

OBOE NOTES FOR ARTFORMS

ABRSM GRADE 1 OBOE LIST C PIECES

C5 “Straight to the Point” from “The Good Tempered Oboe” by Mike Mower

“The Good Tempered Oboe” is a collection of 21st Century pieces composed by Mike Mower & published in 2013. I know Mike Mower from years ago – we were students at the Royal Academy of Music together. He always had a really good sense of humour & this comes out so well in these pieces. They are quirky & fun. The book covers oboe solo pieces from Grade 1 to Grade 8 & they are really enjoyable to play.

Mike says, “ often with a quirky element, each piece is intended to stand on its own as a short concert piece rather than a study.....”

In my playing & writing career, starting as a classically trained musician, I subsequently became involved with many different musical styles & genres such as jazz, blues, rock & pop; I’ve incorporated some of these styles into this book”

“Straight to the Point” is on page 3 & the second piece in the book. It has the term “March-Like” & a metronome marking of 120 crotchets in a minute, so it is to be played briskly at this speed. The piece should have a purposeful feel.

It has a time signature of 4/4 which means 4 crotchet beats in each bar.

It is in the key of G major, with a key signature of F#. The only F# you will need to remember is in bar 16, the last bar. If you think you might forget, write the sharp sign just before the note, lightly in pencil.

In this piece we have some different articulations to play. In bar 1 the dots underneath & over the top of the note heads are staccato. You need to play these notes short & separate, “spiky”. Staccato dots are found on the crotchets in bars 1, 3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16.

Sometimes the quavers have staccato too, the second of each pair of quavers needs to be played short & snappy.

There is not much slurring in this piece. Our first slur is in bar 8, f moving to F#. Our notes here are minims. Do be careful to count two beats on each minim in this bar. The bars with minims in are ; 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 14. Note the minims & count two on these each time.

The dynamics are quite simple in this piece. It starts off “mf” or “mezzo forte” which means “moderately loud”. The first two lines are to be played at this level.

There is a change in dynamic at bar 9, line 3. Here we have “p” or “piano” which means “quiet”. The whole of the third line needs to be played quietly.

The last line, at bar 13, has a new dynamic, “f” or “forte” which means “loud”. We maintain the forte right to the end of the piece in bar 16.

In terms of notes, this piece has a range of a 9th. The range is the distance from the lowest note to the highest note in the piece. The lowest note is low F natural. The highest note is 1st octave G. As well as the F# I have previously mentioned there is also C#. When fingering this note start by fingering high D & add the middle key of the 3 right little finger keys.

Be careful to count your rests carefully in this piece. Minim rests are 2 beats of silence – minim rests are in bars 2, 7, 10, 12, 15. Bar 8 is a whole 4 beats of silence!

While you have rests use this time to find your fingering for the next note that you play & use the opportunity to breathe out & in. Try to count your rests accurately as well as the timing of your notes so that you can keep the flow, the fluency, of your playing.

Do enjoy playing “Straight to the Point2.