

Grade 2 Clarinet B3 Getting to the Queue – Paul Harris

As we are all currently in lock down for the Covid Virus I am sure you are all becoming more aware of what it means to have to queue for things.

Whether its standing in line outside supermarkets keeping you distance from the person in front or holding, for what seems like hours, on the telephone while you wait in a queue for someone to answer – or to be told to “go on line” instead – which you can’t do because the internet has crashed!!

Just take a few moments to reflect on how you feel in those queues.

May be Calm and patient to start with but then you may get frustrated or even angry and then finally the joy at reaching the end of the queue.

Write some of your own words down to express how you feel.

.....

This piece is supposed to represent those feelings.

It uses Tempo – speed of the music

Dynamics – loud and soft passages

And phrasing – slurs and staccato passages to do this.

Therefore although the actual notes shouldn’t pose too much difficulty the interpretation (how you play them) is all important.

This piece has 2 flats in the key signature –check your scales at the back of your book to find out which scale has 2 flats.

For grade 2 you have to learn Bb major which has 2 flats. Try playing it now.



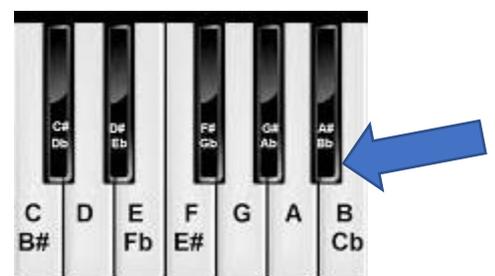
But for every major scale there is a “relative minor” that means it has the same key signature BUT starts on a different note and (for harmonic minors) has a raised 7th note.

One easy way to find the relative minor is to remember that minors work underground.

find Bb on the picture of a keyboard -now move down (or underground) 3 steps – these are called semitones in music

Bb to A is one A to Ab is two and Ab to G makes 3.

So the relative minor of Bb major is G minor.



Try playing both scales.

Can you hear the difference?

In general Major scales sound “happy” and Minor scales sound “sad”.

Download the piece from the free code at the back of your book or play it on YouTube
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDzEtwkZ0Rc>

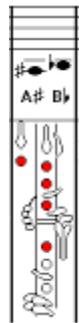
Listen carefully to the piece. Can you hear the happy and sad sections? (major and minor)

Imagine yourself in a queue as the music plays.

Think about what is happening as the music changes – are you moving up in the queue – have you been waiting too long – are you feeling happy- sad- fed up?

Ok so now we have set the tone of the music lets try playing it!

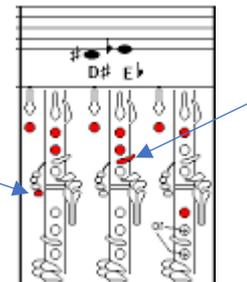
Remember the key signature –



Bb uses the first finger of the right hand (F for Flat and First is a way to remember which finger to use)

and Eb

There are several ways to play Eb. I would recommend the either of the first 2 for this piece. Like a D with the side key or the “banana key” added. Listen to the sound – play D then Eb – it should sound slightly higher.



Moving between the two slowly should sound like the introduction to Baby Shark! Or Jaws. Try playing slowly at first then speed up to create tension!

Try listening to the first line of the piece now then try playing it.

Notice that the notes are slurred in groups—all in one breath-and marked with a *p* for *piano* – or *soft*.



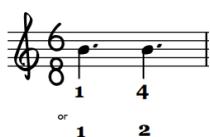
The Rhythm can be a little tricky to count as it is in 6 quaver beats to a bar.

the opening section can be counted like this, or this

Dotted minims are now worth 3 quaver beats



And can be counted like this



And finally 6 quavers or a quaver rest and 5 quavers as you will find are counted like this.



Most importantly though listen to the piece and try to **feel** the mood and rhythms.

If you are trying to play along to You tube it will be hard to start at exactly the same time as music as there is no counting in.

if possible use the free download backing track as you will hear 1 2 1 2 before you have to start.

Listen first then play. Play along with the performance version and then play with just the Backing track.

When you are confident with the notes and rhythm try to add some dynamics to your piece.

Use the chart to help you work out what they mean.

Remember to think about how you are feeling in the queue as As you add the loud and soft parts.

piano	<i>p</i>	soft
pianissimo	<i>pp</i>	very soft
forte	<i>f</i>	loud
fortissimo	<i>ff</i>	very loud
mezzo piano	<i>mp</i>	medium soft
mezzo forte	<i>mf</i>	medium loud
crescendo	<i>cresc.</i> <	gradually louder
diminuendo	<i>dim.</i> >	gradually softer

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In bars 14 and 15 you will find the words

Poco rit and *a tempo*

Poco literally means a little and *rit* is short for *ritardando* which means gradually slower

So put together *poco rit* means gradually getting a little slower.

A tempo means go back to the original speed.

Going back to our queue it may be that the queue had slowed down and then starts moving again.

Try playing the piece again adding this tempo change in.

The very last 4 notes of the piece are all marked with dots under the notes  like this.

These are staccato notes. Played short and detached – imagine laughing as you reach the end of the Queue. Ha ha ha ha.

Remember when you play this piece for an exam you will be playing with a pianist not a backing track.

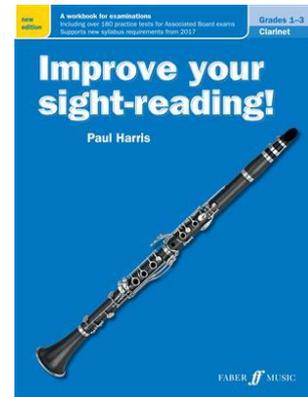
This means that, although you have to stick mainly to the version given on the download you can add your own interpretation of the queue!

This piece is written by Paul Harris who studied Clarinet and was an outstanding performer.

He has written numerous pieces and books for clarinet.

One you may find particularly helpful as you prepare for your exam is Improve your sight-reading. This is an important part of any ABRSM Exam and this book covers grades 1 – 3.

You might also like to try some other grade 2 pieces by buying one of his other books.



It is important that you don't get bogged down with just playing Exam music and forget to have fun! There is a whole world of music out there for you to enjoy these are just a few.

