

Teaching Recorder Online

*A presentation for Virtual CASMEC 2021
February 20, 2021*

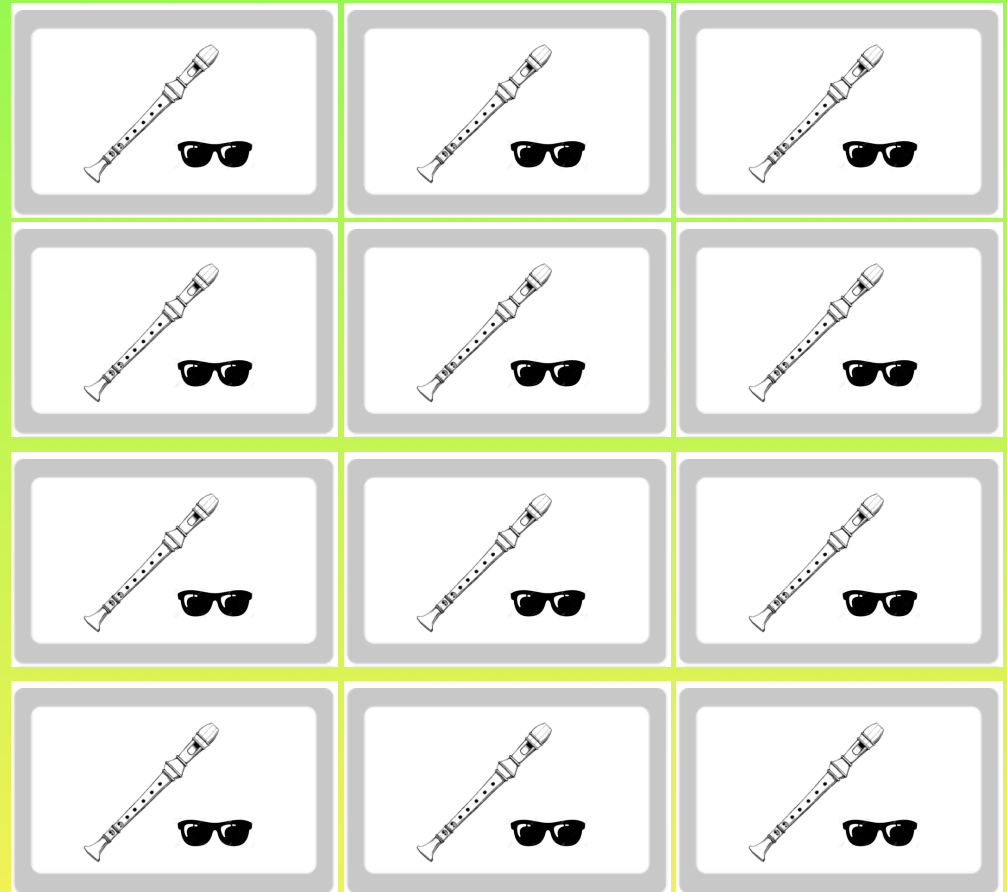
Clinician: Richard Lawton
sponsored by Peripole



Successful Recorder instruction relies on several instructional and experiential components:

- A sense of synchronous time
- The ability for students to hear the instructor
- The ability for students to hear other.
- The ability for the instructor to assess student progress.

Online recorder instruction makes all these aspects very difficult.



Recorded music can provide the backbone for synchronous playing — provided everybody is muted

Working with a recorded groove all helps students learn to play in tune, and with sophisticated sense of time.
Plus, it's fun!

I	I	I	I
IV	IV	I	I
V	IV	I	I

12 Bar Blues Grid

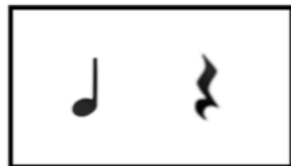
12 Bar Horn Break



Let's Stick Together. Bryan Ferry. *These Foolish Things*. 1976. Available iTunes.

One thing that still works well is transferring foundational musical ideas about beat, rhythm, pitch, and form to recorders to foster musical understanding.

In my virtual classroom, I've find myself spending more time doing this, less on repertoire.



