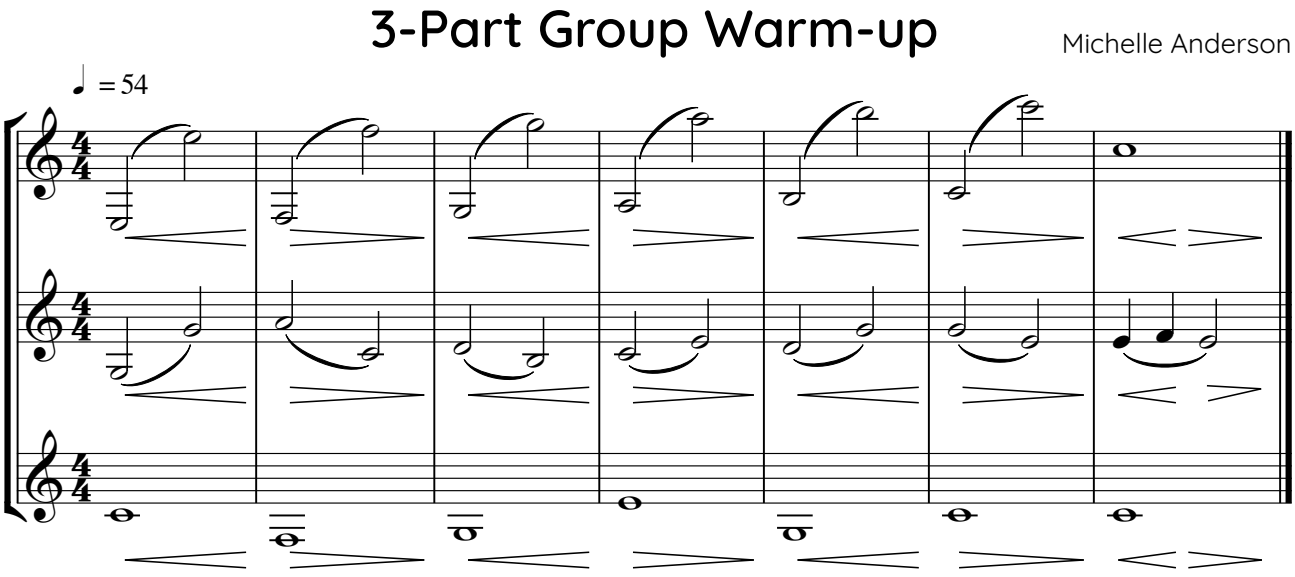
Warm-ups with Michelle Anderson

1) Brief Body Warm-ups (as directed)

2) Air/breathing - Inhaling: relaxed, deep breath with no “gasping sound” - Fill the inner tube around your waist. Exhaling, use a fast “hissing sound” as you shape a clarinet embouchure and have your tongue in a “Shee” position.

