

BRASS COURSE

STUDENT WORKBOOK
BASS CLEF ADAPTATION



↑ LEVEL 1 ↓

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This course is designed to be used as an individual instructional study guide, as well as a class learning tool. Each lesson should take approximately 30 - 45 minutes long including teaching and practice time. Not everyone will progress at the same pace. It is advised to repeat or come back to a lesson so as to reinforce certain concepts.

This Bass Clef adaptation book is designed for students who cannot read treble clef. For this purpose, all exercises and examples have been transposed and the written wording of notes has also been revised. If you are using this as a class learning tool, please remember that E-flat instruments will not sound at the same pitch as B-flat instruments. You can use the E-flat adaptation book to make playing together possible.

Each student should take a placement test before being placed in a level. After a student completes a level, there is a separate final test that should be completed and passed before moving on to the next level. Be sure you have these materials.

In addition, the Brass Course is designed as a companion to the Music Theory course. Students should utilize the music theory books to help advance their knowledge of music making.

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Introduction – Buzzing & Producing Sound

Let's learn how to play a brass instrument. There are several different types of brass instruments, but the concept of playing each instrument remains the same. We make music with the instrument by buzzing our lips and blowing air through the instrument.

Forming the Embouchure

The embouchure is created by the way we shape our lips and the placement of the mouthpiece. It is also how the buzz and sound is created.

- Say the letter M.
- Leave the lips lightly together.
- Breathe and produce a buzzing sound with just your lips.

It is very important to develop the buzzing feeling. However, this won't happen immediately. The next step is to work on how to blow the air.

- Take a big breath.
- Place the tip of the tongue at the inner top of the upper teeth.
- Breathe out by saying the syllable "too."

Now it is time to buzz on the mouthpiece.

- Hold the mouthpiece between the thumb and forefinger.
- Make the M embouchure.
- Place the mouthpiece comfortably between the upper and lower lip.
- Breathe and make a full buzzing sound.



Lips lightly together



Say "too"

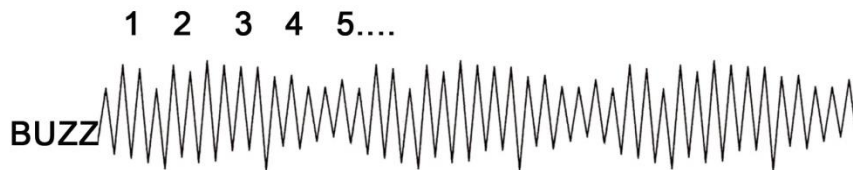


Breathe and buzz

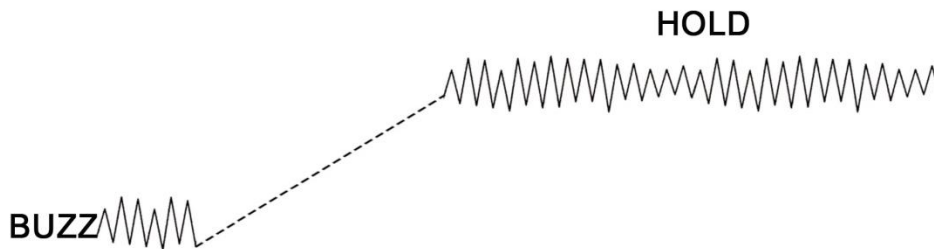
Let's practice

Here are various exercises that will help us develop our buzzing. Keep repeating until you can produce a consistent buzz on the mouthpiece.

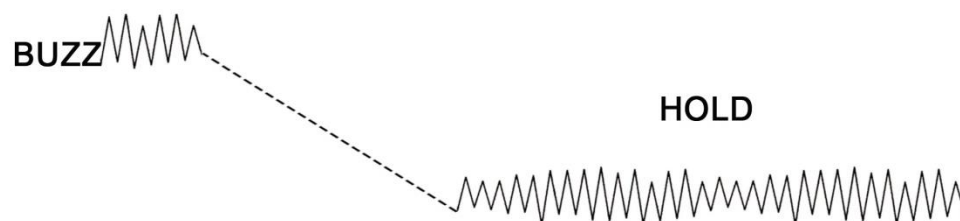
1. Hold a buzz as long as possible.