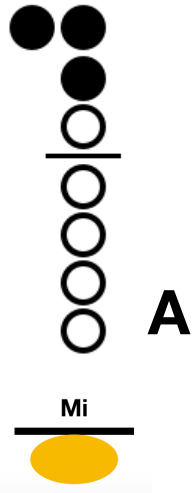
Pease porridge hot, Pease porridge cold



Pease porridge in the pot, nine days old.

Orff Schulwerk calls for constructing understanding by beginning with the most elemental musical ideas — as in these nursery rhyme derived “building bricks” of 2/4 time.

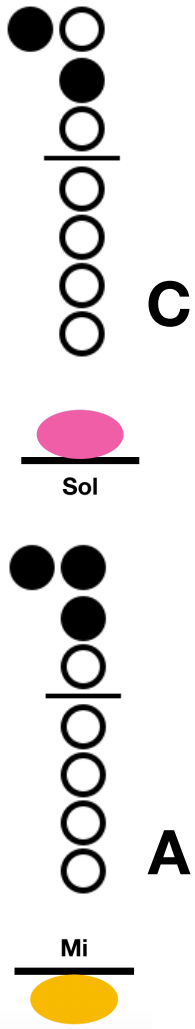
First we transfer our note from the warm up piece.



Pease porridge hot, Pease porridge cold



Pease porridge in the pot, nine days old.



Then we as second pitch to create melodic possibilities

The first two boxes show the melody for 'Pease porridge hot': a pink oval on a line labeled 'Sol', followed by two yellow ovals on a line labeled 'Mi' connected by a slur. The next two boxes show the melody for 'Pease porridge cold': a pink oval on a line labeled 'Sol', followed by a wavy line representing a higher pitch.

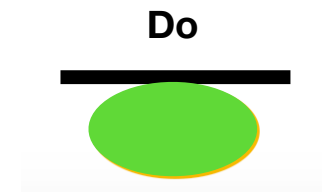
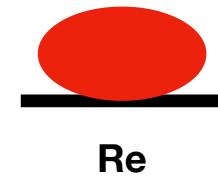
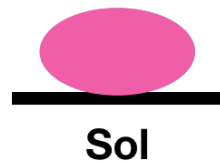
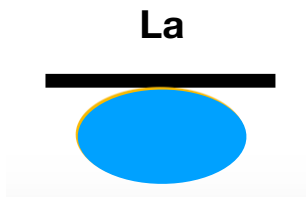
Pease porridge hot, Pease porridge cold

The first three boxes show the melody for 'Pease porridge in the pot, nine days old': a quarter note on a line labeled 'Sol', followed by two eighth notes on a line labeled 'Mi'. The fourth box shows a quarter note on a line labeled 'Sol' followed by a wavy line representing a higher pitch.

Pease porridge in the pot, nine days old.

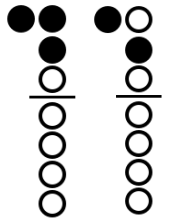
A sequence of ten notes: a pink oval on a line labeled 'Sol', a yellow oval on a line labeled 'Mi', a pink oval on a line labeled 'Sol', a yellow oval on a line labeled 'Mi', a pink oval on a line labeled 'Sol', a yellow oval on a line labeled 'Mi', a pink oval on a line labeled 'Sol', a yellow oval on a line labeled 'Mi', a pink oval on a line labeled 'Sol', and a yellow oval on a line labeled 'Mi'.

