

## *TBZ Monthly*

A new monthly content service from Brad Edwards  
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### ***Welcome!***

Here is the next issue. Thank you to everyone who has subscribed so far. I'm always looking for ways to connect with trombonists and I love having the opportunity to share with people in a way I hope will provide benefit. If you are getting this pdf without having subscribed and would like to subscribe to future issues, simply [follow this link](#). This little digital publication will evolve over time. If there's something you'd like to see included, please reach out to me: [brad.edwards6251@gmail.com](mailto:brad.edwards6251@gmail.com). (IG: [@brad edwards trombone](#))

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### ***Enjoy!***

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[Trombone Zone](#)

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Please note: this is my first time trying to write the music sections using Dorico Pro 5. I'm still very slow and clunky and the formatting isn't quite what I want but I'm getting closer!

## A Pretty Good Melody

In honor of Thanksgiving, here's a little set of variations on the Thanksgiving hymn, "We Gather Together." This is also one of my early efforts writing from scratch in Dorico. With time, I'll get better at this.

The musical score is written in bass clef with a 6/8 time signature. It consists of seven staves of music, each starting with a measure number. The dynamics and articulations are as follows:

- Staff 1 (measures 1-5): *mf* (measures 1-3), *f* (measures 4-5).
- Staff 2 (measures 6-11): *mp* (measures 6-11), *leggiero* (measures 10-11).
- Staff 3 (measures 12-16): *mf* (measures 12-16).
- Staff 4 (measures 17-21): *mf* (measures 17-21).
- Staff 5 (measures 22-26): *mp* (measures 22-26).
- Staff 6 (measures 27-30): *mp* (measures 27-30).
- Staff 7 (measures 31-34): *f* (measures 31-32), *slower* (measures 33-34), *mp* (measures 33-34), *rit...* (measures 33-34).

A Pretty Good Melody

*mf* *f*

6

*mp* *leggiero*

12

*mf*

18

*mf*

23

*mp*

27

*mp*

31

*mp* *slower* *rit...*

A Pretty Good Melody

Musical notation for measures 1-5. The piece is in bass clef, B-flat major (two flats), and 6/8 time. The first measure starts with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a crescendo leading to a dynamic marking of *f* at the end of the fifth measure.

6

Musical notation for measures 6-11. The melody continues with eighth and sixteenth notes. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present. The instruction *leggiero* is written above the staff. The final measure of this system has an accent (>) over the last note.

12

Musical notation for measures 12-16. The melody continues with eighth and sixteenth notes, featuring slurs and ties.

17

Musical notation for measures 17-21. The melody continues with eighth and sixteenth notes. A dynamic marking of *mf* is present. There are slurs and ties throughout the system.

22

Musical notation for measures 22-26. The melody continues with eighth and sixteenth notes. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present. There are slurs and ties throughout the system.

27

Musical notation for measures 27-30. The melody continues with eighth and sixteenth notes. There are slurs and ties throughout the system.

31

slower

rit...

Musical notation for measures 31-34. The melody continues with eighth and sixteenth notes. A dynamic marking of *f* is present at the start, followed by *mp*. The instruction *slower* is written above the staff, and *rit...* is written above the final measure. There are slurs and ties throughout the system.

# A Helpful Lip Slur

## Quick, accurate slide

This is another one written in Dorico. I still have lots to learn here.  
For the longer jumps, make sure your slide doesn't go flying off!

The musical score is written in bass clef with a 4/4 time signature. It consists of ten staves of music, each containing a series of eighth notes with slurs. The notes are primarily natural and flat, with some sharps and naturals appearing in later staves. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 above the notes. The score includes various rests and dynamic markings. The piece concludes with a double bar line on the final staff.

# Tech/Rhythm Builder

## 1. Mozart Requiem - Kyrie Fugue runs

Right now at ASU, students are working hard on the placement auditions for the spring semester. This includes the Kyrie fugue from the Mozart Requiem. Here are some chunks of that run that include some 'surprise' accidentals (secondary dominants, you might say). In each, the presentation is the whole run followed by some breakdowns of that run to work on slide accuracy.

Tenor Trombone part

Bass Trombone part

Alto Trombone part (in alto clef)

Alto Trombone part (in bass clef)

*Free book sample:  
100 Sight-Reading Melodies  
in Tenor Clef*

In my earlier book, [Introductory Studies in Tenor and Alto Clef: 'Before Blazhevich'](#), I tried to create enough melodic surprises so that students couldn't simply guess their way through each etude.

In my [Sight-Reading Melodies](#) books, I take on a different strategy: make things more predictable so students can apply their knowledge of scales and arpeggios to assist with sight-reading.

These three half-page pieces are from a section which focuses on what I call, 'pivot points,' notes that we keep coming back to in a pattern or melody. Knowing that detail about a melody increases your ability to read it fluently.

