

# **Practicing For Success**

## **Claudette Laureano**

The lessons below were written primarily for my students at the Breck School however anyone can use them. Some of it is geared towards beginners but I am certain that there is something here for everyone. Also, if you have young students that you are teaching, this could be quite valuable for you.

I do not recommend that you read through all the lessons at one time because you won't remember a great deal. You may want to look over everything and get a general idea of what I talk about. It might help to print it out so that you can refer to it when you are practicing. Basically you are going to read ideas on practicing that are just common sense methods. Please know that this is a work in progress and as I write, the site will be updated.

### **1. Lesson One: The First Step Towards Practicing for Success**

What is practicing? I can tell you what it isn't more easily than I can tell you what it is. Practicing is not playing through a piece over and over from beginning to end. That basically does you little good, especially if there are mistakes in what you are doing. Have you ever heard the phrase "Practice makes perfect"? Well, that is simply not true because if you practice with mistakes the only thing that becomes perfect is your mistakes. The proper way to say this phrase is "Perfect practice makes perfect."

So, how do you practice for success? That is not an easy question to answer. There are so many things that we have to accomplish in the small amount of time that we devote each day to our instrument. Think about it, if you were to practice everything that you have to do everyday, which would likely include scales, arpeggios, studies (etudes), solos, and orchestra music, and spend about 20 minutes on each thing, you would be working close to an hour and a half every day. Truthfully, kids that are serious about their instruments sometimes spend three or four hours everyday to perfect their playing but that's not for everyone and I don't expect you to do that.

If you are a beginner, you likely don't have as much to practice as a person who has been playing four or five years, but you can fill up 30 minutes a day five to seven days a week, and you should. That is the best way to improve on your instrument. I would like to help you get the most out of your time when you do practice.

It is not necessary to play through everything everyday. Also, when you are limited to 30 minutes of practice a day, you have to pick and choose what gets your attention. Things that are not hard do not need to be "practiced" on a regular basis. It might be fun to play through it after all the work is done.

Choose something that gave you trouble at your lesson or in orchestra. If you are starting a new piece, take a good look at it. Notice the key signature (flats and sharps), the time meter, the tempo, and the composer, (so you know in what style you are playing). Next, you should scan the entire piece and notice accidentals, articulation markings, tempo changes, key changes, and anything else that is in the music. Look carefully at the rhythms

and see if you can sing or tap them out. Rhythm is MOST important! Look at the pitches (notes) and see if you can finger it on your instrument without your bow. Notice if it stays in first position or if you need to shift.

If this is the first time that you are playing the piece, pick a slow tempo. How do you do that? Look for the fastest passage in the piece. You should pick a tempo that is slow enough so you can play through with correct notes and correct rhythm. Whatever tempo that is, you should apply that tempo to the rest of the piece. For example, if you can play eighth notes at a quarter note equals 86 on the metronome but you cannot play sixteenth notes at that same tempo, then the tempo you chose is too fast and you should slow it down until you can play all sixteenth notes, eighth notes, and quarter notes at that same speed. It may be as slow as a quarter note equals 50, but that's OK! Once you learn all the notes and rhythms, you can start to increase the speed.

You are now ready to play through your piece. See if you can sight-read through your piece with as few stops as possible. Once you have done that go back to the beginning and mark with a pencil the spots that were difficult for you. Now you are ready to work!

Chose the first spot that gave you trouble. Were your problems mostly notes or rhythm or both? You need to choose ONE thing to work on at a time so you must decide what was hardest for you. If the notes were hard, look them over carefully and play through them so that you are sure you are playing the correct notes. Make sure to observe the key signature and any accidentals that may come up. Does it sound right or does it sound a little bit strange? As your ear becomes more trained, you will be able to hear when you play a note out of tune or incorrectly. Feel free to make markings in your music (in pencil only!) to help you remember how to do things. Play the passage again with any corrections that you may have made. Does it sound better? You can isolate spots and work slowly on those notes to see if they are all correct. Please remember that SLOW PRACTICE MEANS FAST PROGRESS! Take your time to figure out what is not right. Also remember that PERFECT PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT. That means that you need to learn the right thing from the beginning in order for it to be correct.

After you are able to play all your notes correctly, play it with the correct rhythm. Can you get through it? If not, figure out what is giving you difficulty and isolate those problems. Once everything has been ironed out separately, it is then time to put the notes and rhythm together and play through it correctly, even if it's slow. Remember LAUREANO'S LAW! (The first time you succeed is an accident, the second time you succeed is a coincidence, the third time you succeed, you have a clue and should continue to practice.) A good rule of thumb is to be able to play something three times in a row correctly or at least play it five times correctly, even if it is not necessarily in a row.

