

## Points to consider when selecting a method book.

- ✓ Clear explanation of the first steps in tone production on mouthpiece or head joint alone.
- ✓ What is the quality of the visual aids for instrument assembly/posture/mouthpiece placement, etc.?
- ✓ First tones on the assembled instrument must be in a playable register and with enough fingers involved to control the instrument.
- ✓ Explanation and illustration of staff, clefs, bar lines, basic note values, musical signs, symbols, terms clear for students to understand?
- ✓ A logical system of rhythm sequence and introduction of patterns supported by melodies and exercises. Are rhythms repeated in a variety of forms to avoid monotony and still provide continued drill? Is a common counting system included to aid in developing a rhythmic vocabulary?
- ✓ Is there clarity in making the point upon first introduction of a new note, rhythm, or fundamental?
- ✓ Is there a balance of familiar tunes to hold the student's interest as well as technical studies and etudes characteristic of the instrument in the proper register?
- ✓ Does the text include rounds, duets, trios, etc. to develop ensemble playing?
- ✓ Grouping of voices with both familiar and contrasting problems for drill purposes
- ✓ Is there a balance of unisons and harmonized material in which all may share in playing the melody as well as parts characteristic of the instrument?
- ✓ If possible, try to find a Horn book and look for the lines that offer a lower starting note for those students who struggle with range early on.
- ✓ If possible, try to look at how the percussion book is organized. Is there a good balance of snare and mallets material?
- ✓ Does the book progress at a constant and regular pace without hurrying across challenging issues?
- ✓ Does the book contain periodic reviews of material covered in each major section? Does it include written exams when and if appropriate?

- ✓ Is there a separate section providing all scales in keys with arpeggios and articulated patterns?
- ✓ Are dynamics and phrasing presented effectively? Use of breath marks and explanation of breath support?
- ✓ What keys and time signatures are covered and at which level do these appear?
- ✓ Is the book part of a complete series covering several grad levels, and with a variety of supplementary books?
- ✓ Does the series help the teacher teach musical concepts such as phrasing, tone quality, dynamics, styles of articulation, and expressive playing?
- ✓ Is the cover design visually pleasing; is there a good use of color, graphics? Is the general format and layout attractive?
- ✓ Does the method have an accompaniment play along CD? If so what is the quality? Or is there an online interactive site? What are some of the features of the interactive site?

*Source: various books, publications.*