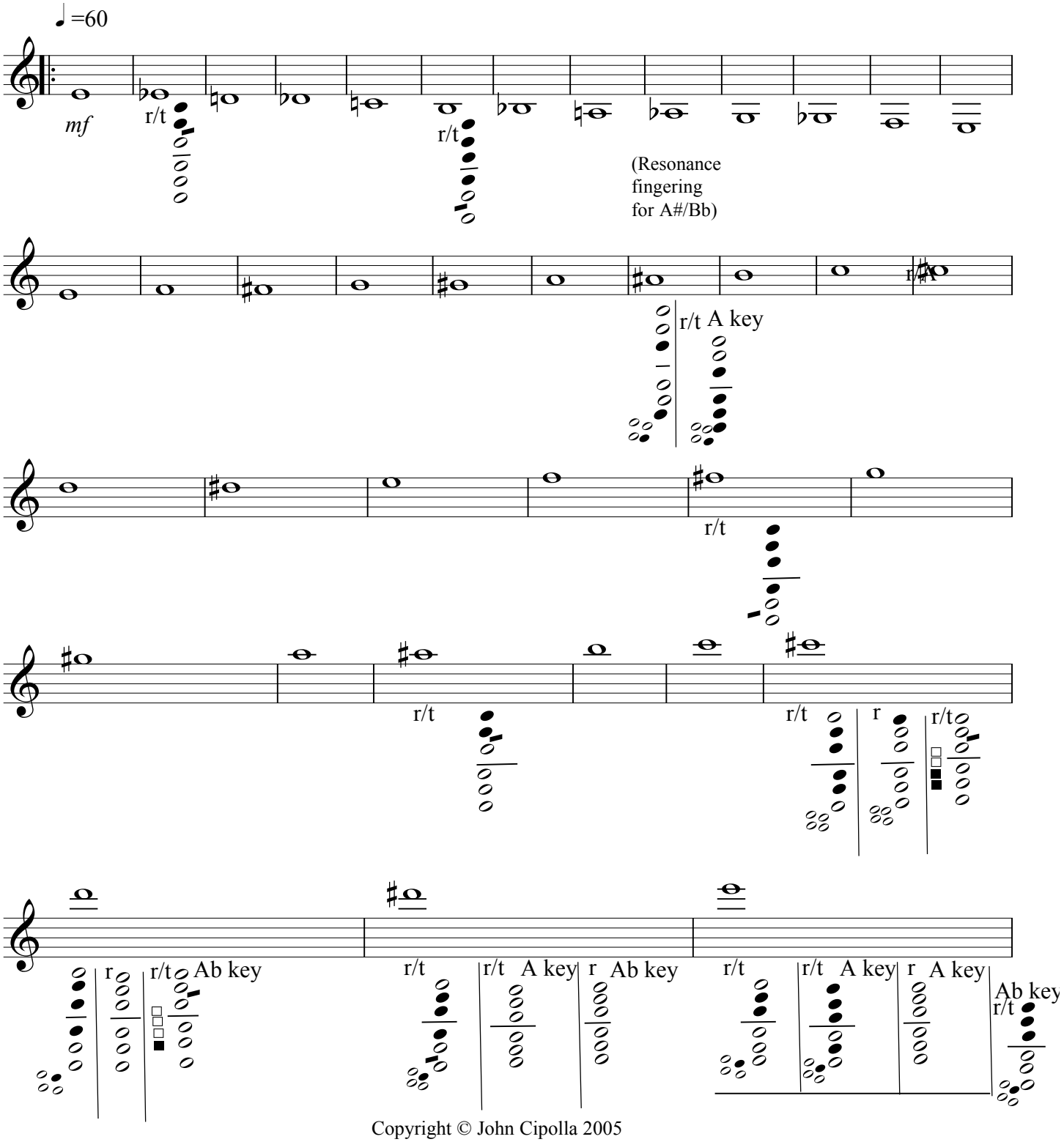
Experiment & Make Discoveries

Long Tones
Chromatic Scale-Ascending
5 minutes

Play each note with a full, rich tone.
Breath as often as necessary.