Let the students be the composers



<https://musiclab.chromeexperiments.com/Song-Maker/song/6601818661453824>

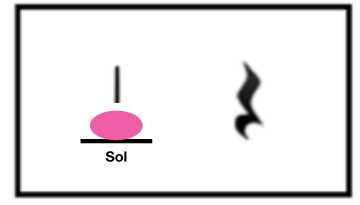
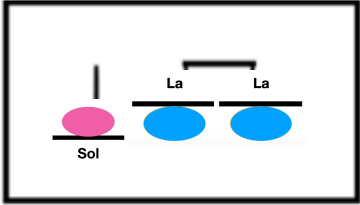
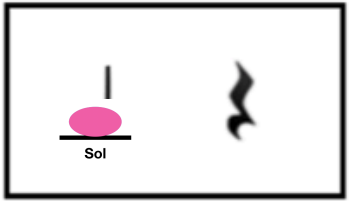
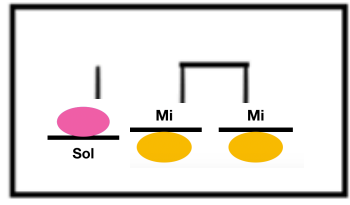
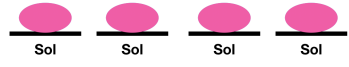
Creating Chromelab Improvisation frames is
a great way to get them to practice



A

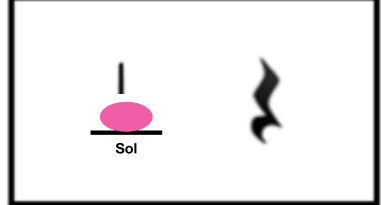
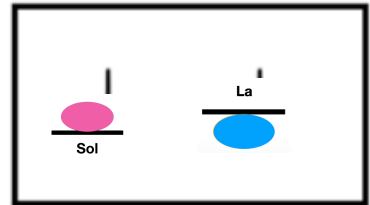
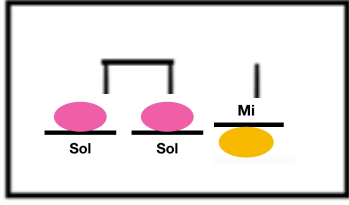
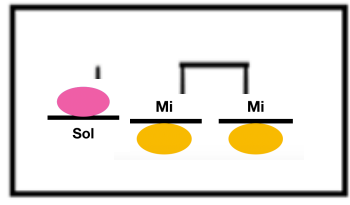


C

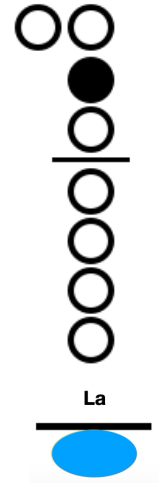


Pease porridge hot,

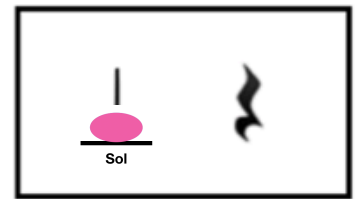
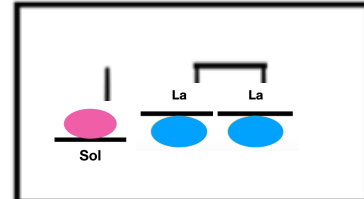
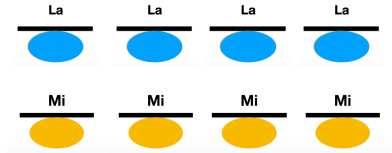
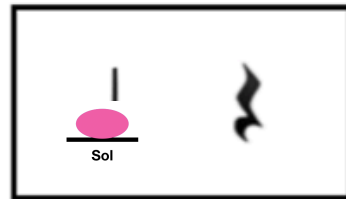
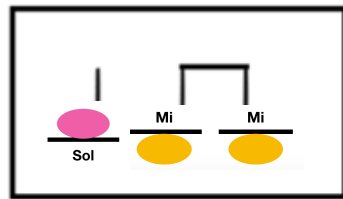
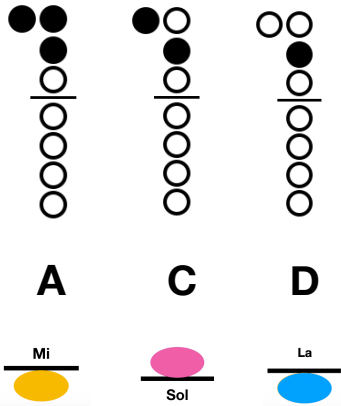
Pease porridge cold