If you have gotten to this point in your practicing, you've done well. HAPPY PRACTICING!

## **2. Lesson Two: Pulse, Rhythm, and Tempo**

Put your hand on your heart. You should feel your heart beating inside your chest and it should be a fairly steady beat. That beat or pulse is also what we use in music to keep

everyone together. It can be slow or fast, but no matter what the tempo (speed) is, everyone is using that same pulse to stay together. Without it, there would be no order.

So what exactly is rhythm? Rhythm is the timing of the notes and different types of notes last for different amounts of time. For example, a quarter note receives one beat and lasts for a quarter of a measure in 4/4 time. In order to make music interesting, music is written using many different note values. A whole note gets 4 beats, a half note gets two beats, a quarter note gets one beat, an eighth note gets half a beat (2 eighth notes together make up one beat), and a sixteenth note gets a quarter of a beat (4 sixteenth notes fit into one quarter beat).

The time meter, which is indicated at the beginning of a piece, tells you how many notes are in the measure (top number) and what type of note gets the beat (bottom number). If you are in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, then there are three beats to the measure and the quarter note gets the beat. (If the lower note is 2, then it is equal to a half note. 4 equals a quarter note, and 8 equals an eighth note)

There is a large amount of silence in music and that is also an important part of rhythm. The silences are called rests and they work the same way as notes do. For example, a quarter rest is silence that lasts as long as a quarter note and an eighth rest is silence that lasts as long as an eighth note.

Now we come to tempo, which is the speed of the pulse. Tempo markings, such as allegro and adagio, give musicians some idea as to how long to hold each note. So, if a tempo is fast (allegro), the pulse will be fast and the notes will go quickly. If the tempo is slow (adagio), then the pulse will be slow, and the notes will go slowly.

When you play an instrument, there are many things that need to be considered. Understanding and practicing rhythms and notes are very important when you want to learn to play an instrument well. They require time and patience and most of all, persistence. If you ever get overwhelmed because there is just so much to learn, focus on ONE thing at a time. It's OK if that one thing takes up most of your practice session because when you are done, you will have gained the skill and knowledge to do it the next time. It may still require more practice but you now have an idea on what to do. Success can be achieved when you are persistent and remember that "winners never quit and quitters never win."

### **3. Lesson Three: How to Use the Metronome Effectively**

<http://www.seventhstring.com/metronome/metronome.html> (This outstanding metronome will not only play a steady beat at whatever number you set it to, you could tap out a tempo and it will tell you what tempo you are taping.)

<http://a.bestmetronome.com/> (This metronome may be easier to use. Play with it until you learn how to work it.)

Once you are able to play all your notes correctly, you are ready to begin working with the metronome. I have had a love/hate relationship with the metronome all my life but I have

always understood the value of it and I use it in my teaching nearly everyday. The metronome provides a steady beat and if used correctly, it can help you to understand subdivisions and help to keep your tempo (speed) steady.

The first thing that you need to do is to learn to choose a starting tempo on your metronome. Let's say, for example, I asked the orchestra to learn a piece at a quarter note =100. That may not seem all that fast if you are playing half notes or quarter notes, but if you are playing eighth notes or sixteenth notes, that is very fast. You cannot possibly start by putting the metronome on 100 and expect to play it. A way to figure out what tempo you should use to start is by looking at a fast passage in your music. Let's say you have a lot of sixteenth notes in a row that are really hard for you. You should put the metronome beat on the eighth note, which is a subdivision of the quarter note. (Subdividing is taking a large note value and dividing it into smaller note values, which go twice as fast.) You are now counting eighth notes instead of quarter notes. You might even be able to start at an EIGHTH note equals 100, which is twice as slow as a QUARTER note equaling 100. Start playing your passage. (Remember that since you are now listening to an eighth note beat, you will play 2 sixteenth notes per beat.) If you are able to play through it without mistakes, you have picked a good starting tempo. If you are struggling, you need to choose a slower tempo. Play through the passage at the tempo that works best. You should be able to play it without mistakes. If you find that everything went well except a few notes, isolate those notes and work on them separately with the metronome turned off until you have mastered them. Then turn on the metronome again and play it. If you can do this three times without mistakes, or five times correctly, you are ready to go on to the next tempo. The best way to decide your next tempo is to go up anywhere from 4 to 10 beats per minute faster. (The numbers on the metronome represents the number of beats per minute.) Each time you choose a new tempo, you should be able to play through the passage correctly three times in a row or five times correctly. As before, if you can do most of it correctly but there are still a few mistakes, turn off the metronome and isolate the problem and work it out. Once that is accomplished, try it again with the metronome.