Dr. John Cipolla



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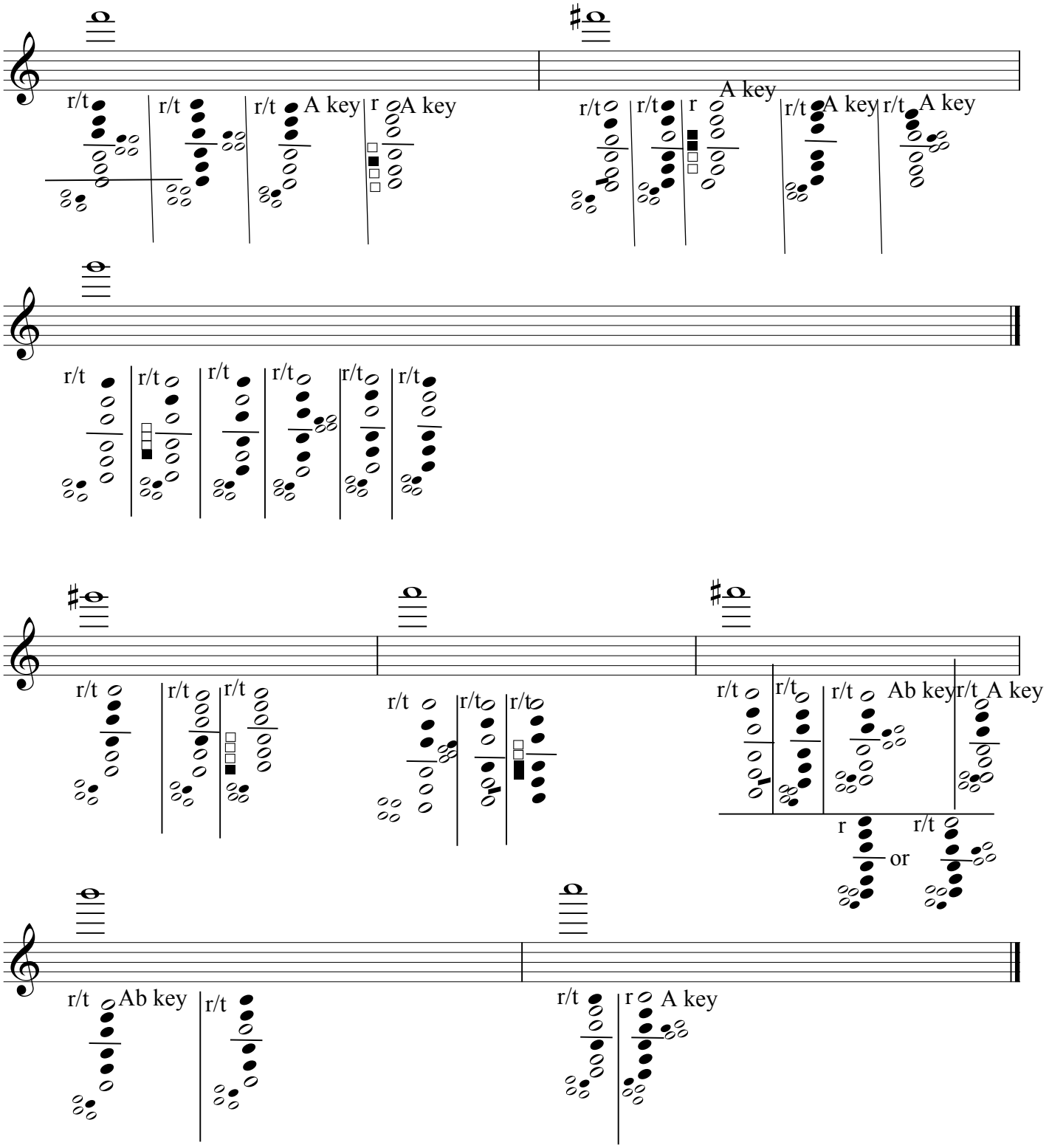

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Air/Tone Crescendo Decrescendo
1 minute

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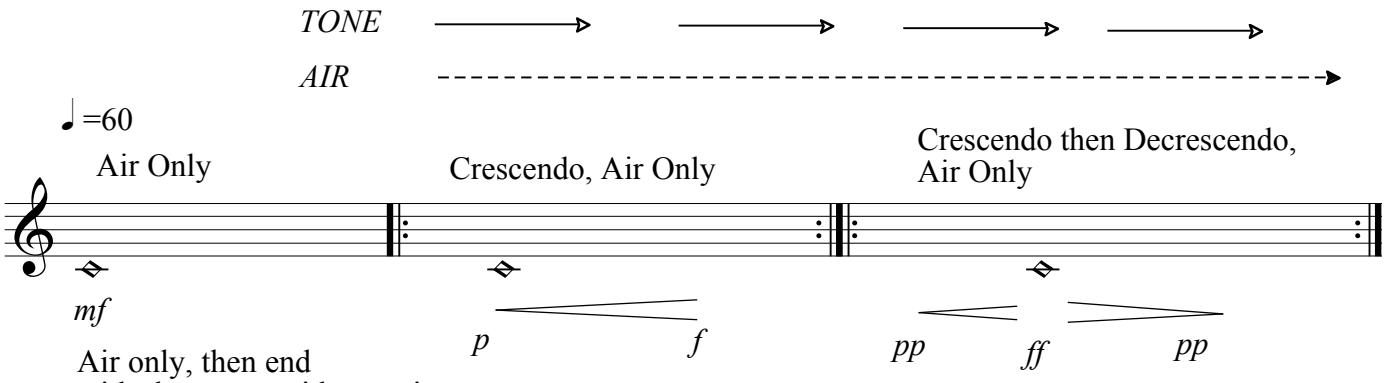
The ◇ symbol means to play only air with no tone.

These exercises develop the "feel" of blowing a focused air column and coordinating it with the proper lip pressure on the reed so you can begin a tone exactly when YOU want to-without the aid of the tongue. Once you have this ability, the tongue can then be used to articulate and begin notes, but you are not dependent upon it to begin ALL notes.

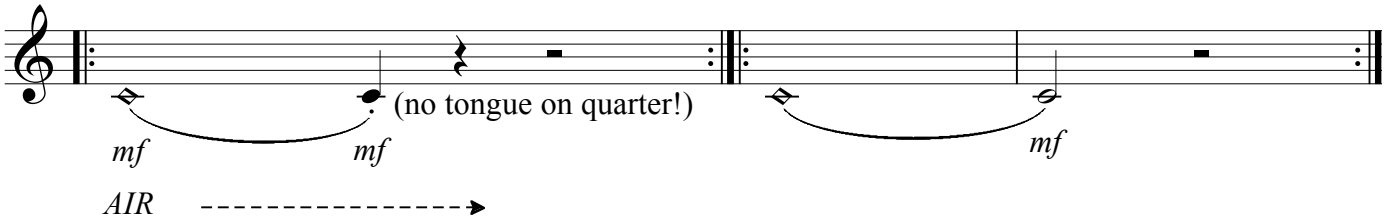
This exercise also helps reinforce the need for the player to always blow a CONSTANT stream of air through the instrument. I like to think of the tone "RIDING ON TOP" of the air stream. Even when there is no tone produced, there should be constant air pressure against the reed. The tongue closing off the reed prevents the tone from being produced, but the pressure of air should always be there.