2. Play a buzz starting low, go high and hold.



3. Play a buzz starting high, go low and hold.



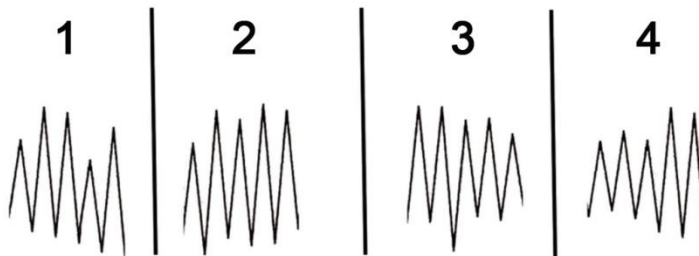
4. Play a buzz for 4 counts and rest for 4 counts.

1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4



5. Play a separate buzz on every count.

1 | 2 | 3 | 4



6. Continue to practice buzzing with higher and lower notes.

Lesson Reminders:

Posture – *sit up straight.*

Breathe – *always take low and deep breaths.*

Cheeks – *keep them firm, don't puff them out.*


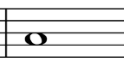
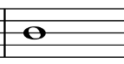
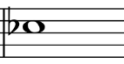

Sound – *make it nice and steady.*



Lesson 1.1 – Playing B \flat to F

In the introduction, we worked on producing a buzzing sound with our lips and mouthpiece. Now it is time to put the mouthpiece into the instrument and play.

Here are five notes we will work on over the next couple of lessons. The fingering (slide positions) will be labeled for now, but eventually, you will need to memorize them. (See page 5 for a valve/slide explanation)

B \flat	C	D	E \flat	F
				
0 (1)	1/3 (6)	1/2 (4)	1 (3)	0 (1)

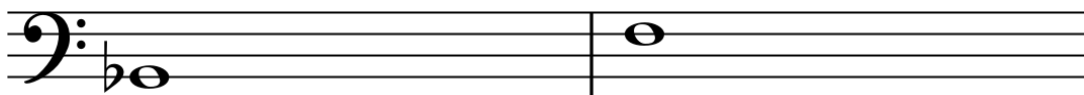
Music looks like how it will sound. The higher the notes on the lines and spaces, the higher they will sound in pitch.



Here are some basic points to consider for proper technique. The embouchure should always remain in the relaxed M pose. The air speed is what controls the pitch. To play a low note, simply blow/buzz a strong but relaxed stream of air. Be aware of your throat. Keep it open, relaxed and not strained.

To play higher, increase the speed of the air. In the lower register, it is a very small amount of change. As you continue to learn and play higher, be conscious of the air speed.

Which note will use a faster air speed?



Brass valves:



Trombone slide positions:



Let's practice

Take your time playing these exercises. Sit up straight, set the embouchure, breathe and play. Try to start all of the notes the same way. Use the "too" syllable.

(Count)
1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4

a)

0 (1) 1/3 (6) 1/2 (4) 1 (3) 0 (1)

1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4

b)

0 (1) 1 (3) 1/2 (4) 1/3 (6) 0 (1)

1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4

c)

0 (1) (Rest)

1 (3)

1/2 (4) 1/2 (4) 1/2 (4)

1/3 (6) 1/3 (6) 1/3 (6)

0 (1) 0 (1) 0 (1) (Hold)

Here are some exercises that will help you jump from note to note. Be sure to tongue each note and use the right amount of air support.

d)

0 (1) 1/3 (6) 1/2 (4) 1 (3) 0 (1)

1 (3) 1/2 (4) 1/3 (6)

e)

0 (1) 0 (1) 0 (1) 0 (1) 0 (1)

0 (1) 1 (3) 0 (1) 1 (3) 0 (1)

0 (1) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 0 (1)

0 (1) 1/3 (6) 0 (1) 1/3 (6) 0 (1)

f)

0 (1) 0 (1) 0 (1) 1/3 (6) 1/2 (4) 1 (3)

1/2 (4) 1/3 (6)

Lesson 1.2 – Note and Rest Values (Whole to Quarter)

In music, notes can be played at different lengths. The organization of sound is called rhythm. Rhythm is equally as important as knowing fingerings and note names. Here are three different note and rest lengths: **whole**, **half**, and **quarter**.