Enjoy!

# More sharps and flats (pivot points)

65

Scherzando ♩ = 104-116

*p*

*mf*

*p*

*f*



The musical score consists of four staves in tenor clef, 6/8 time, with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The first staff begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and features a melodic line with a long slur over the first six measures. The second staff starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and contains a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The third staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic, has a melodic line with slurs, and ends with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The fourth staff continues the melodic line with a slur and concludes with a double bar line.

The musical score is written in tenor clef (C4), 3/4 time, and the key of D major (indicated by two sharps). It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The second staff features a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fourth staff returns to mezzo-piano (*mp*) and concludes with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The notation includes various note values, rests, and articulation marks such as accents and slurs.

## *Playing Tip: Relaxed Loud*



Contact is an old favorite movie of mine. Jodie Foster plays Ellie Arrowway who is ultimately selected to attempt interstellar travel using a giant machine of alien design. Here is a [YouTube scene](#) of one of these machines firing up. You can see the enormous power it is generating! At one point in the film, as this giant machine is rumbling away, generating a giant powerful sphere of glowing energy, a technician points out that, on the inside of the sphere, the temperature is mild and everything is calm.

I thought to myself, “What a powerful analogy for our playing!” Think of an orchestra concert as everything crescendos to the mighty entrance of the low brass. Perhaps it is a piece you have loved for years and now you finally get a chance to perform it. The music itself is exciting, evoking strong emotions. However, in order to play it well, you have to find a way to maintain a dichotomous state: exciting and energetic on the outside but calm on the inside. Sort of like the interior of that sphere.

This reminds me of the word:

*sangfroid*  
sän- 'f(r)wä

This is a French word that means “self-possession or imperturbability especially under strain” [Merriam Webster dictionary online]. The word comes from the phrase “cold-blooded” but has a more positive spin. Think of the phrase, “he has ice in his veins.”

To think of a *much* darker example, there is a scene in *Silence of the Lambs* (also starring Jodie Foster, interestingly) containing a description of a murder committed by the horrible Hannibal Lecter. Lecter was wearing a heart monitor at the time he attacked. This monitor showed that his heart rate was not elevated as he committed this horrible crime.



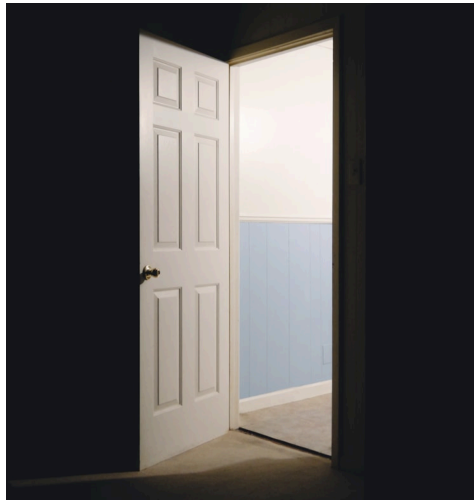
To be clear, I’m **not** proposing that you be a psychopath! However, we all need to find strategies to remain calm in exciting and stressful moments.

The trick, then, is to convincingly project that excitement while maintaining a “pool of calm water” inside.



Think of the Broadway actress who has to play a passionate, intense character night after night, eight shows a week. How is it that they don’t collapse from the stress of these strong emotions? They, too, have figured out a way to project one passionate state outwardly while maintaining a calmer state inwardly. This also reminds me of the fascinating world of professional mourners. Two links: [Wikipedia](#) and [The World of Chinese](#).

## *On Teaching and Playing: Step Out, Step In*



When students are working on excerpts, there is a little teaching trick I like to use. Suppose the excerpt is Bolero. The plan is for them to have run at it while I record with the plan of reviewing the recording afterwards.

Before they begin to play, I ask them to step out of my office and wait in the hallway for about 30 seconds. Then they walk in without me saying anything and play the excerpt straight down. If I'm feeling mean, then while they are out of the room, I might adjust the music stand so they encounter a little surprise when they come back in.

It's a little psychological test but I find it useful. It provides a little "gear shift" between student mode and performer mode. It's a way of saying, "OK, this one is for real. Make it count."

Similarly, in lessons there are moments when it is clear I'm coaching a student and there are moments when they are playing it for a grade. We all have to get used to that little bit of added pressure. This one counts for something.

## *The Good Stuff - Trombone Pedagogy* *Daniel Coyle, The Little Book of Talent:* *52 Tips for Improving Skills*

This is a wonderful book, highly recommended! I feel as if I could quote most pages of this book. For this month, I'll grab this section and highlight three (sub)tips

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### **Tip number #42: Six Ways to be a Better Teacher or Coach**

(1) Use the First Few Seconds to Connect on an Emotional Level.