Air only, then end with short tone without using tongue.

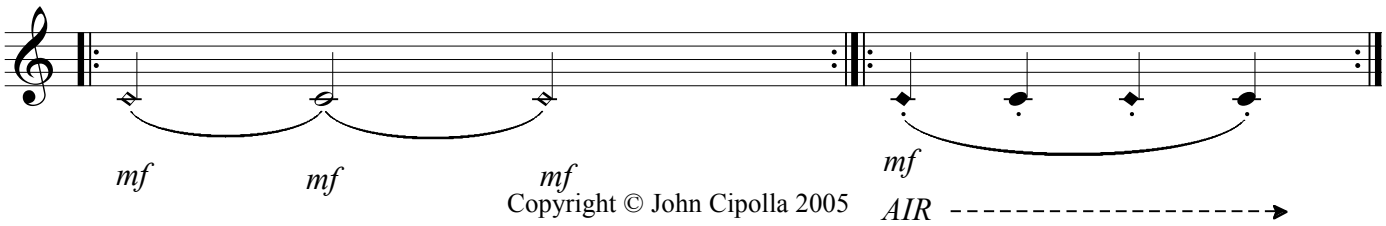
Try to develop a feel for what the focused air stream and lower lip pressure against the reed feel like when the tone actually begins

Air only, then tone. Play in exact rhythm. Tone should begin exactly on beat 1



Keep the same *mf* dynamic level through the entire exercise.

Alternate between air and tone, BUT... keep a steady pressure of air throughout. The extremely light lip pressure on the reed is what makes the reed vibrate with the underlying air flow.



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Harmonics/Overtones
(Chalumeau to Clarion)
3 minutes

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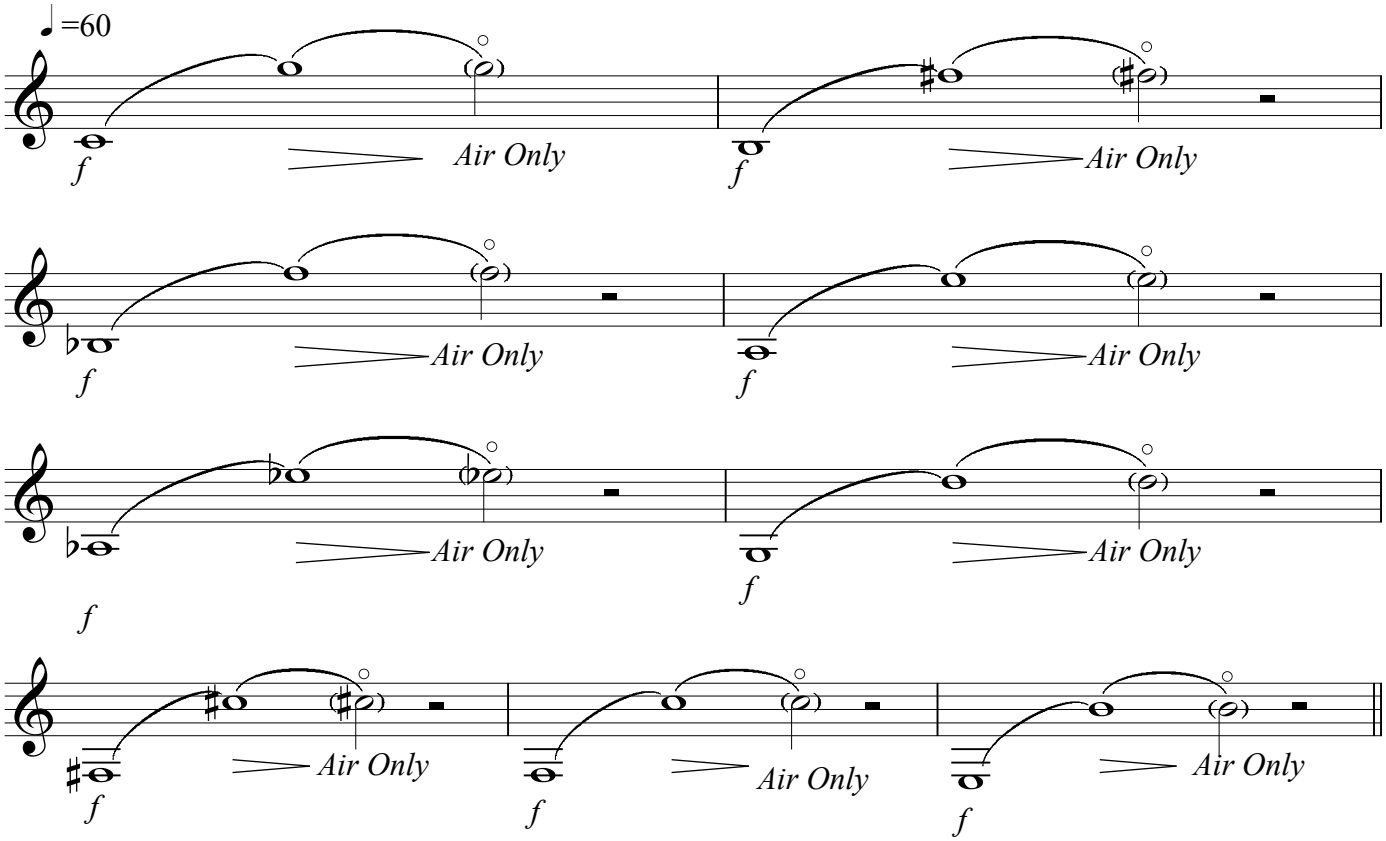
Chalumeau to Clarion
*Establish a nice resonant tone on bottom note first
* When the upper note's tone ends, continue with only air, as if the tone is continuing
*Play one or two of these per day, if time permits, play all 9 exercises

In this exercise, we are learning to think of the air and tone as seperate, as if the tone rides "on top" of the air. And that we should always blow a constant stream of air when playing the clarinet.