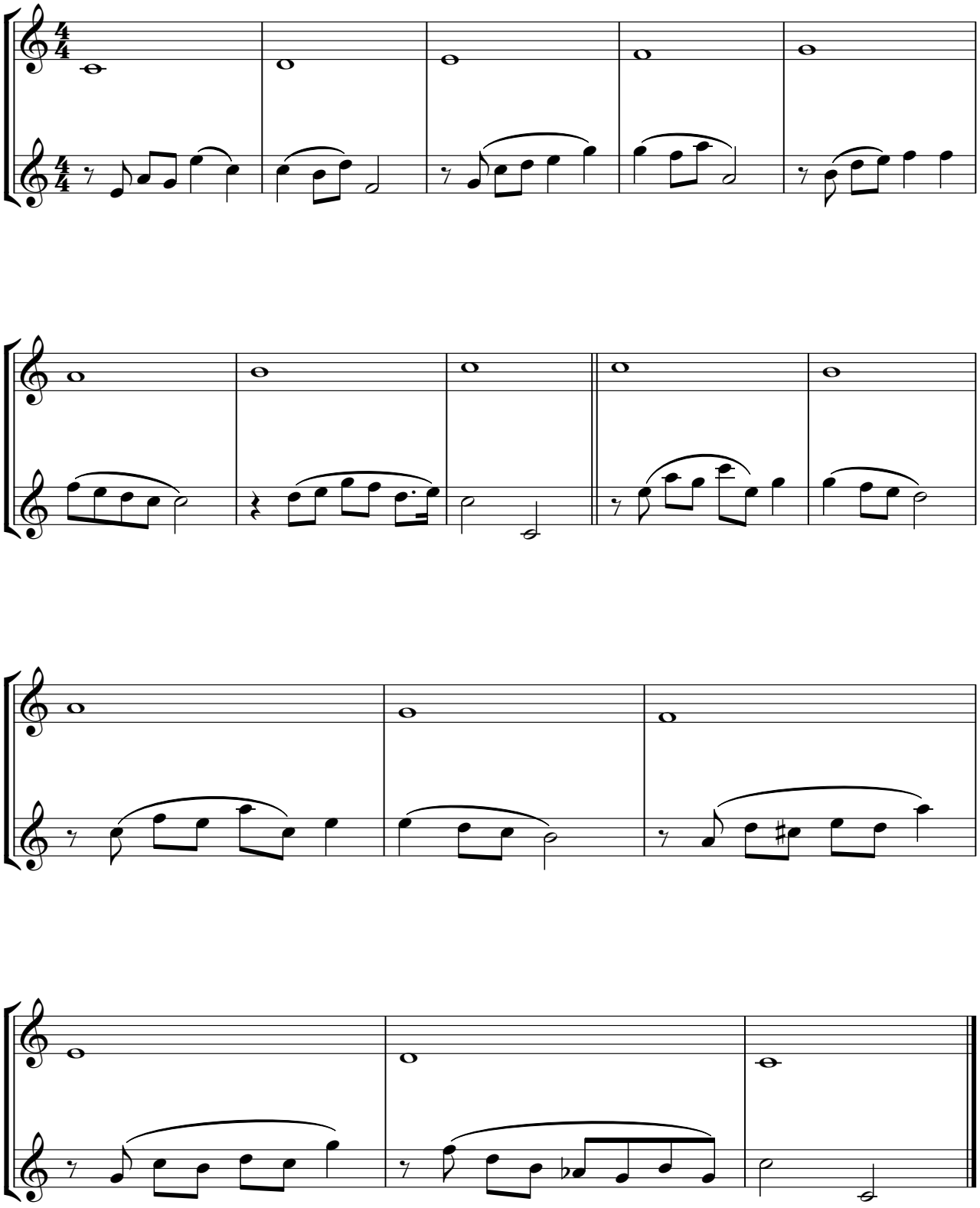
In for 8 beats, out 4 beats
In for 4 beats, out 4 beats
In for 2 beats, out 4 beats
In for 1 beat, out 4 beats
In for 1/2 beat, out 4 beats

3) Long Tones warm-up - Pick a line.

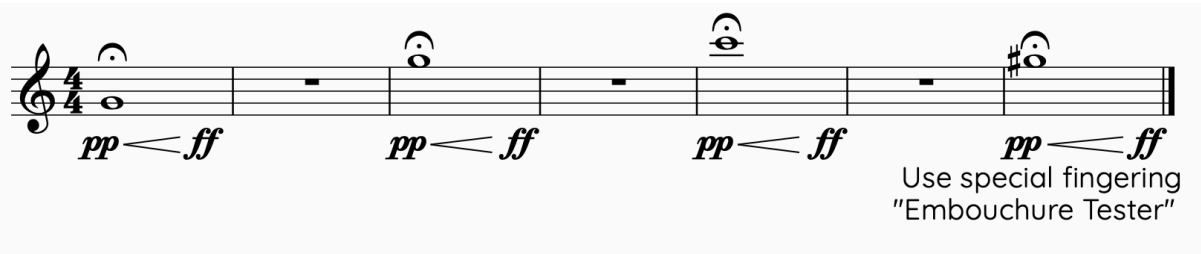


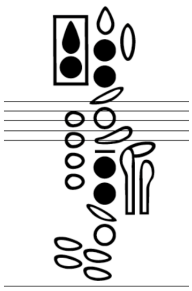
Play one line of this 3-part warm-up. Focus on fast, steady air and keeping a good tone throughout. Here is a variation on this Group Long Tones exercise - Keeping the embouchure unmoving, without articulating, “Huff” each note in quarters with super fast air. The idea is to let your air start the sound instantly. Follow the dynamic ups and downs. Ensure that you don’t inadvertently “bite” at the start of each note, or as you get soft. This is a great one to do with a tuner or even better, us the analysis mode in TE Tuner to see if you are staying in tune and resonant.