Sooner or later you are going to get to the point where keeping it on the eighth note beat is not practical and you need to set it to the quarter note beat, which will be twice as slow as the eighth note beat. Let's say you worked your tempo up to an eighth note = 168. The way you figure out the quarter note beat is to divide it by two. So, if the eighth note beat is 168, then the quarter note beat will be 84. ( $168 \div 2 = 84$ ) At that point you can start playing your passage at a quarter note = 84 and continue working in the same way as before until you hit your goal of 100. This process takes a while and does not happen necessarily in one practice session. It could take two, three, and even more practice sessions to get to your goal. Once you have reached it, you may still not be able to do it right away the next time you pick up your instrument but you will certainly notice that you don't have to start all the way back at the eighth note beat =100. You may be able to start somewhere like a quarter note = 68 or 72. Practicing and achieving goals is a process and a good worker will achieve goals over a period of time.

The most important thing that you should remember is that everyone progresses at a different rate and you should not feel bad if it takes you a week or more to reach your goal. If you are methodical and consistent, you will learn that you can do just about anything. Until next time, happy practicing!

#### 4. Lesson Four: Working Out Rhythmic Problems

Let's say you have a rhythm problem. Put your instrument down and get out the metronome. Set it on a SLOW beat and see if you can clap along with the beat and sing the rhythm. Slow it down if it's too fast. You have to figure out where the difficulties are. Sometimes when you have rhythm problems it's best to first practice exercises like clapping the beat and singing or saying quarter notes, eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and so on. (Using words instead of "TAAA" to figure out rhythms may help you to divide the beat more easily. Here are words that work well: Say "long" for quarter notes, "app-le" for eighth notes, and "Lau-re-a-no" for sixteenth notes.) Most problems that you run into at home are things that were likely covered in orchestra or a lesson and you have to draw on that knowledge to figure out problem spots on your own.

You know how to count whole, half, dotted half, quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes. Sometimes there may be something a little different like a dotted eighth note, but if you think about what you already know, you will likely be able to figure it out. (You know that a dot means you add half the value of the note to the note. So, a dotted-eight note is equal to an eighth note plus a sixteenth note. Much of rhythm is just math and if you take your time, you can figure it out.) Success builds on itself and anything that you build takes time.

*(this lesson is to be continued at a later date)*

#### 5. Lesson Five: What is Intonation and How to Play In Tune

<http://www.seventhstring.com/tuner/tuner.html> (Excellent online tuner that can be downloaded onto your school laptop and will respond to your instrument.)

<http://www.seventhstring.com/tuningfork/tuningfork.html> (Online tuner that will play a pitch for you.)

What is intonation? The word "intonation" is used in music to describe whether someone who is playing a musical instrument is playing in tune. This is not used for instruments such as the piano, which are tuned already, but for an instrument such as the violin where there is a lot of skill and practice needed to play with good intonation (to play well in tune). A violinist needs to put his or her fingers in exactly the right place on the fingerboard; otherwise the note will be sharp (too high) or flat (too low). Musicians playing in a group will need to listen to one another so that their tuning (intonation) is good."

I often like to compare playing in orchestra to playing on a sports team. Everyone on the team has an important position to play and if you do not do your best, the entire team suffers. Also, it is important to know that one position is not more important than another. You need a great pitcher but if you don't have a great outfielder to catch all those long, high, hard hit balls, the team will do poorly. If orchestra members come to rehearsal unprepared without notes and rhythms learned, the rest of the orchestra has to wait while those who are unprepared try to figure out their parts. Each member of a team or orchestra is important to the overall success of the group and it's that team spirit that can either bring a group together or pull it apart.

So, you may be wondering, what has all this have to do with intonation? As we discovered earlier, intonation means "in pitch." In other words, playing "in tune." If everyone in the orchestra plays in tune with each other, the music will blend and sound pleasing to the ear. On the other hand, if notes are "out of tune," they will clash against each other and sound bad.

Good intonation comes with good practicing and listening carefully to what you are playing. Intonation has a great deal to do with intervals. An interval is the relationship between the pitches of two notes. Although this can become fairly complicated, I want to simplify this as much as possible for now.