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Harmonics/Overtones
(Clarion To Altissimo)
2-5 minutes

Play the upper note of each three-note group by overblowing the lower-note fingering. If you hear the upper note in your mind first, you should soon be able to blow a focused air stream and produce the upper note without changing your embouchure between registers.

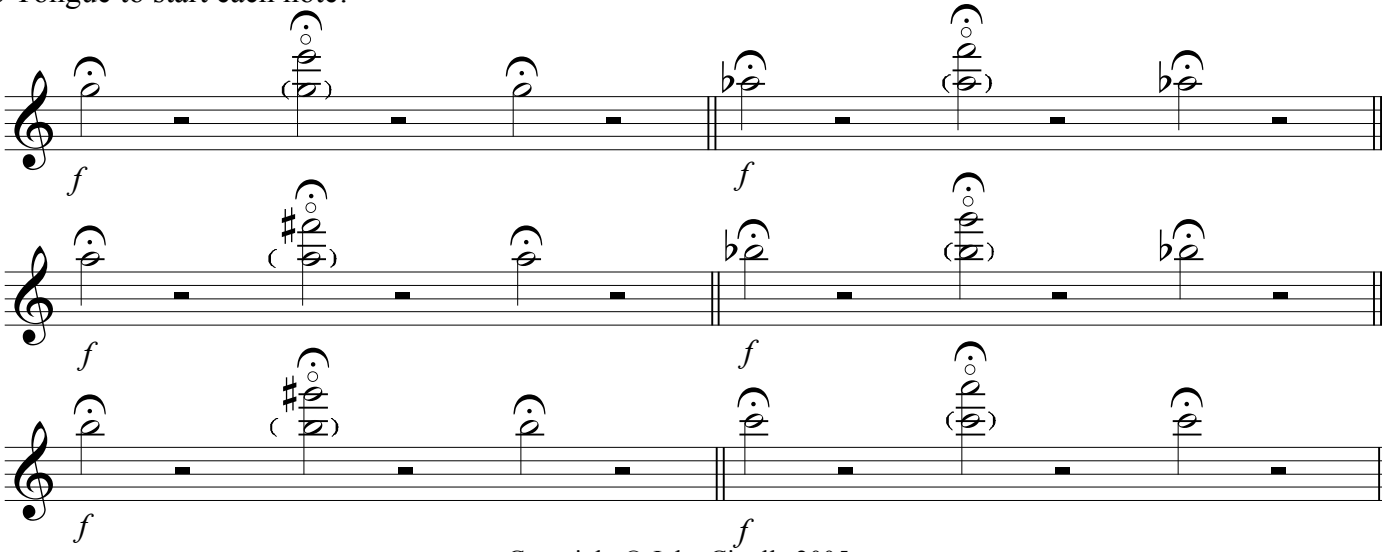
Each note should be PRECEEDED with a slight "huff" of air. In these exercises, NO tongue should be used to begin or end the tone. We are learning to "feel" the exact point at which the combination of focused air and lip pressure on the reed make the reed begin to vibrate to produce a tone. Play each note at a FORTE dynamic level with a strong stream of air.

Pay close attention to the moment the note speaks after the huff of air. As you practice these exercises, try to predict what the note will "feel" like before it is played. You should focus on:

1) blowing a focused air stream (I like to think of saying, "Shhhhoooo" with the lower lip flat against the lower teeth-the embouchure should be fully formed when producing this sound with the air). Also try to think of blowing the air diagonally upward to the point where the inside upper teeth meet the upper gums of the mouth.
2) feeling of the reed against lower lip. If you don't feel the reed or are at least not aware of it against your lower lip, you may be biting too hard against the reed with you lower lip.
3) hearing the actual pitch in your mind BEFORE you play it.
4) not moving the lower jaw between registers.

This overtone exercise helps to transition between the clarion and altissimo registers. It also helps to learn to "hear" notes on our instrument not only with our ears, but also with the feel and focus of our "air column" and the feel of the reed vibrating against our lip.

No Tongue to start each note!



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Half & Whole Steps Trills (10 minutes)

Play all slurred, then all tongued.
Focus on keeping a steady stream of air.
Focus on precise finger movements and correct fingerings.
Give the bracketed areas extra practice time.
Only play as fast as you can play CORRECTLY. This is a
good practice habit to develp in yourself and in your students.
SLUR ALL NOTES FIRST. MOVE FINGERS SMOOTHLY & PRECISELY.