4) Klose C Major Scale Duet Warm-up



5) Long Tones (Optionally with TE Tuner in Analysis Mode)





Play each pitch with a slow crescendo from soft to loud. Focus on steady, fast air. With TE Tuner (or equivalent) in analysis mode, watch your pitch as change dynamics. Make sure that your instrument is basically in tune before you begin. Do you get flatter as you crescendo? In general, pitch going down means your tongue is dropping. If you get sharper, it usually means that you are inadvertently "biting" with your jaw. Round the corners of your mouth in the help keep the jaw open so the reed vibrates freely. Bonus: Play each pitch from soft to loud, and then back to soft. Repeat so that you see a series of "diamonds" on the screen. Usually you can improve pitch (and tone) considerably by repeating in this way.

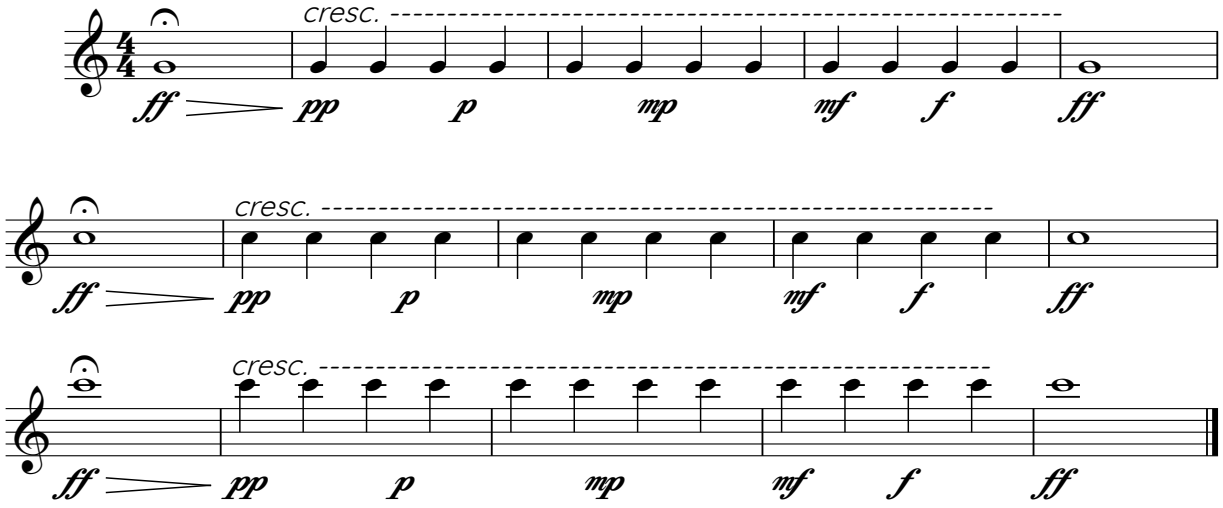
6. The Tongue Tickler Warm-up (Based upon Bonade Exercises)

1) Play any longtone. Keep your tongue lightly on the reed the whole time. (This may tickle.) Get louder and softer.