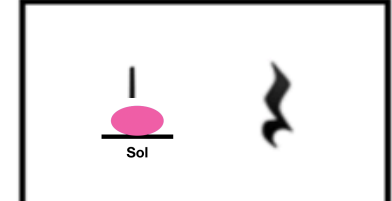
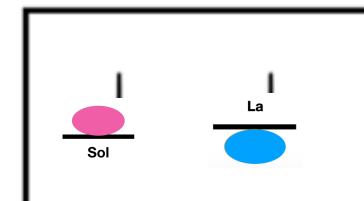
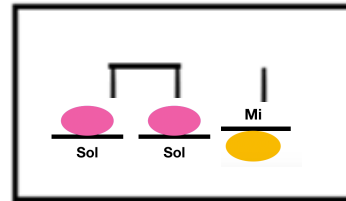
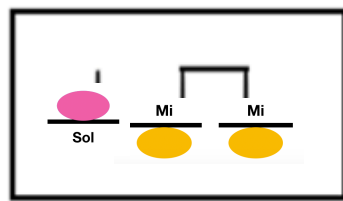
Pease porridge in the pot, nine days old.



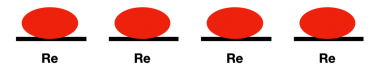
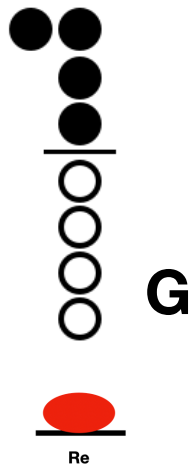
D



Pease porridge hot, Pease porridge cold



Pease porridge in the pot, nine days old.



No *Do* for now - F is too hard a note to make

Little Johnny Brown

trad. African American song/ar. Lawton

Lit - tle John-ny Brown, lay your com-fort down!_

5 Lit - tle John-ny Brown, lay your com-fort down!_ Now

9 (question) (answer)
 fold one cor - ner, John-ny Brown; fold the next cor - ner, John-ny Brown...
 Fold the next cor - ner, John-ny Brown; fold the last cor - ner, John-ny Brown...

AX Oh, you, John - ny Brown!

CL

P

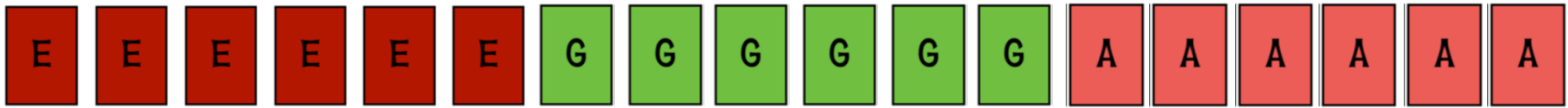
E	E	G	A	B
B	B	A	G	E

(question and answer continued...)

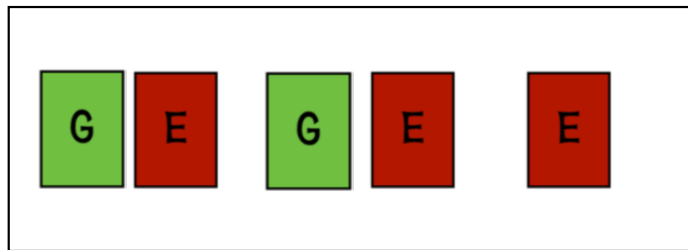
Take it to a friend now, Johnny Brown; take it to a friend now, Johnny Brown.
 Make a little motion, Johnny Brown; make a little motion, Johnny Brown.
 Share a little motion, Johnny Brown; share a little motion, Johnny Brown.
 Lope like a buzzard, Johnny Brown; lope like a buzzard, Johnny Brown.

Let's switch to a *La* pentatonic pitch stack and a more "conversational" sense of time.