If you play an open D string and then go up to the open A string, you have played an interval of a fifth. D to A are five notes apart (D-E-F-G-A). If you play an open G string and then play the note G on the D string, you have just played eight notes apart which is also called an octave, meaning eight (G-A-B-C-D-E-F-G). So, intervals are just the spaces from one note to the next. As your ear develops, you should learn to sing all the intervals in an octave. If you can hear it in your head and if you can sing it, you will be able to play it!

*For the more experienced player, here is an exercise for you to try with your tuner. Pick a note on your tuner and listen to it. Now play the same note on your instrument, only slightly out of tune and listen carefully. You should hear a rolling sound called "beats". In addition to the two pitches, you should hear a woo-woo-woo sound. As you listen, change the pitch and listen and notice what you hear. If the beats get faster, you are getting more out of tune. Now, go in the other direction and notice that as you get closer to the proper pitch, you should hear the beats getting slower, which means that the pitches are getting closer. Continue until you are in exact unison with the pitch and hold that for a little bit. You should be able to hear a calmness, which signifies exact intonation. Now, start moving away from the note and listen for the beats to reappear. When this happens, you have defined the point of exact intonation and now you can subtly move back to the middle point where you experienced the least beats. That is exact intonation.*

Each interval has a specific sound and it takes years to get really good at knowing these sounds, but even beginners can learn to play in tune by making sure that your fingers are in exactly the correct place on your instrument. When you first start, many of you will have tapes on your instrument to indicate where you place your fingers. If you practice slowly and carefully and make sure that your fingers are exactly on the tapes, your chances of playing in tune are pretty good. Your fingers actually have memory and the more experience you have, the easier it becomes for you to put your fingers in the correct place. Also, after a while, your ear will start to remember intervals and pitches and so when you play something incorrectly, your ear will know that it is wrong and you will be able to correct it by moving your finger either up or down. Most corrections for intonation are minor adjustments. The best way to adjust a pitch is to move it SLOWLY up or down until you have the correct pitch.

There are tools that you can buy or get online to help you learn to play in tune. They are called tuners and they can be extremely helpful when working on intonation. They have either a needle or a light so when you play a note that is sharp (too high) or flat (too low) it will tell you and you in turn adjust your pitch accordingly. Tuners also play the correct notes for you. Let's say your music calls for the note F and you are not sure where to put

down your finger or what it should sound like. If you turn on the tuner, it will sound the pitch and then you can match it. Make sure that you look to see where you have placed your finger so that you know how big the interval is. To help train your fingers and your ear, keep the tuner sounding the note and practice putting your finger in the exact spot that matches the pitch you hear. You should be able to do it five to ten times correctly before you move on to other things.

Remember to take your time when you are practicing. It is not important to go through everything you are playing at each practice session. You will make quicker and better progress by isolating the difficult spots taking your time in working them out. Always remember two basic rules to practicing.

- 1) Slow practice makes fast progress
- 2) Laureano's Law (amended):

The first time you succeed is an accident

The second time you succeed is a coincidence

The third time you succeed you have a clue, so keep on practicing until you can do it five times right or three times more in a row with **no mistakes!**

Have fun and remember that music has great power and with great power comes great responsibility. Be responsible! PRACTICE!

## **6. Lesson Six: Why Did the Man Throw the Clock Out of the Window?**

\*(The answer to this question is at the bottom of this lesson)

Imagine yourself waking up on your birthday, running downstairs, and there with a great big red bow around his neck, sits your new puppy. Your responsibility is not only to feed him and take him out but also to train him. How long do you think that will take and how often do you think you need to work with him so that he will learn how to behave properly? I have trained two dogs in my life and these dogs were as different in intelligence and personality as they could have possibly been. Our first dog, Ginger, was a Husky-Collie mix with beautiful ice blue eyes. She was an amazing animal. Within a few years she knew about 60 different commands and even as she got older, she loved learning new tricks and earning her treats. Then there was Lucky. Lucky is still with us. He is a Bichon Frise, who weighs about 13 pounds, and is as sweet and gentle as they come. He is now 11 years old and although we love him, we had a great deal of trouble training him. Where as it would take me about a week, 10 minutes a day, three to four times a day, to teach Ginger a new trick, it would take me what seemed to be months to teach Lucky just one trick. Everyone learns at different speeds and so do dogs. Lucky needed much more time and a great deal of consistency to accomplish what Ginger did relatively easily. The point is that training came easily for Ginger but not for Lucky. I had no idea when Lucky joined our family that it would be so hard to train him. I learned more than ever that routine and persistence was extremely important when teaching Lucky. Repetition and positive reinforcements (treats) were also crucial in his training.

