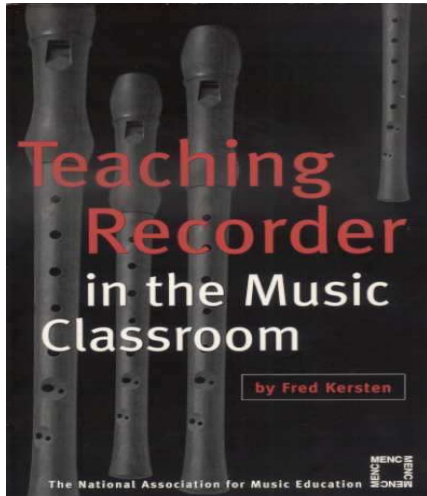


**Successful Practical Tips:**  
**for immediate recorder playing improvement of your students!**



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-East Brunswick Hilton & Towers**



**“POSSIBLE” Translucent Recorders provided  
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Yamaha Corporation of America**

**Presentation on line:  
<http://fredkersten.com/NJMEARecorder/by.htm>**

## QUICK TIPS FOR SUCCESS

\*Make a paper recorder as part of a class project and use it for practice of hand position and proper holding. Work on correct placement and pressure for fingers and hand position. “Chin” practice singing/chanting/fingering of notes.

\*Mark your recorder with liquid paper for precise location of thumb rest and sections. Line up recorder sections for optimum hand placement and then paint over the joints. Draw a line over the painted sections as a resource should they get out of line.

\*Instrument Maintenance. Clean and wash recorders with dishwasher detergent. By cleaning the recorder with detergent and allowing it to dry, water will “bead” off the windway sides and not collect making the recorder clog up. A commercially available product “Duponol” is available that allows the beading effect. Cut absorbent strips of lint-free cloth, put them in the slotted end of the cleaning rod and have your students use them with their instruments.

\*Tape over upper Left Hand holes of the recorder with duct tape so they will not leak. The lower notes then can be fingered and will sound correctly allowing practice on production of full sound and correct placement of fingers of the Right Hand.

\*Use of a MIDI file with your synthesizer; develop an accompaniment tape or CD; or, obtain commercial products such as those made by Don Muro, to provide backgrounds for solo or classroom accompaniments.

## PRACTICAL TIPS FOR TEACHING RECORDER

Check pinch movement of the left thumb. It is better to pinch the thumb back at the first joint with the left top exposing the hole than to move the whole thumb from the hole. The pinch-technique will give you a reference point allowing the thumb movement to be continuously precise. Examine the pressure put on the thumb, it should be free to move with no tension. A larger aperture will aid intonation on high notes. Trim your left thumb nail as it can damage the thumb hole, and the space between nail and flesh provides a channel for air to leak which effects note production.

Some players use Duponol (commercially available anti-clogging liquid--a form of detergent) on windways to prevent clogging. I wash my plastic instruments with "Dawn" or other dish detergent and let them dry and this seems to work well at keeping them clog-free as well as sanitary. A thin piece of paper slid into the windway of plastic

instruments can dislodge dirt or food particles if they do not come out while washing. Put a small piece of lint-free cotton cloth in the slot of the plastic swab rod that comes with every instrument and USE IT. Most students NEVER do and many teachers do not require daily cleaning.

Obtain an Alto (Treble) recorder yourself and start working on classical literature from the easier movements of the Handel Sonatas, to those of Marcello, Porpora, Bach and others. The great music for the recorder is for the Alto and you will have a superb solo instrument that is impressive in recital. Have some of your students especially those in middle school and secondary levels purchase an Alto and develop a repertoire of works that may be presented in a school assembly.

Obtain an electronic tuner and allow your students to try and play in--tune pitches as an intonation game. If you pair up students as teams (one to four players) and have one

play while others keep score, you will increase the number of individuals involved as you provide interest, and a cooperative education activity. This venture can provide good developmental awareness regarding intonation problems plus immediate feedback with an opportunity for correction. Such activity will also help with breath support needed to maintain a steady sound and relatively pure quality sound on the instrument.

