

Trumpet Solo Class Lecture #20

“Low Tone Exercises and Patterns”

Dr. Mark Ponzo

Most students are taught to expand their range incorrectly.

Young players are told to loosen the embouchure to play low and tighten to play high; this simply results in a tubby unfocussed low register and pinched high register.

The concepts of air speed (velocity) and amount (volume) are difficult for young students.

Young players are consumed with the mechanics of the instrument.
They try to play the pitches on the page and will press and pinch to do so.
The breathing mechanism and the tongue control velocity and volume.
Tongue position is critical for range development.

It takes time and determination in order to develop and control the embouchure.

Regular/repetitive practice is necessary in order to establish physical control.
The basic elements of playing must be practiced and reviewed daily.

The process of aperture control is difficult for many advanced players.

Most players (regardless of level) do not feel the air pass through the embouchure.
Most players (regardless of level) do not use the tongue correctly.

The size and shape of the aperture controls the sound quality and pitch center.

In order to control the aperture it is necessary to play long/soft notes.
Long, long tones (several minutes) are very helpful.

Producing a focused low register demands embouchure strength and aperture control.

If the air speed is too great, the embouchure will be blown open.
If the aperture is not firm and focused, the sound is airy/fuzzy.

Low register practice taxes the embouchure without excessive pressure.

Playing slowly and softly in the low register requires extreme muscle control.
As the volume of air increases in the low register, the embouchure must resist it.

Low register practice also demands breath control and capacity.

We use much more air in the low register than in the upper register.
It is necessary to breath deeply in order to play for any length of time in the low register.

Work on all of your elements in all registers.

Practice dynamics, articulation, slurring, etc. in every range, every day.
You will perform as you practice.