" Effective teaching is built on trust, and when it comes to trust, we humans are consistent : We decide if we are going to trust someone in the first few seconds of the interaction. This is why good teachers use the first few seconds to connect on an emotional level, especially on the first encounter..."

"Before you can teach, you have to show that you care."

p.85

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(2) Avoid Giving Long Speeches - Instead, Deliver Vivid Chunks of Information.

"What vivid concise message can you deliver right now that will guide her toward making the right reach? "

p.87

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(6) Aim to Create Independent Learners

"Your long-term goal as a teacher, coach, or mentor is to help your learners improve so much that they no longer need you. To do this, avoid becoming the center of attention. Aim instead to create an environment where people can keep reaching on their own. Whenever possible, step away and create moments of independence. Think of your job as building a little master-coach chip in their brains - a tiny version of you, guiding them as they go forward."

p.91

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Coyle, Daniel. *The Little Book of Talent: 52 Tips for Improving Skills*. Random House, 2012.

As a teacher, I have to hold these paragraphs as a mirror to myself. Am I actually doing this on a daily level? Maybe I should ask my students to grade me as a teacher.

At the beginning of a lesson, I try to check in with my students. Even before the lesson, I have them send me a lesson ticket including an answer to the question, “How has practicing gone this past week.” This gives them a chance to let me know how the week has gone. The trick, I think, is to avoid becoming their therapist. Check in, be sincere, then get down to work.

I have seen teachers who celebrated rather publicly how much their students look up to them. I’m sure that’s because they are good teachers but I would rather not bring the focus to me. As I often say to my students, “You’re not here for me. I’m here for you.”

As for vivid, concise messages, I continue to discover that I can be more effective by saying less and noticing more. Simple things like, “Watch me. Imitate this. Listen to this recording.” As a student plays, I can in my mind make a list of things that need work. But, I don’t serve the student well by simply rattling off that list. I need to find one concise thing. Often this is when I’m able to spot “the problem behind the problem.” Yes, I hear ‘wah’ in their playing. But maybe the underlying problem is tension or faulty slide technique. So, I try to design an exercise in the moment that I believe will go right to the heart of the problem.

## *A Random Thought: The Final Factor: Anatomy of a Clam*

In high school, we watched a high school drive safety video, [The Final Factor](#), that broke down car crashes into all the factors that leading up to the crash. I found it on YouTube because, of course they would have it!

We all clam notes. Last night (Fri, Oct 18th) I had a good one on the first high A in the last movement of Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliette. Here's a picture of the actual music that was sent to me:



So let's break this down by thinking about the factors that went into my 'special moment.'

1. Problem: Visual congestion
  - a. Prokofiev (or maybe some copyist) thought it wise to jump from bass clef to alto clef in the middle of big lick.
    - i. Solution: Just know the lick and play if mostly from memory
  - b. Somebody penciled in note names above the notes.
    - i. Solution: I was playing off of my iPad so I used the 'white pencil' to 'erase' that handwriting, thus cleaning up the part a bit.
2. Problem: Lung capacity
  - a. As we get older, we just don't have as much air to work with.
    - i. Solution 1: Find more places to take a small catch breath.

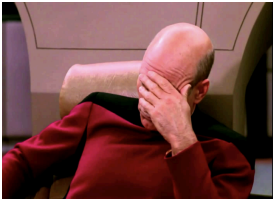


ii. Solution 2: Maybe don't play so loud!

3. Problem: Staggered breathing

At first, this may sound like a solution, not a problem. The conductor asked that we not decrescendo at all on the sustained G-flat. Sure, no problem. Just prepare for it.

- a. For some reason, in that spot, I volunteered to breathe between the pickup 8th note and the downbeat. I wanted to be sure someone would really sustain the D-flat and I do play a bit louder than the 2nd trombonist. Ok, that's fine and all but now my lungs are a bit depleted and I've left myself a fairly awkward place to take my next breath: **right before a loud high A.**



And that, ladies and gentlemen, broke one of my big rules. During a loud trombone section soli, don't breathe in an awkward spot right before the peak high note.

- i. Solution: Have the second player breathe in the awkward spot.
- ii. Solution: Work out the staggered breaths in the first rehearsal, not the dress rehearsal.

Yeah, it's just one note. I will go on living. My wife over in the horn section said she didn't even notice it. However, it will haunt my dreams for a while.

In high school, we watched a high school drive safety video, [The Final Factor](#). that broke down car crashes into all the factors that lead up to the crash. I found it on YouTube because, of course they would have it!

Funny how I found that video popping up in my memory after that clam.



We founded **The Trombone Tutors** in 2023 to offer top-notch instruction to all young trombone players! Our program includes eight live virtual masterclasses each month with Dr. Eric Henson and Dr. Justin Isenhour. Classes cover all the essential skills middle and high school students need to achieve their personal musical goals. Can't make a live session? No worries! Members enjoy unlimited archive access!

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