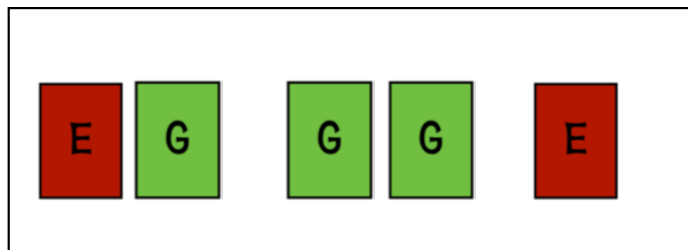
E E G A B B B A G E



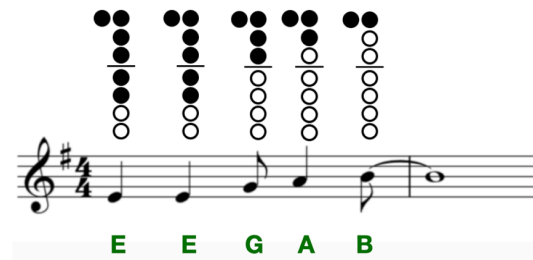
Question 1



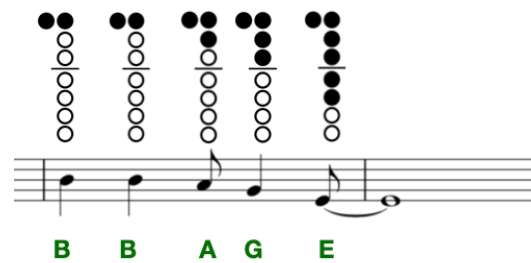
Question 2



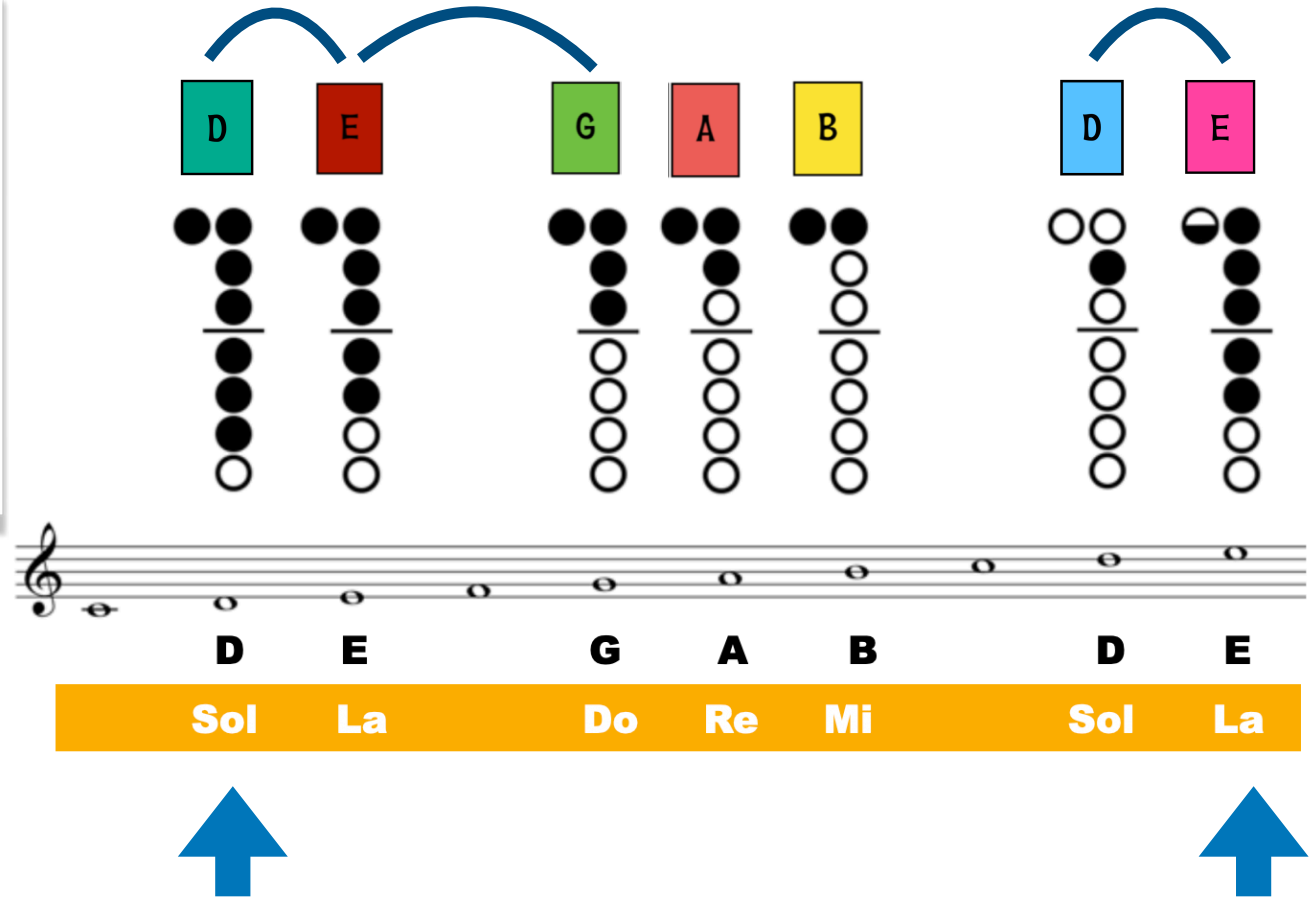
Answer 1



Answer 2

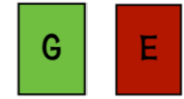


People talk about “blue notes” but getting a blues effect is more about about “intervals” — the distance between pitches. In the E blues scale, where E is the home note, the most important intervals are between E and G (minor third) and D and E (minor or dominant seventh)





Is that right?



Uh, huh



