
    - Consider buying and using a breathing tube (see kimballtrombone.com).
  + Corner Strength/Lip Flexibility:
    - Add low to middle register lip trills on the trumpet. These work well in combination with the mouthpiece trills mentioned earlier.
    - Continue with the Three-note Patterns.
    - Continue in the Colin *Endurance and Elasticity.*
    - Consider adding patterns from the Irons book.
  + Tonguing:
    - Add descending major scales. Eight 16th notes on the top pitch, followed by a descending scale, followed by eight 16th notes and a half-note on the lower octave. Similar to Schlossberg #97.
    - Begin working the exercises that start on p. 28 (#19) in the Arban book.
  + Finger Coordination and Speed:
    - Clarke or Vizzutti
    - Add a metronome
      * Use it to measure your progress.
      * Use it to keep you even.
      * Increase speed in small increments.
    - Curve the fingers.
    - Snap the valves down.
    - Play with a full sound pushing to the last note of the pattern.
  + Range:
    - Continue expanding upward with the previous range pattern.
    - Move your starting warm-up note up to third-space “c”. (See “Shifting Warmup Patterns” later in this document.)
      * The traditional Stamp pattern works very well for this.
      * Bai Lin has some patterns that start on “c”.
      * Inverted Clarke patterns work very well.
* 2 months
  + You should be able to play for about 2 hours a day if you break it into 2-3 sessions.
  + With the exception of range and endurance, you should be playing as well as you were before your break.
  + At this point you can pretty much play what you want.
  + Continue to expand on the base that you have established.
  + Air:
    - Continue in *The Breathing Gym*
    - Continue in the Cichowicz *Flow Studies.*
  + Flexibility:
    - I like the following sequence through the standard flexibility books:
      * 1 - Colin. *Endurance and Elasticity*
      * 2 - Irons. *Twenty-Seven Groups of Exercises*
      * 3 - Bai Lin. *Lip Flexibilities*
      * 4 - Colin. *Advanced Lip Flexibilities*
  + Tonguing:
    - A new pattern starts on low “g”, runs up the scale to the ninth and back down, then up two octaves and down, followed by a two octave arpeggio up and down.
    - Develop the speed and air to do this in one breath.
    - Continue working through the tonguing exercises in the Arban book.
  + Range:
    - Re-center Your Warm-up to “e” at the top of the staff.
* 6 months
  + Think of your rehabilitation as recovering from major surgery.
    - At 2 weeks you are mobile again but not able to do much.
    - At 2 months you feel pretty good but just aren’t quite there yet.
    - At 6 months you should be fully recovered.

Finding time to practice:

* Schedule your practice time in advance. This is the single most successful way to keep yourself consistent.
* Carry your mouthpiece with you and take a buzzing break.
* If you are careful, you can use your commute time to buzz on the mouthpiece.
  + I used to get in about two hours of practice in the car on family road trips. I would do an hour of mouthpiece routines while driving, and then later I would let my wife drive and I would jam along with the radio on a practice mute. My only concern was how messy it would be if the airbag released.
* Arrive early at rehearsals and do an extensive warm-up.
* Stay a few minutes after your rehearsal and warm down.
* Keep your trumpet out so you can just pick it up and play for a few minutes.
* Start a family band. If you get your spouse or your kids involved in playing instruments you won’t feel guilty about taking family time to play your trumpet.

How others deal with time issues:

* If you are a Comeback Player, time will become your greatest struggle. There are a number of books that I have found that focus on maximum benefit from the shortest amount of time. I haven’t vetted them yet but I will list the most applicable of them here.
  + Lewis, Eddie. *Daily Routines,* Developed from the “Physical Trumpet Pyramid”
  + Lewis, Eddie. *Chops Express,* Daily Routines Light for Trumpet
  + Davis, Michael. *20 Minutes Warm-up Routine*
  + Davis, Michael. *15 Minute Warm-up Routine*

48-Hour cycling:

* Young trumpet players coming to college for the first time often jump into a much more diligent practice routine only to find that after a short period of improvement, their chops begin to collapse. What they fail to understand is the basic concept that there are two stages in building muscle strength. The first stage is to stress the muscle and push it beyond it’s every day use. The second stage requires you rest enough to let the muscle rebuild and this usually takes about 48 hours. Spaulding *(Double High C in 37 Weeks)* takes this to the extreme and presents a very strict routine that requires you to rest every other day. I have found that it is more practical and nearly as affective for you to play every day but space out the hard practice days.
* The following sequence is geared towards a player who has already gone through the early stages of recovery and is in need of building more serious range and strength.
  + 1st month: 1 hard day per week.
  + 2nd month: 2 hard days per week.
  + 3rd month: 3 hard days per week.
* Hard practice days might include the following:
  + Extended practice sessions.
  + Longer etudes without resting in the middle.
  + Playing through solos or recitals with minimal rest.
  + Extended range work.
  + Extensive work at high volumes.
  + Extensive work on Eb or piccolo trumpet.
  + The goal is to take the larger embouchure muscles to the point of collapse, but be very mindful of mouthpiece pressure and the need to keep it light!
* Easier practice days might include the following:
  + Multiple short practices sessions that still add up to your daily practice goal.
  + Focus on the middle and low registers.
  + Extra time spent developing basic technical skills.
  + This is your woodshed day. Break down difficult passages into short motives or phrases and drill them until you can’t play them wrong.
  + Your goal is to spread things out and stop each session before you get excessively tired. Think of this as going to the massage therapist between workouts.