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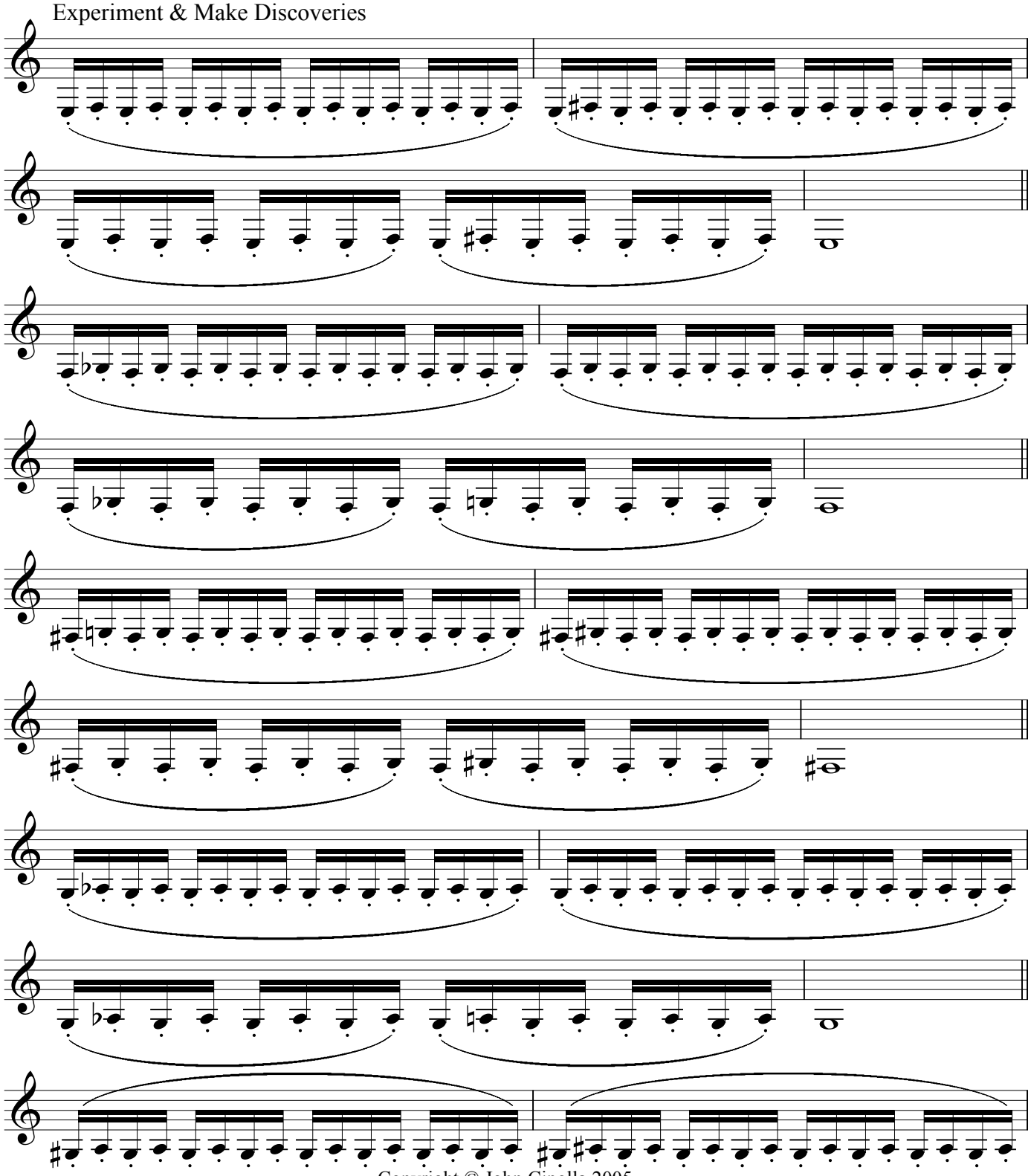

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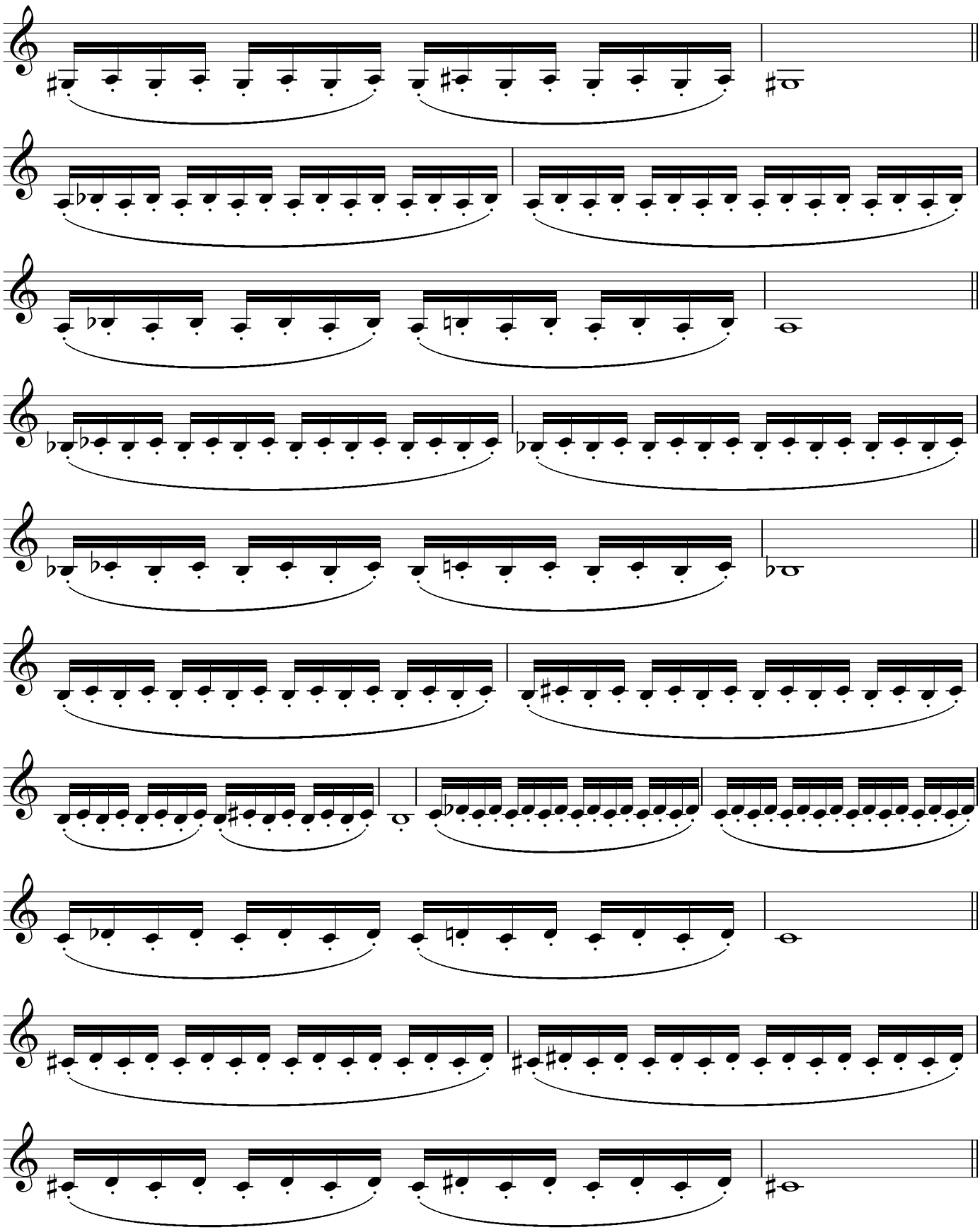