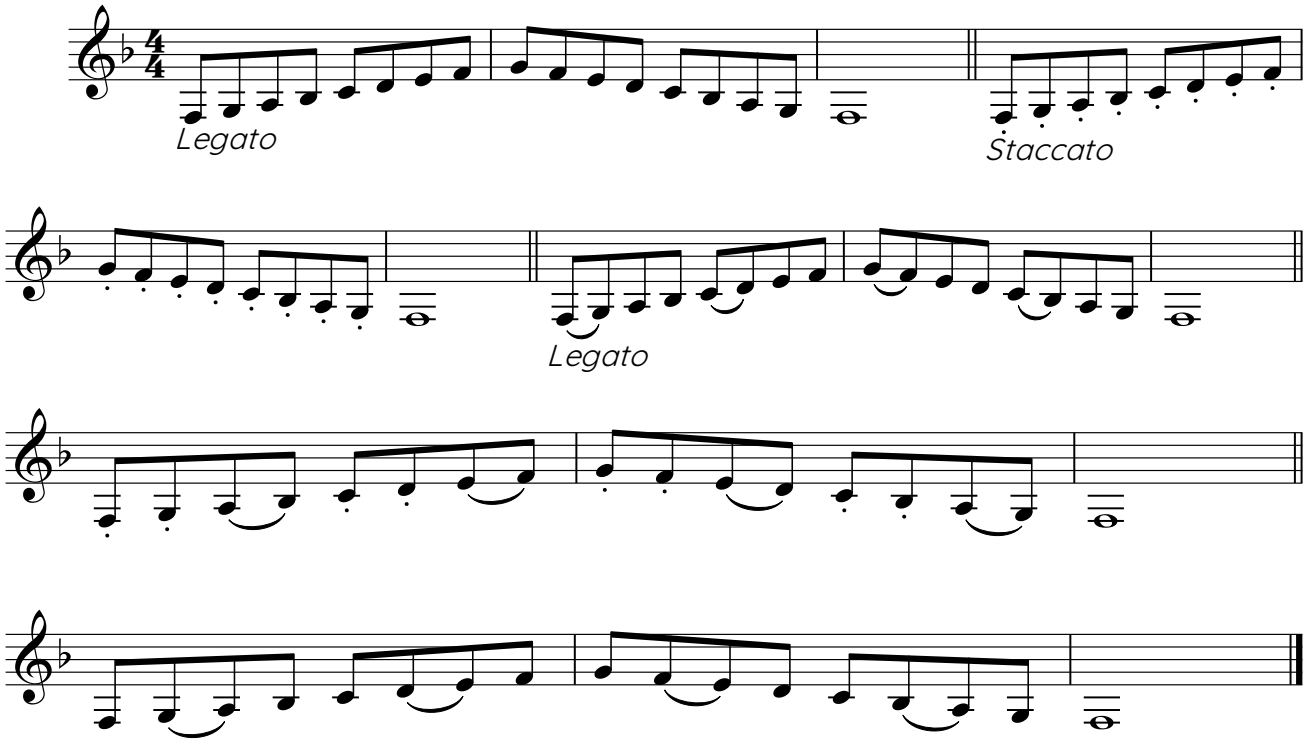
2) Keeping your tongue on the reed, lightly close the reed to articulate repeatedly (say quarter notes at 60), but never lift your tongue completely off the reed. Once this is working, crescendo and diminuendo. Try on different pitches.

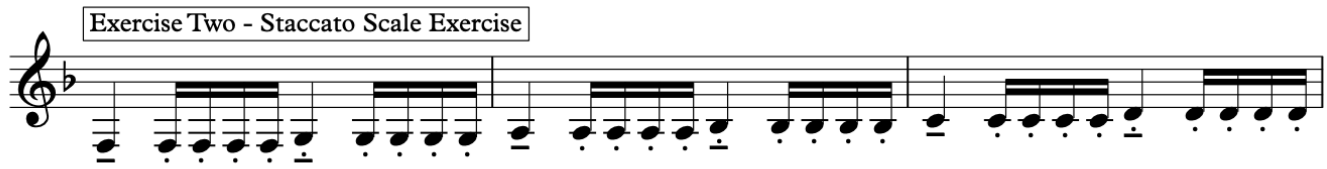
3) Now morph into every other note, having your tongue lift off of the reed, but as little as possible. On alternating notes, keep the tongue on the reed.

4) Notice how your tongue wants to move more and "hammer" when you get loud. You may also notice that the back of your tongue drops, affecting pitch and tone.