The importance of mouthpiece work:

* You will be less likely to use pressure. Hold the mouthpiece with the thumb and two fingers out near the end of the shank to facilitate this.
* You will be more likely to stay in a comfortable range as you begin your recovery.
* You will be more likely to experiment and gravitate towards proper placement and set.
* You will be more focused on response and air control.
* You will avoid problems associated with trying to force a clear sound out of the trumpet when you begin your recovery.
* If you use drones, you will improve in your ability to match pitches and intervals.
* It will give you the flexibility to practice under a much wider variety of circumstances meaning you are more likely to practice throughout the day.

Drones:

* These are computer generated static pitches. Sine waves work particularly well as they are very pure (no overtones) making it easy to hear pitch discrepancies. You can find them on-line, but I particularly like the ones sold with Chase Sanborn’s Tuning Tactics. I primarily use the ones that sound the root and the fifth together.
* Drones are used to stabilize your sound by giving you a solid reference point.
* Drones teach you to tune intervals as well as match pitches. Again, the purity of the sine wave makes it easier to hear the beats when you are out of tune.
* I prefer using drones with my students and only use a tuner (in combination with a drone) when I have a student who really struggles to hear pitch.
* Don’t limit yourself to playing individual pitches against the drone. Try the following:
  + Scales in all keys and modes.
  + Flexibility patterns.
  + Clarke or Vizzutti patterns.
  + Arban exercises that stay in one key.
  + Improvise Gregorian Chant lines.
  + Improvise simple jazz lines.
  + Pitch bending exercises.

Shifting warmup patterns:

* We tend to start all of our warmup patterns on second-line “g”. This is a good practice initially, but your upper register will improve if you will gradually move to higher starting pitches. As you strengthen, move your initial warmup patterns higher so they start in third-space “c”, then the “e” above that, and finally the “g” at the top of the staff.
* Examples of exercises that start on pitches other than second-line “g”:
  + Schlossberg: #5, line 3; #9, line 2;, #11, line 3; etc.
  + Irons: Reverse the group sequence so you work from high to low.
  + Clarke First Study: Invert each pattern so that you start on the top pitch.

Extended Clarke: How to get more out of your Clarke book:

* 1st Study
  + Change the meter to 6/8, play the same pitches, but thinks triplets.
  + Add an extra triplet to the top of the pattern so you now go up a 6th rather than just up a tritone.
  + Add one more triplet to the top of this new pattern and you have the full octave.
* 2nd Study
  + Flat the 3rd and the 7th and they are in minor.
  + Flat the 3rd and the 5th and you have diminished.
  + Sharp the 4th and the 5th and flat the 7th and you have whole tone.
* 3rd Study
  + Flat the 3rd and put them in minor.
  + Isolate the last two measures of each pattern and play them in a sequence.
    - You can move up by half-step, down by half-step, or through a cycle of fourths.
    - As you get comfortable drop the half-rest so they run together and you don’t have time to think about where the next one starts.
    - Finally, drop the half-note so your are just running the 16th notes.
* 4th Study
  + Isolate the last measure of each pattern and play them in a sequence.
    - You can move up by half-step, down by half-step, or through a cycle of fourths.
    - As you get comfortable drop the half-rest so your are just running the 16th notes.

Developing sound and style through transcription

* I am absolutely convince that most musicians will end up sounding like the players to whom they listen. Transcription is a way to accelerate and orchestrate that process. The jazz world discovered this 100 years ago as most early jazz was learned by ear. But the classical player is so tied to the written page that it is hard to get him to open up his ears. So here is how I apply this.
* Simple Transcription:
  + If the part is straight forward with a simple meter and basic rhythms, I give the student a recording of 30-60 seconds of the tune and let them work it out on their own. I encourage them to do it by ear (not written down) so they can also develop their memorization skills as well as their listening skills.
* Blank Score:
  + If the part is a bit more complex, I give them the recording along with the measures and meters already placed on the manuscript paper. All they have to do is fill in the pitches and rhythms.
* Clean Score:
  + In longer pieces I provide a clean score. It has the notation but no dynamics or stylistic markings, and the student has to provide all of the nuance heard on the recording.
* Comparative Transcription:
  + This is usually done with a pair of “clean scores”. Two recordings are played and details are transcribed on separate pages. Comparisons can then be made between different players approaches to a particular piece. This can be done with traditional solos or with orchestral excerpts. I find this especially effective as a studio class exercise.
* The goal is to set up a sequence of tunes that will take the novice player through a variety of players and styles until they begin developing their own individual sound and are comfortable with a variety of styles and venues.

A final thought on dealing with nerves:

* Observation: Jazz players appear to have fewer nerve problems than classical players.
* Hypothesis: The creative brain overrides the nervous brain.
* Application: Learn to be more expressive and creatively involved in classical music.