As well as notes, rhythm also includes rests. Rests are silence in music.



Most music has a **beat** (or **pulse**).

- Sometimes the beat of the music is fast.
- Sometimes the beat of the music is slow.

Each type of note or rest has its own length. Here's how you count them.

Whole note = 4 beats	○ = 1 2 3 4	Whole rest = 4 beats	■ = 1 2 3 4
Half note = 2 beats	♭ = 1 2	Half rest = 2 beats	■ = 1 2
Quarter note = 1 beat	♯ = 1	Quarter rest = 1 beat	⚡ = 1

Did you notice that notes and rests with the same name have the same value?

Let's practice

Here are several exercises that will help you improve your counting. Over time, you will learn to count without even thinking about it. Make a good habit of counting correctly. Be sure to use the tongue to start a new note on the correct count.

a)

b)

Now it's time to practice changing notes and rhythms. Make sure that your counting is always equal and even.

c)

d)

e)

1-2 3 4 1-2-3-4 1-2 3 4 1-2-3-4

1 0 1 0 1/3 1/2 1/3 0
 (3) (1) (3) (1) (6) (4) (6) (1)

1-2 3 4 1-2 3 4 1-2 3-4 1-2-3-4

1 0 1 0 1/3 1 1/2 0 1
 (3) (1) (3) (1) (6) (3) (4) (1) (3)

f)

1-2 3 4 1-2 3-4 1-2 3 4 1-2-3-4

1/2 1 0 0 1/3 1 1/2
 (4) (3) (1) (1) (6) (3) (4)

1-2 3 4 1-2 3 4 1-2 3-4 1-2-3-4

1 0 1 1/2 1 1/2 1/3 0 0
 (3) (1) (3) (4) (3) (4) (6) (1) (1)

g)

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1-2 3-4

0 1/3 1/2 0 1/3 1/2 0
 (1) (6) (4) (1) (6) (4) (1)

1/2 1 0 1/2 1 0 0
 (4) (3) (1) (4) (3) (1) (1)

h)

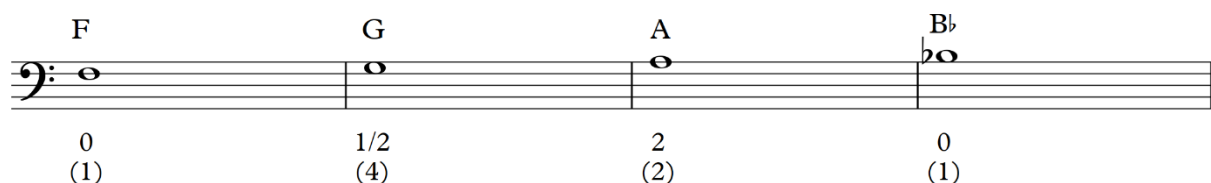
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1-2 3-4

0 1/2 0 1/3 1 1/3 1/2 0 1/2 1
 (1) (4) (1) (6) (3) (6) (4) (1) (4) (3)

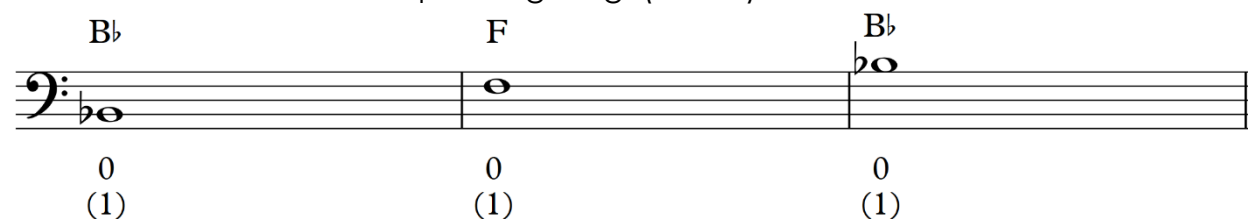
0 1/2 0 1 1/3 1 1/2 1/3 0
 (1) (4) (1) (3) (6) (3) (4) (6) (1)

Lesson 1.3 – Playing Higher (F to B \flat)

It's time to really push yourself. Let's learn the last three notes that complete the B \flat major scale.