As a variation to a vocalization or singing activity, have half of your group play Recorder and the other half sing as selections are performed. Reverse the process! Divide the group further; sing/play triads, ostinatos, descants, or do partner songs and rounds. Greene's research supports a children's voice model as good for a pitch matching source. The recorder sound comes close to this. Practice open-throat exercises by singing through the Recorder. (Recorder will sound fuzzy). Also have children sing and match pitch of note or note patterns being played by other students in a call response game that can aid in both pitch matching and tonal memory.

For students who are physically handicapped, Aulos makes a Recorder that can be adapted to fit handicapped hands, and also hands with missing digits. Marsha Evans has written about using Recorder with Physically Challenged students and this information may be found in *The American Recorder*, March, 1994.

The three-piece recorder, when properly adjusted, will provide the right-hand with a more relaxed hand position in addition to aiding in production of lower tones. Have students play and adjust the instrument for several weeks without taking it apart to find the most effective alignment of head- and foot-joint in relation to the main body. Then apply "white out" or "liquid paper" over the

back joints to identify position of the body parts once the optimum hand and finger position for playing ease is established. Draw a narrow line on the dry white surface painted across the joints. If the recorder is taken apart, simply line up the marks as the recorder is put back together and you will always maintain proper alignment.

Buy detachable thumb rests (approximately \$1.00 for each rest) for your three-piece recorders as they vastly improve both player comfort and establish right-hand position for ease of note production. Use the "white out" method to establish thumb rest position.

Try to get students playing on the larger Recorders (tenor and bass) as soon as hand size permits. The larger instruments permit playing of SATB music and allow for ensemble playing. Larger instruments are also perceived as serious musical instruments as sometimes the soprano is looked upon as a toy-- especially by the boys.

Be aware of March as "National Play the Recorder Month"--A good chance to allow your children to participate in another activity in conjunction with MIOSM.

Parents as Partners--many parents especially of European decent have had experience with recorder. Encourage them to work with their children or perhaps play for your class.

Incorrect hand position results in tense hands and most problems of low--note production. The right hand fingers should be placed approximately at a right angle to the holes and it is allowable for the fingers to extend a little OVER the side of the recorder so the fingers do not play on the balls of the fingers as is taught with clarinet playing. (This is why students have such trouble obtaining low notes on the recorder--its a wonder that some of them or their teachers, obtain any low notes at all!!) Instead of a

"curve your fingers" approach TRY the more FLAT FINGERED playing technique yourself--hear and FEEL the difference it makes in your playing--then pass it on to your students. As accidentals (C#, D# and Eb) utilizing double holes are played, the right wrist is moved upward at the joint and the finger slides off one of the double holes producing the note. Reversing the wrist movement allows the finger to slide back over the hole. The finger slides off the hole but does leave the location. Work for hand relaxation--almost to the place where the instrument will fall out of the fingers. Practice focus of air and diaphragm support for high tones.

The tongue should be resting lightly on the top teeth and the tip should be on the palate just above the front teeth. There is a misconception that the mouth aides in resonance of the instrument and some state the student should think of having an Apple in his/her mouth. Such an approach places the tongue in the bottom of the mouth and it then has a greater distance to travel to reach the palate thus slowing tonguing. You must produce a strong focused air flow. Think of "whistling." Aim the air so it flows down the front teeth and is focused just out under the top lip. The syllables Ti and Di (stronger and weaker attack) will raise the back of the tongue so the airflow is more directed. The syllable Na works well for legato passages (called a soft tongue) and Dit for staccato. To end the duration of a note put a "d" on you syllable or inhale the air back into the instrument for a more natural ending to the sound. Long tones are a must for developing pitch stability.

Elbows should be relaxed and down near sides, not up near the mid-body as this

produces tension, which will be reflected in the sound.

Excessive water condensation is a problem that results as anxious students become so involved with obtaining notes that they adrenalize, grip the instrument harder, tighten the hand muscles, and usually move the fingers higher off the holes actually slowing up the playing and continuing the salivating/anxiety cycle. A suggested technique for teaching relaxation in playing is to take a piece of paper, and form it into a tube and have the children finger their performances on the tube (rest it on the chin) while singing the notes. The objective is not to crush the paper as they finger and the relaxation effect should permeate through the whole playing process as it effects the physiological and psychological body temperament.