You can say that again

To facilitate improvisation, develop a series of licks and hooks, once again by connecting them to language

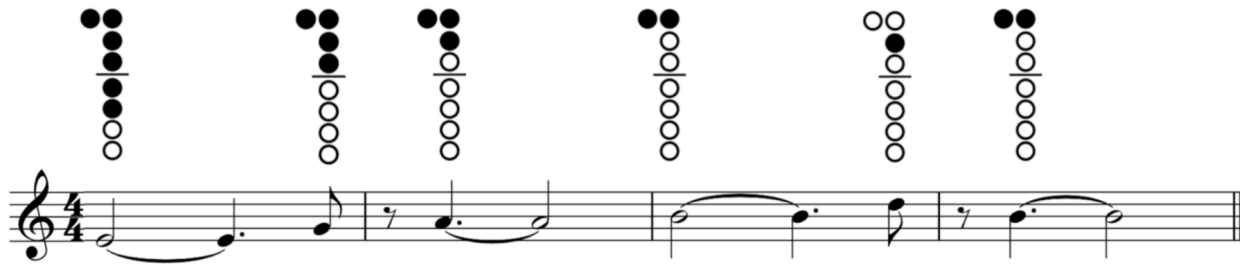
Remember, you don't have to use all the notes. A good improv can be made out of two note, if it swings.

D E G A B D E

Sol La Do Re Mi Sol La

We can transfer our understanding of the *La* on E pentatonic pitch set to more sophisticated material.

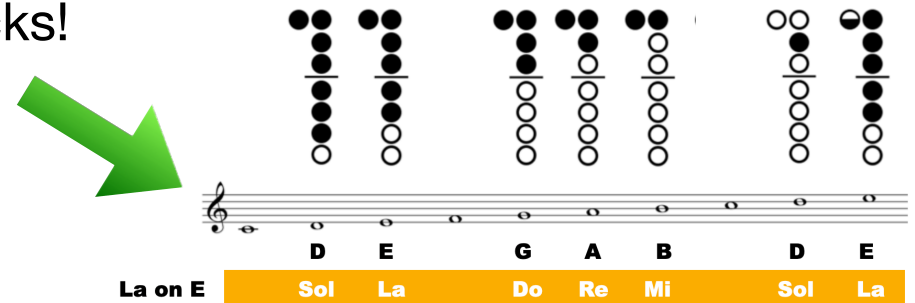
Like a lot of great old R&B classics, “Knock on Wood” has a killer *la* pentatonic hook...



...and lots of windows for improvisatory licks!