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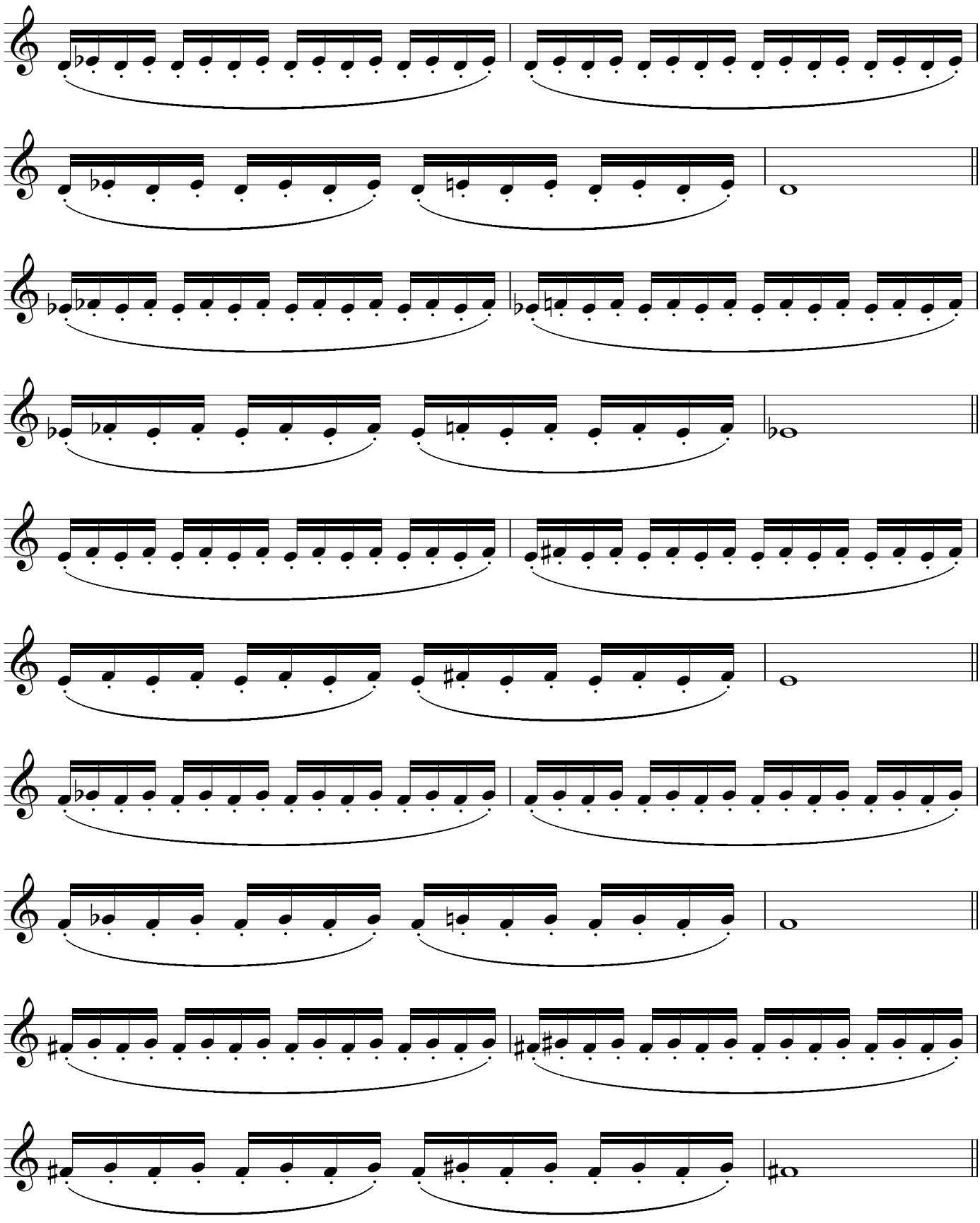