Two techniques for removing condensation from a wet horn: 1. Cover "window" with finger to prevent instrument from sounding and blow out. 2. Suck back on instrument to remove water from windway and also from thumb hole.

Put the recorder between your lips (formed as a kiss). The chin is not pointed as with clarinet playing The recorder angle should be almost 90 degrees from the chin and angled slightly (approximately 20 degrees to the right) with the teeth slightly parted so the air flow is direct into the mouthpiece. You can use a lot of air in playing the recorder and under-pitched lesser quality tone is a result from those who do not. Most people UNDERBLOW perceiving the instrument sound as being delicate and all they produce is a wimpy out-of-tune-sound.

A neat ensemble for songs in your general music classes includes...guitar (autoharp), recorder, and a quality hand drum-- or perhaps a multicultural percussion instrument such as an Indian tabla.

The Recorder Home Page developed by Nicholas Lander  
<<http://members.iinet.net.au/~nickl/recorder.html>> is the most thorough and complete source of online information in the world.

C Pentatonic Scale

Sea to Sea in C Pentatonic  
Konnie Saliba

A-Minor Pentatonic Scale

Waltz with Me  
Konnie Saliba

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# This Little Light of Mine

Afro-American Spiritual  
Arr. Konnie Saliba

Tambourine

Voice

1. This lit - tle light of mine  
2. Ev' - ry where I go

I'm gon - na let it shine.  
I'm gon - na let it shine.

Soprano Recorder

Alto Recorder

Alto Xylophone

Bass Xylophone/  
Bass Metallophone/  
Contra Bass Xyl

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Tambourine

Voice

This lit - tle light of mine  
Ev' - ry where I go

I'm gon - na let it shine.  
I'm gon - na let it shine.

Soprano Recorder

Alto Recorder

Alto Xylophone

Bass Xylophone/  
Bass Metallophone/  
Contra Bass Xyl

9

Tambourine

Voice

This lit - tle light of mine I'm gon - na let it shine, let it  
Ev - ry where I go I'm gon - na let it shine, let it

Soprano Recorder

Alto Recorder

Alto Xylophone

Bar Xylophone/  
Bar Mescalobone/  
Contra Bar Xyl.

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Tambourine

Voice

shine, let it shine, let it shine.  
shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Soprano Recorder

Alto Recorder

Alto Xylophone

Bar Xylophone/  
Bar Mescalobone/  
Contra Bar Xyl.



# Hills of Arirang

Korea  
Arr. Konnie Saliba

The musical score is arranged in a system of seven staves. The top four staves are for percussion: Finger Cymbals, Temple Blocks, Suspended Cymbal, and Gong. The bottom three staves are for melodic instruments: Recorder/Voice, Soprano Metallophone, and Bass Metallophone. The time signature is 3/4. The Recorder/Voice part includes the lyrics: A - ri - rang A - ri - rang A - ra ri yo. The Recorder/Voice part features a triplet of eighth notes in the third measure. The Bass Metallophone part is marked with an asterisk and the instruction '\* play with stick ends of mallets'.

\* play with stick ends of mallets

Finger Cymbals

Temple Blocks

Suspended Cymbal

Gong

Recorder/  
Voice

Soprano Metallophone

Alto Metallophone

Bass Metallophone

A - ri - rang Ko\_ gae\_ ro\_ nau - mau - kan - da

Detailed description: This musical score is for a piece featuring traditional instruments and vocal lines. It consists of eight staves. The top four staves are for percussion: Finger Cymbals, Temple Blocks, Suspended Cymbal, and Gong. The bottom four staves are for melodic instruments and voice: Recorder/Voice, Soprano Metallophone, Alto Metallophone, and Bass Metallophone. The Recorder/Voice staff contains the lyrics: "A - ri - rang Ko\_ gae\_ ro\_ nau - mau - kan - da". The music is written in a 4/4 time signature. The Recorder/Voice part features a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes. The Metallophone parts (Soprano, Alto, Bass) provide a rhythmic accompaniment with various note values and rests. The percussion parts (Finger Cymbals, Temple Blocks, Suspended Cymbal, Gong) provide a complex rhythmic texture with various patterns and accents.