Instructional video link is: <http://www.vimeo.com/399535141>

Knock on Wood. Eddie Floyd. *Knock on Wood (single vers)*. 1966.



Learning any language requires exposure to formal as well as informal acquisition practices.

There's also the matter of need to have occasional performances.

Virtual ensemble is an option that satisfies both needs.

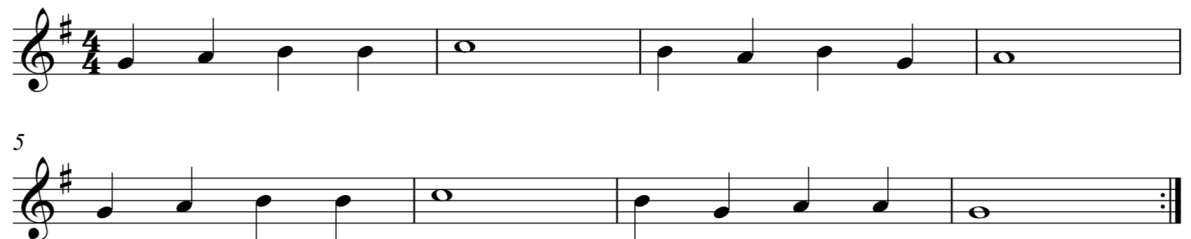
Instruction began with a composite video to illustrate the final version



View this video at <https://vimeo.com/504200064>

Tune of the Buffens

Claude Gervaise





Students were then provided with guide tracks which they were to play along with. They could submit on any or all of the parts.

Tune of the Buffens

Claude Gervaise

Pedal

G G G G G G G G G G

5

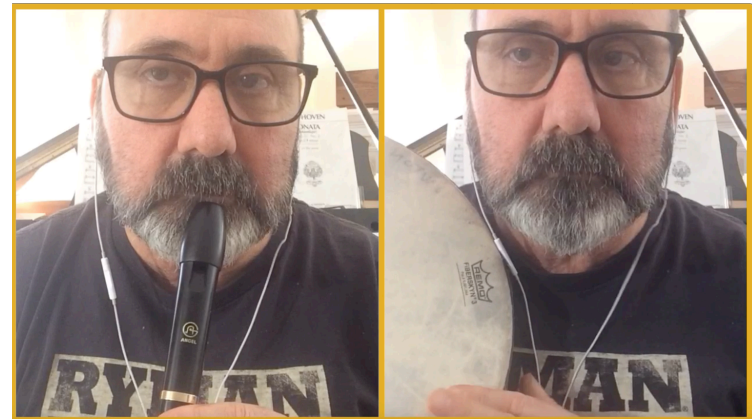
G G G G G G G G G

Melody

Chord diagrams and letter labels for the 'Melody' section:

Staff 1 (Chord Diagrams): G, A, B, B, C, B, G, A, A, G

Staff 2 (Letter Labels): G, A, B, B, C, B, G, A, A, G

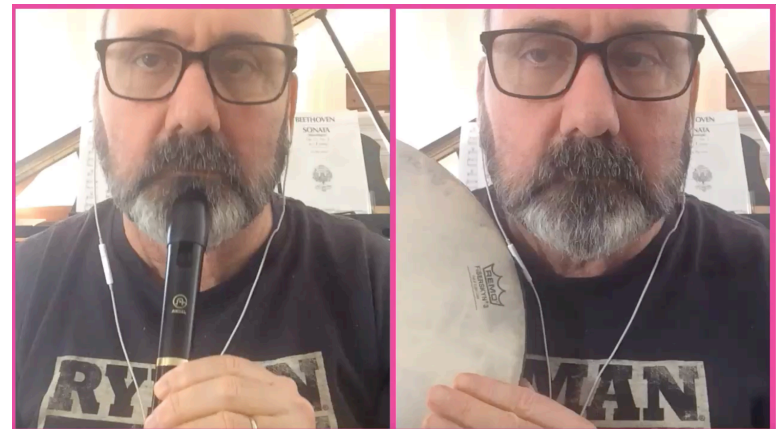


Parallel

Chord diagrams and letter labels for the 'Parallel' section:

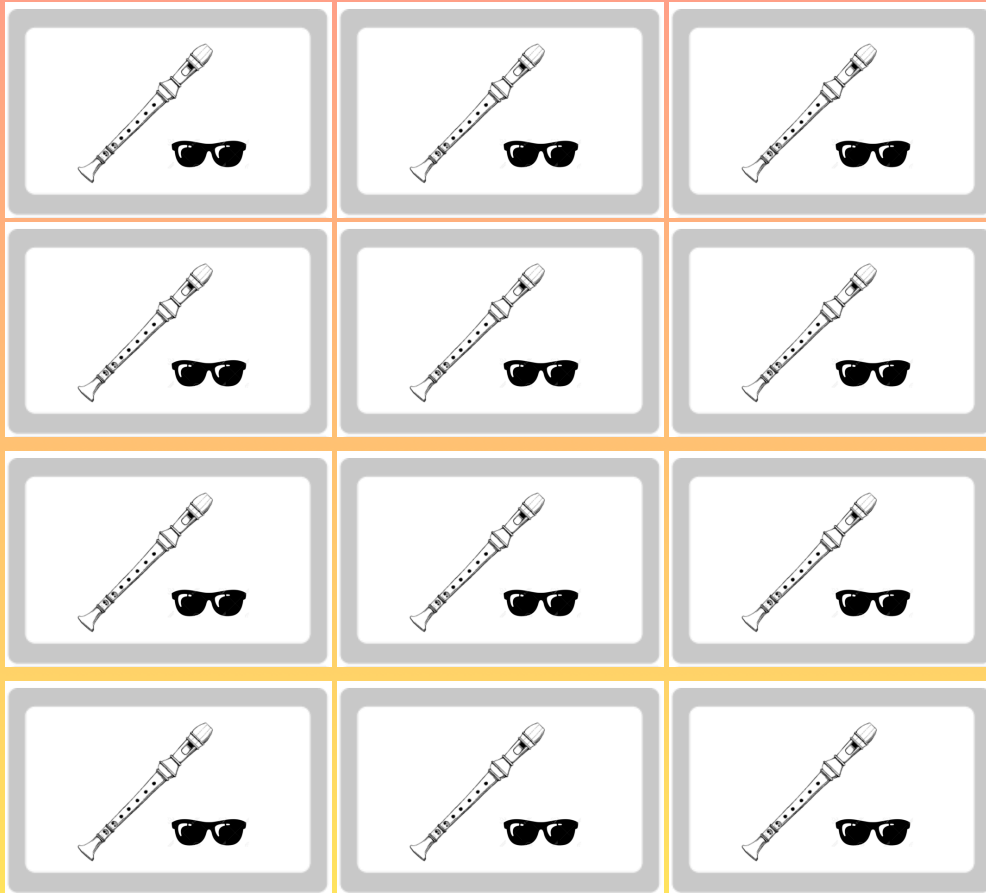
Staff 1 (Chord Diagrams): B, C, D, D, E, D, C, D, B, C

Staff 2 (Letter Labels): B, C, D, D, E, D, B, C, C, B



Students submitted their videos on Schoology. These were converted to mp4's. The audio was then stripped off and mixed on GarageBand while the composite video was made on iMovie.





Conclusion

It is not clear when we will return to in person recorder instruction. So it worth noting that a few thing actually work better in the virtual format:

- Individualized instruction via Schoology and similar platforms
- Student self-reliance
- Preserving performances for evaluation.
- Everybody plays. It's hard to fake it on video.

Richard Lawton teaches kindergarten through Grade 6 general music at The Westland School, an independent elementary school in Los Angeles and is a (virtual) adjunct faculty member at California State University, East Bay in Hayward, California. Richard is an AOSA teacher educator certified in recorder and basic pedagogy and currently teaches recorder in the Los Angeles Orff Course. He is a frequent presenter at state and national conferences and a member of the *General Music Today* editorial board.



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Check out our Los Angeles Orff Summer Levels course - online for 2021
<https://www.laorff.org/summer-levels-training1.html>