As mentioned earlier, playing higher is achieved by increasing the air speed that flows through the mouthpiece and instrument. You will notice that we have learned three notes with open fingering, (B \flat -F-B \flat).



To play these notes correctly, it takes a slight adjustment in the air speed as you move from low B \flat to F and then to high B \flat .

Over time, your muscle memory will help you remember how each note feels so that playing each note correctly will become fairly simple.

If you are finding it difficult to reach the higher notes, simply go to a note you can play and build your strength from there. Imagine you are lifting weights and want to lift something very heavy. You have to work your way up to that heavy weight slowly. Keep that same mindset, working slowly to build and expand your range note by note.

Lesson Reminders:

When attempting to speed up the air, ensure you are not adding pressure on your embouchure.

Let's practice

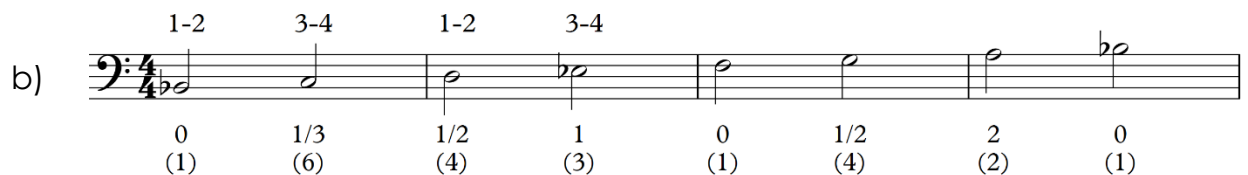
Make sure you are playing the correct register. Play these exercises at various speeds. Whether you play a slow or fast speed, keep your counting steady and even.

a) $1-2-3-4$



0 (1) 1/3 (6) 1/2 (4) 1 (3) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 0 (1)

b) $1-2$ $3-4$ $1-2$ $3-4$



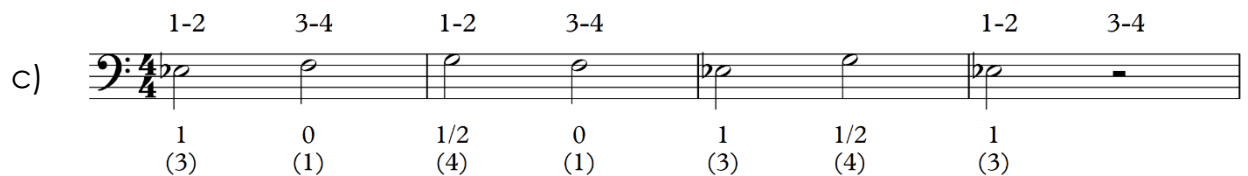
0 (1) 1/3 (6) 1/2 (4) 1 (3) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 0 (1)

$1-2-3-4$



2 (2) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1 (3) 1/2 (4) 1/3 (6) 0 (1)

c) $1-2$ $3-4$ $1-2$ $3-4$ $1-2$ $3-4$



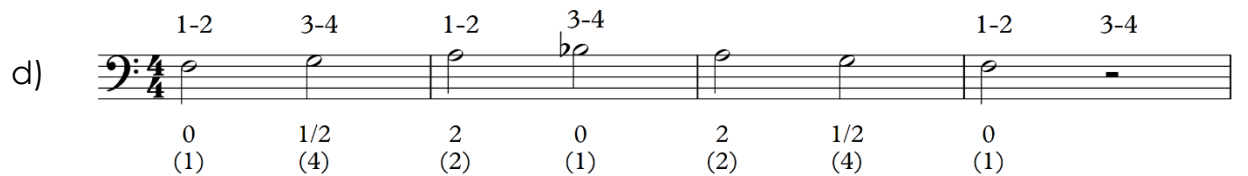
1 (3) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1 (3) 1/2 (4) 1 (3)