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Finger Cymbals

Temple Blocks

Suspended Cymbal

Gong

Recorder/  
Voice

Soprano Metallophone

Alto Metallophone

Bass Metallophone

Na rul pau - ri - gu kah - si noo nim euhn

Finger Cymbals

Temple Blocks

Suspended Cymbal

Gong

Recorder/  
Voice

Soprano Metallophone

Alto Metallophone

Bass Metallophone

Shim nee doo not kah soo rah pyong nan da.

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a piece, likely of traditional East Asian origin, featuring a variety of instruments and a vocal line. The score is organized into eight staves. The top four staves are for percussion: Finger Cymbals, Temple Blocks, Suspended Cymbal, and Gong. The bottom four staves are for melodic instruments and voice: Recorder/Voice, Soprano Metallophone, Alto Metallophone, and Bass Metallophone. The Recorder/Voice staff contains the lyrics: "Shim nee doo not kah soo rah pyong nan da." The music is written in a 4/4 time signature. The percussion parts are primarily rhythmic, with some melodic elements in the Temple Blocks and Suspended Cymbal. The vocal line is a simple melody with a range of approximately an octave. The metallophone parts provide harmonic support and melodic accompaniment.

### Motivational Techniques for Classroom Participation

(Source: Donna Basile “Recorder before B-A-G”, Summer Music Conference, Syracuse, New York, August 17, 1999):

1. Hold a class or individual contest for students to remember to bring their recorders.
2. Present awards for good recorder playing, and report the names of the winners to the school or PTA newsletter.
3. Demonstrate other sizes of the recorder. Inform the class about the history and worldwide use of the recorder.
4. Establish a Recorder Club whose members can participate in festivals, adjudications, and community performances.
5. Include a recorder part as one of the sections for choral concerts.
6. Put up a bulletin board devoted to the recorder during March, National Play the Recorder Month.
7. Incorporate the recorder into cooperative learning activities.
8. For the best motivation, try to use as many activities as possible allowing every student to feel some success.”

### Supplemental Materials

**Brian Bonsor Contemporary Recorder Composer..(Scotland) ---solos are excellent and his music is available through music houses. Played Serenata: MIDI files for his work and other composers are available on the web through Nickolas Lander web site at:**  
<http://www.recorderhomepage.net/midi.html#Bonsor>

Tunes include: Get Up and Go! Nice n' Easy, Reverie, Serenata, Waltz for Mo.  
 Jim Phipers Recorder player, arranger. GREAT MIDI files by an outstanding arranger, Lion King tunes –good for class and performance. <http://www.solarhaven.org/RecorderMusic.htm>

### Common Articulations

Articulation	Use
Tu,ti,ta	strong normal tonguing
Du,di,da	weaker normal tonguing
Dit	staccato
Ru,na	legato tonguing
Did-dle, dic-kie	double tonguing
Tu-ku-tu	triple tonguing

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A neat example of what can be done with a Recorder Festival is the Gene Reichenthal Festival sponsored through the Suffolk County Music Educators Association. Donna Basile has been the coordinator for many years and provides excellent leadership for this event. Students from numerous school districts gather, rehearse and perform.

Frate. Hymn tune published by Ed. Milano Publishing 1997 Super MIDI Song.  
Good tune to play on the tenor recorder. MIDI file available at: <http://st-takla.org/Multimedia/008-Midis-index.html>

Good Source of arrangements for recorder consorts.. Arcadian Press (Stan Davis),  
116 Scudder Place, Northport, NY 11768.

On-Line Recorder Method provided by Brian Blood. Realistic, up-to-date method  
Web address: [www.be-blood.demon.co.uk/method.htm](http://www.be-blood.demon.co.uk/method.htm)

Good source of method books for recorder Sweet Pipes, 6722- Brentwood Stair  
Road, Fort Worth, TX Web site: [www. Sweetpipes.com](http://www.Sweetpipes.com)

Sterisol, Germicide available from many music suppliers in both concentrate and spray on if  
needed to be used in classroom.