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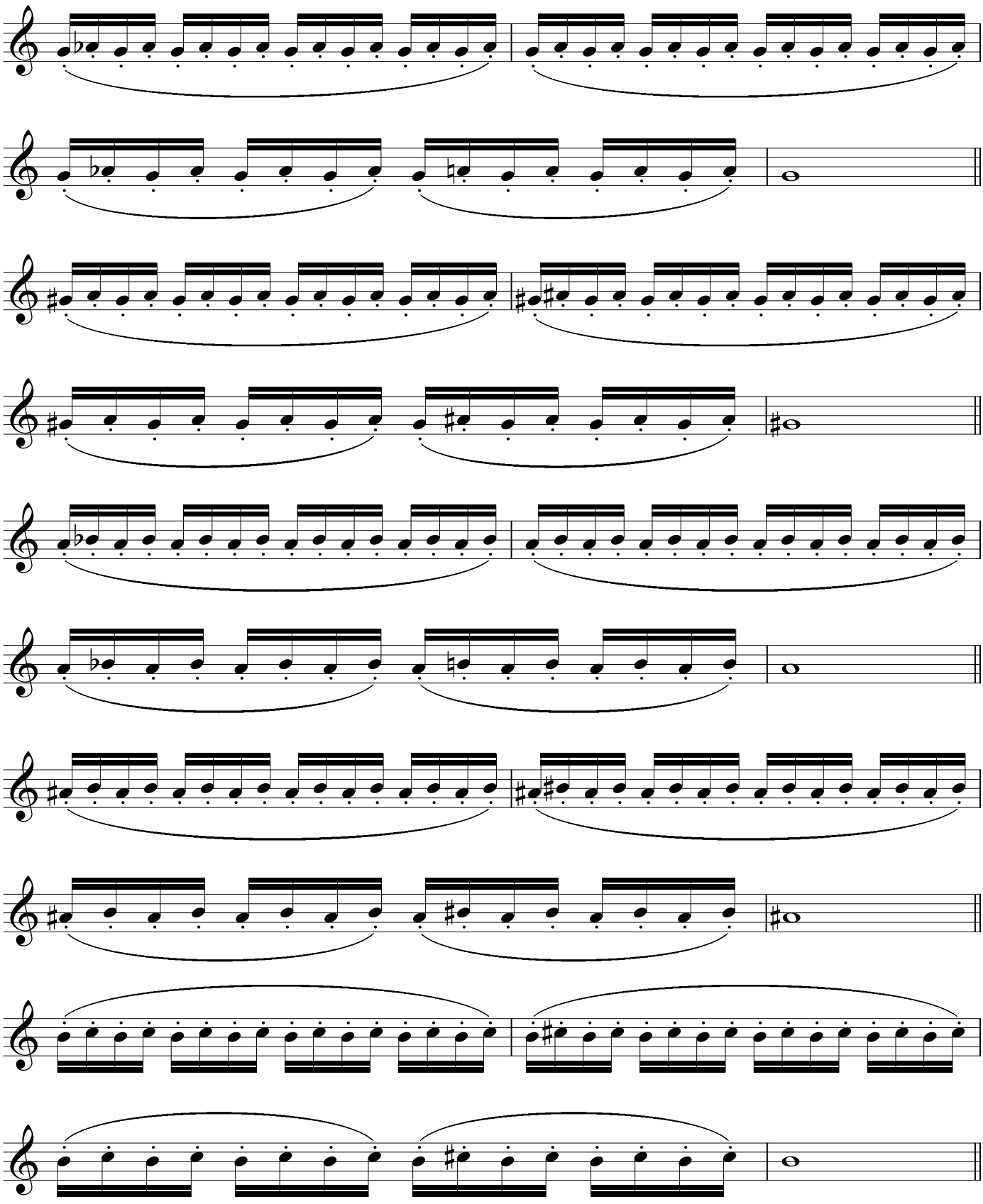

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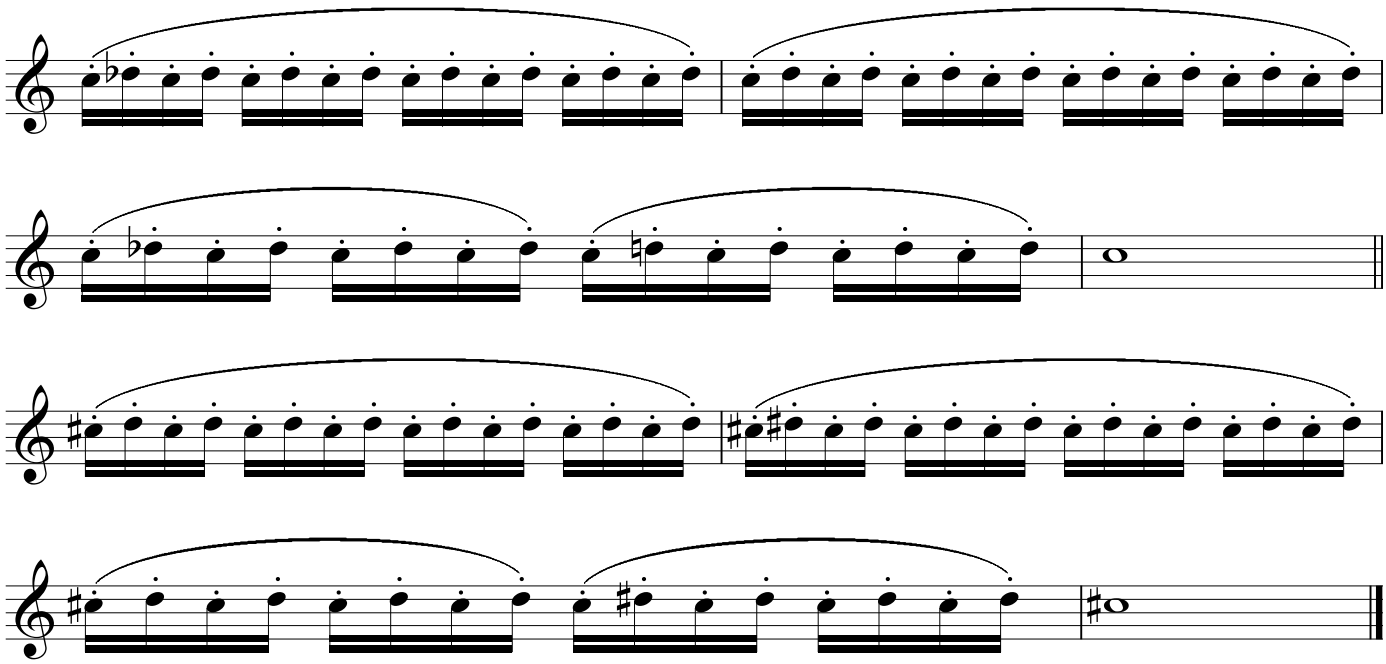