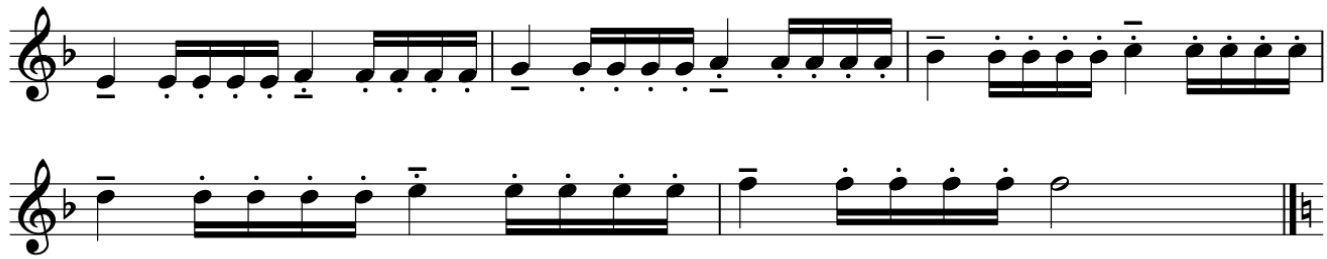


7) Articulation Patterns





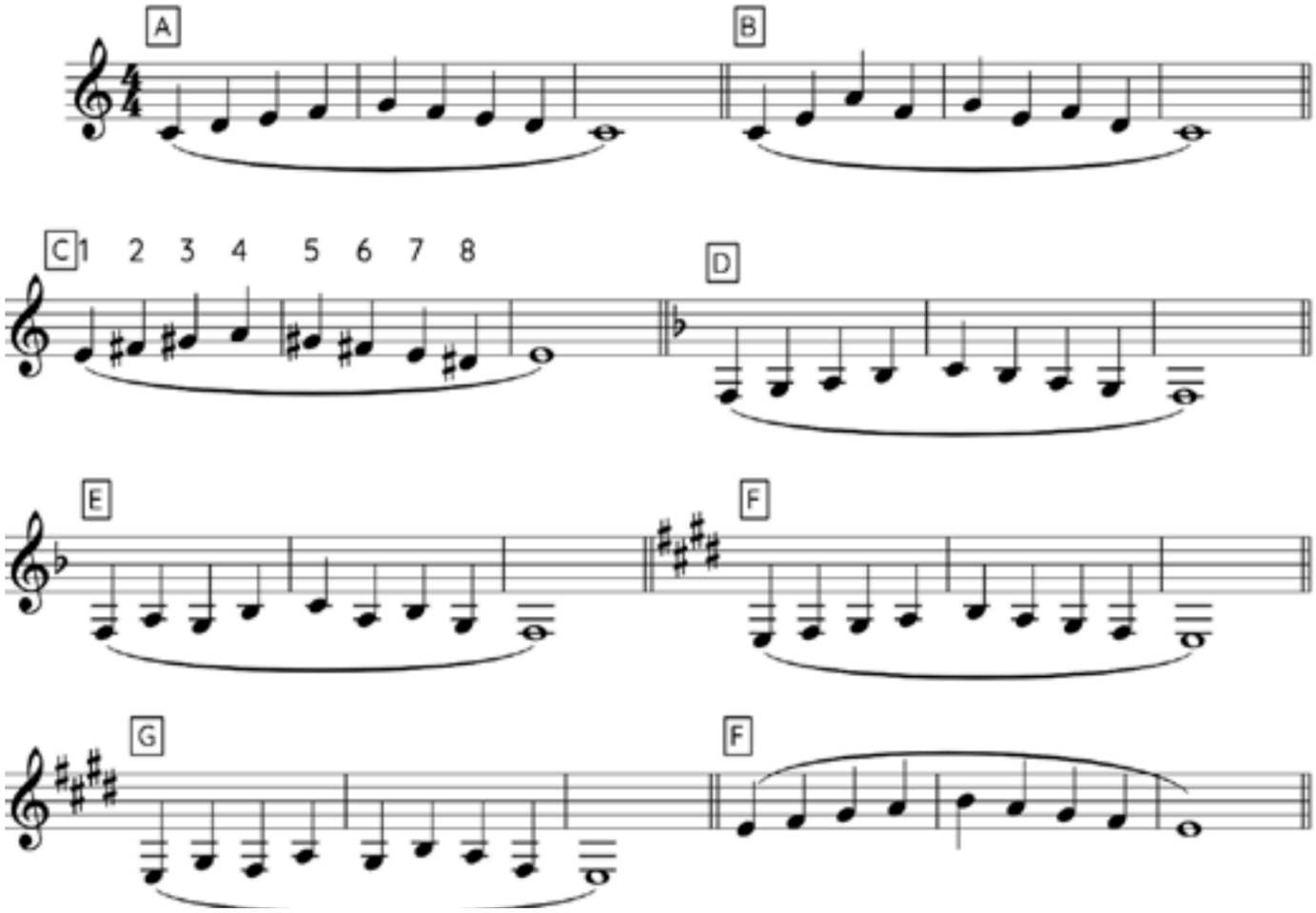
In this exercise, ensure that each of your 4 staccato notes match each other in shortness. Ensure that you are blowing steadily the entire time.



Finger Loops for lightness and speed

1) Hold clarinet beside your mouth and simply watch your fingers loop a pattern - arched, relaxed, gentle - gradually move from slow to fast

2) Repeat with the clarinet in your mouth, ideally in front of a mirror to watch fingers. Don't play yet, but do blow air through the instrument with your jaw open for a whisper sound.

3) Play on your clarinet gradually picking up speed and volume. If your fingers start to "slap" as you get louder, or faster, stop playing and get your fingers back to a more relaxed motion.

Use this technic for any measure or spot where your brain says "RED ALERT - TOO HARD!"