

A guide to How's Tricks by Timothy Jackson

How's tricks is a really great choice for your grade 3 exam and is a very exciting piece with lots of surprises. To get you in the style of playing fast with lots of fast movement, have a look on YouTube at pieces like the Haydn Trumpet concert 3rd movement.

First things first, let's do a couple of exercises to get used to the few main bits in the tune!

Exercise 1 – Slurring

This time with the slurs make sure it sounds a bit like a smooth snake and keep the rhythm uneven. Before playing walk around the room saying 1,2,3 . Whilst doing this step forward with your left foot and stop on 1 and 2, before stepping forward with your right foot on the 3.

Trumpet in B

12 3 12 3 12 3 12 3 12 3 12 3 12 3

i like choc-late

Exercise 2 – Dynamics

There are a lot of dynamics in this pieces there's two exercises here; one for the new dynamic Sforzando (sfz) and the other for sudden changes in the dynamics.

To play a sforzando you will need to push the air out very fast for a loud sound and then for the accent you will need to pull in the top of your stomach just below your ribs very fast it should feel like your breathing when you are on a run.

Trumpet in B

sfz sfz sfz sfz sfz sfz sfz

For the second exercise you will have to change the speed of your air very suddenly; – a very difficult skill to master. Remember for quiet dynamics to push the air out slowly, and then suddenly change to very fast air for the sforzando.

Trumpet in B

p sfz p sfz p sfz p sfz

The last exercise is based on the rhythms. Start by clapping a steady pulse of 6 quavers. Then start by saying the numbers 1,2,3,4, etc. The next step is to stay silent on number 2, so now try it saying 1, ,3,4,5,6. The final step is to now hold the last note for three claps. This should internalise this rhythm now see if you can spot in in your music and play it with the notes.

Percussion 

Approach to practice

Make sure you start off slowly and simply. Break it down and learn different elements one by one. At first focus on the rhythms of the music, and then add in the pitches and make sure you are using the right valves and slide positions! After this maybe add the articulation (accents and slurs), then the dynamics building it up. After this increase the tempo (speed of the music) little by little making sure you still have all the elements in place.

Have fun playing this piece and enjoy playing your brass instrument!