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Experiment & Make Discoveries

5 Note Articulation Bursts
2 minutes

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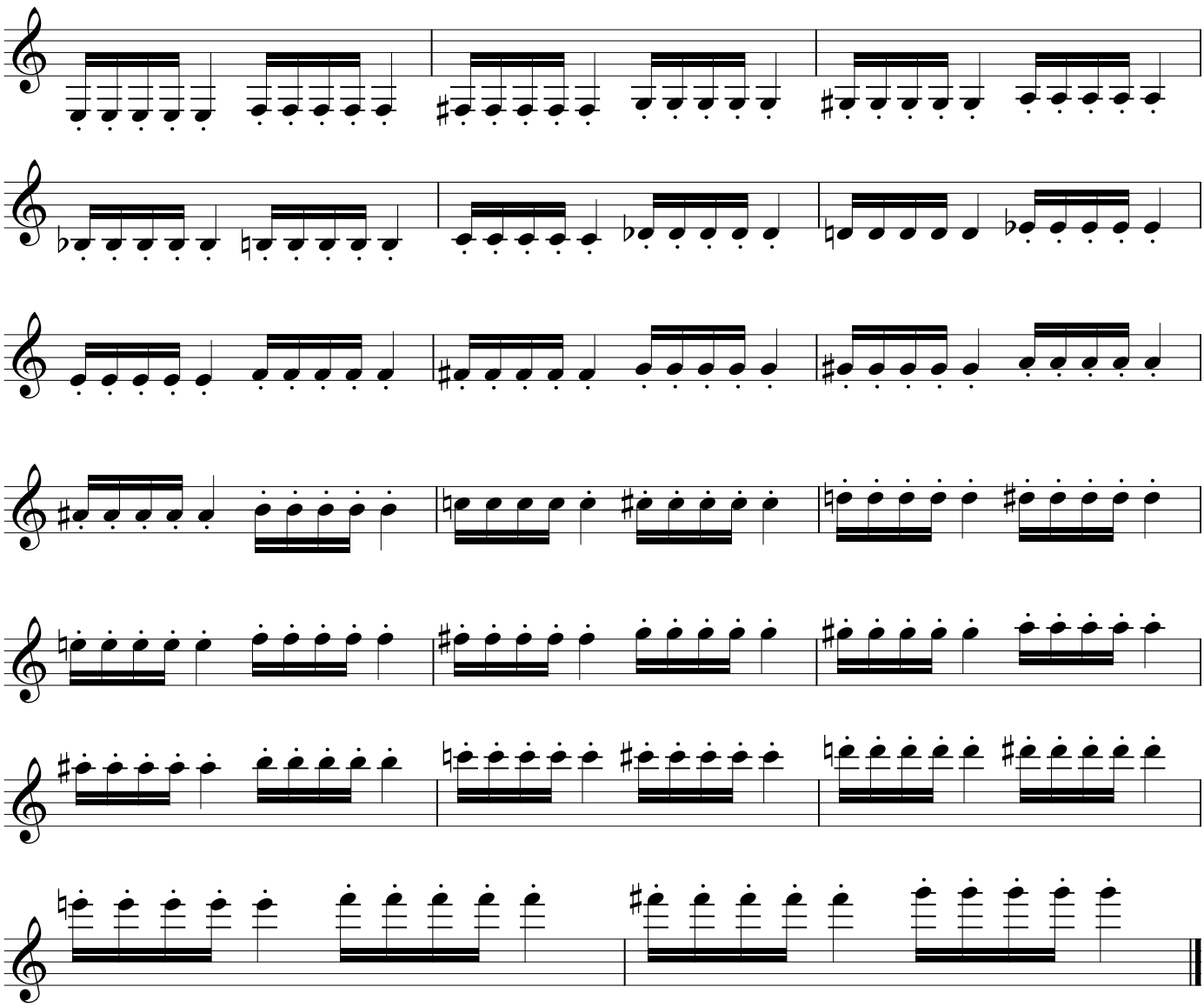
In this exercise, you may breath wherever necessary. If you find it helpful, you may take breaks throughout, stopping and restarting so you can focus on the resistance of a specific register or note. As you cross through various registers, you will find the air resistance changes, almost feeling like you have to blow a bit harder when crossing the throat break. Also, the right-hand clarion notes like D, E, F, G tend to be a bit harder to articulate. Try to focus on any of these types of areas in your practice.

This exercise should ALWAYS be played with a metronome.

Clear articulation is as much dependent on PRECISE RHYTHM as it is on proper use of the air and tongue muscle. Play and teach your students to PLAY RHYTHMICALLY.

♩=60, 80, 100, 120, etc.



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