$1-2-3-4$



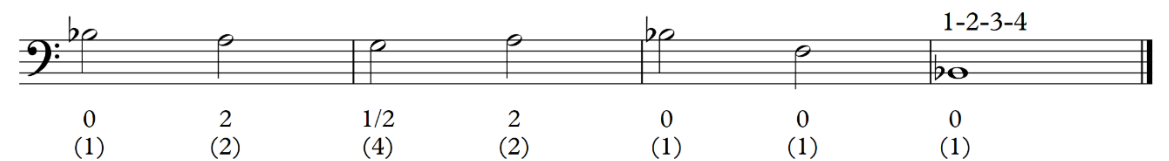
0 (1) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1 (3) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 1 (3)

d) $1-2$ $3-4$ $1-2$ $3-4$ $1-2$ $3-4$



0 (1) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 0 (1) 2 (2) 1/2 (4) 0 (1)

$1-2-3-4$



0 (1) 2 (2) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 0 (1) 0 (1) 0 (1)

Before moving on to this next page, ensure you are able to reach the higher notes without any struggle. Remember that expanding your range takes time to develop. If you aren't quite there yet, keep working at it and don't get discouraged. Continue learning other aspects of playing like **dynamics** and **tempo** (Lesson 1.4) while working away at your range.

Let's try more rhythms and bigger jumps.

e)

f)

g)

Lesson 1.4 – Dynamics and Tempo

Music can be made more meaningful, expressive, and interesting in a number of ways. Some of the ways to achieve this is by adding **dynamics** and changing the **tempo**. In this lesson, we will learn about these important elements of music making.

Dynamics



In music, **dynamics** refer to the volume – how loud or soft the notes are sung or played.

When the music is to be played **loud**, the music has a marking **f**, which stands for **forte**. When the music is to be played **soft**, the music has a marking **p**, which stands for **piano**.

When the music is to be played at a medium dynamic, we say that it is to be played **mezzo piano** (medium soft) or **mezzo forte** (medium loud). We write these as **mp** and **mf**.

From soft to loud, we have the following **dynamic markings**:



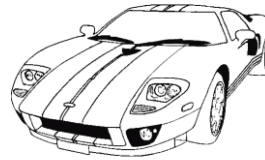
How do you achieve these dynamics on a brass instrument? **AIR!** While the air speed generally will remain the same, the louder you play will increase the amount of air that is used. Playing softer will use much less air. However, don't let your soft playing lack air support. Try and see if you notice a difference.

Tempo

Tempo is how fast or slow a piece of music is played.

When the piece is to be played quickly, the **tempo** word is **Allegro**.

Allegro is Italian for “fast.”



When the piece is to be played slowly, the **tempo** word is **Adagio**.



When the piece is to be played at a medium speed, the **tempo** is referred to as **Moderato**.

The tempo is always written at the beginning of the piece and might change somewhere in the middle, so stay alert.

From slow to fast, we have the following **tempo markings**:



Let's practice

You have learned most of the basics. Notes, rhythms, dynamics and tempo are all very important elements of reading music. The goal is to be able to read and identify their meaning instantly.

Adagio

a)

Exercise a) consists of two staves in bass clef, 4/4 time. The first staff starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The notes and their fingerings are: G2 (0/1), F2 (1/2/4), E2 (1/2/4), D2 (1/3/6), C2 (1/2/4), B1 (0/1), and A1 (0/1). The second staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The notes and their fingerings are: G2 (1/2/4), F2 (0/1), E2 (1/3), D2 (1/2/4), C2 (0/1), B1 (1/3/6), and A1 (0/1).

Allegro

b)

Exercise b) consists of two staves in bass clef, 4/4 time. The first staff starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The notes and their fingerings are: G2 (0/1), F2 (1/2/4), E2 (0/1), D2 (1/2/4), C2 (1/3), B1 (1/2/4), and A1 (1/3/6). The second staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The notes and their fingerings are: G2 (1/3/6), F2 (1/3), E2 (0/1), D2 (1/3), C2 (1/2/4), B1 (1/3/6), and A1 (0/1).

Allegro

c)

Exercise c) consists of two staves in bass clef, 4/4 time. The first staff starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The notes and their fingerings are: G2 (0/1), F2 (1/2/4), E2 (2/2), D2 (1/2/4), C2 (0/1), B1 (1/2/4), A1 (0/1), and G2 (1/2/4). The second staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The notes and their fingerings are: G2 (1/3/6), F2 (0/1), E2 (1/2/4), D2 (0/1), C2 (1/2/4), B1 (1/3/6), A1 (1/2/4), and G2 (0/1).

Moderato

d)

mp 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 1/3 (6) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1/2 (4)

mf 1/3 (6) 0 (1) 2 (2) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 0 (1)

Moderato

e)

p 0 (1) 1/3 (6) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1 (3) 1/2 (4) *mp* 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 1/3 (6) 0 (1) 1/3 (6) 0 (1)

mf 1/2 (4) 1 (3) 0 (1) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) *f* 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 1/3 (6) 0 (1)

Adagio

f)

p 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 1 (3) 1/2 (4) *mp* 1/3 (6) 1/2 (4) 1 (3) 0 (1) 1/2 (4)

mf 2 (2) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1/3 (6) 1 (3) 1/3 (6) *f* 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 0 (1)

Allegro

g)

f 1/2 (4) *p*

mp 1/3 (6) *f* *p*

Lesson 1.5 – Group Practice

Part of the fun in making music is playing songs with other people. When we play in a band, there are several different parts that combine together to make the correct sound. Here are a few little pieces that you can start playing with two or more people.

When playing duets, be sure to play your correct line. If you are playing Part 1, you play the top staff. Be aware of what the other person is playing.

Moderato

a)

Exercise a) consists of two parts. Part 1 is a duet for two bass clefs in 4/4 time, marked Moderato. Part 1 (top staff) starts with a whole note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, and C3, then a whole rest. Part 2 (bottom staff) starts with a whole rest, followed by quarter notes G2, A2, and B2, then a whole note C3. Part 2 is a piano accompaniment for the first part, with the right hand playing whole notes G2, A2, B2, and C3, and the left hand playing whole notes G2, A2, B2, and C3.

Moderato

b)

Exercise b) consists of two parts. Part 1 is a duet for two bass clefs in 4/4 time, marked Moderato. Part 1 (top staff) starts with a whole note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, and C3, then a whole rest. Part 2 (bottom staff) starts with a whole rest, followed by quarter notes G2, A2, and B2, then a whole note C3. Part 2 is a piano accompaniment for the first part, with the right hand playing quarter notes G2, A2, B2, and C3, and the left hand playing quarter notes G2, A2, B2, and C3.

Allegro

c)

Exercise c) consists of two systems of music. The first system has two staves: Staff 1 (top) and Staff 2 (bottom). Staff 1 starts with a dynamic of *f* and changes to *mf* in the second measure. Staff 2 starts with a dynamic of *mf* and changes to *f* in the second measure. The second system has two staves: Staff 3 (top) and Staff 4 (bottom). Staff 3 starts with a dynamic of *mp* and changes to *f* in the second measure. Staff 4 starts with a dynamic of *p* and changes to *f* in the second measure. The music is in 4/4 time and features various rhythmic patterns including quarter notes, eighth notes, and rests.

Allegro

d)

Exercise d) consists of two systems of music. The first system has two staves: Staff 1 (top) and Staff 2 (bottom). Staff 1 starts with a dynamic of *f* and changes to *mf* in the second measure. Staff 2 starts with a dynamic of *mf* and changes to *f* in the second measure. The second system has two staves: Staff 3 (top) and Staff 4 (bottom). Staff 3 starts with a dynamic of *mp* and changes to *f* in the second measure. Staff 4 starts with a dynamic of *p* and changes to *f* in the second measure. The music is in 4/4 time and features various rhythmic patterns including quarter notes, eighth notes, and rests.

Level 1 Wrap-up

To finish Level 1, we will review some of the material we have learned throughout this book. For each exercise we must remember all of the **fingerings** (slide positions), values for **notes** and **rests**, as well as written **tempo** and **dynamics**. With all of these elements in mind, you are now ready to play in a band!

Adagio

a)

f

mp

Moderato

b)

f

p

Moderato

c)

mp

f



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