Well, teaching a dog how to behave and perform tricks is not all that different than learning an instrument. The most important and influential teacher that you will ever have is YOU! That's because you work alone more than you work with a teacher. Most of you have one 30 to 60 minute lesson a week and yet you are expected to practice anywhere from 30 to

60 minutes everyday! If you learn how to work carefully and correctly, your progress will be six times faster than if you don't.

Have you ever taken a class and all of a sudden the teacher tells you it's time to leave? That happens because you were so engaged that you did not think about the time. That's usually a sign that you are focused on what you are doing and you are really learning. Learning to do anything well takes time, persistence, and commitment and if you learn to make it interesting and engaging, your practice time will go quickly, and you will likely enjoy it much more than if you are bored. So, how do you make it interesting? Engaging your brain is the answer. If you go back up to Lesson One, you will remember what I said practicing was not. ("Practicing is not playing through a piece over and over from beginning to end.") That actually gets boring quickly because we start to do things automatically and when we are not thinking, and our brain wanders. If you learn to engage your brain, your progress will be faster and your performance in class and at lessons will also improve.

How do we engage our brain? In order to learn, we need to understand, and that takes time. Everyone learns in his or her own time and the trick is to give yourself enough time so that you don't cram. You are always best off practicing right after a lesson or rehearsal because it is fresh in your mind and you will remember what your teacher said. After my violin lesson, I always used to write down everything that my teacher said at the lesson. This notebook was with me all the time while I practiced and I would refer back to it often. That's why writing things down directly in your music during rehearsal is important. It will help you to remember what was discussed in class or at a lesson.

Let's say you have a new piece to learn in orchestra. After playing through your piece, pick out the most difficult passage. Look and see what makes it difficult for you. Is it the notes? Is it the rhythm? Remember, you need to pick only one thing that is giving you a hard time. If it's the rhythm, it might be best to put down your instrument and try and work it out with a metronome and sing it. Sometimes when we don't have the instrument in our hands, we are able to think more clearly. If you can sing it correctly, you can play it correctly. What if it's a note problem? Again, you might be better off putting down your instrument and taking a good look at it. Look for notes that are different than what you may normally play. Are there any accidentals (notes with sharps, flats, or naturals)? Look at the key signature and know what key you are playing in. These are important questions to double check and make sure that your brain knows where to put your fingers. More advanced players would also benefit by asking themselves questions pertaining to what position would be best for specific passages. Just taking a good look at the passage and define where and what the problems are can help you to figure out how to solve them.

Taking time to learn is never a waste of time. In other words, if it takes you all 30 minutes to figure out just one new thing, you benefited from your practice. That's why practicing is an on going activity that never really ends. As long as you have learned one new skill, or rhythm, or passage, or actually anything that you did not know before, you have used your time well. Just know that as you get better and more experienced, it will take you less time to learn and you will move more quickly. The trick to making time fly is engaging your brain.

\*answer to the question: He wanted to see time fly.

## 7. Lesson Seven: Good Position and Why It Is Important

Sit up straight! Lift your arm! Drop your shoulder! Uncross your legs! Have you ever heard me say this before? Of course you have! If you haven't, you've been asleep because I say this nearly everyday and I am sure your private teachers also say this regularly. Position is crucial to playing well. As you improve, holding your instrument properly will allow you to play faster, shift more easily, and play in tune. Most important, learning how to hold your instrument from the start will help you to avoid injuring your body down the road.

At first it's hard because your muscles are not trained or strong enough. The more you do it, the stronger your body becomes and the easier it becomes. Remember we talked earlier about our muscles having memory. It's the same here. If you are a beginner, you need to be constantly thinking about how to stand, sit, hold your arm, hand, shoulders, feet, etc. After a while your body will remember all on it's own and you will not have to think about it.

How do you learn good position? First of all, pay attention to what your teachers are telling you. You should practice fixing the problem as soon as you are corrected, right in class or at your lesson. It's OK to take time, no matter where you are, to set yourself up correctly. Make a note of it by writing it in a notebook or in your music so that you remember it when you are home. Practice in front of a mirror so that you can watch yourself is a great way to correct yourself. If you see something wrong, **STOP!!** CORRECT, LOOK, and CONTINUE! Get ideas of what professional musicians look like by looking at photographs. If you watch someone on Youtube, make sure that you are looking at a professional player. There are lots of people on Youtube that have horrible position!

Click or paste these links to see photographs of what good position looks like on the instrument you play:

Violin:

<http://www.alexanderdhettinga.com/images/limited/heifetz1.jpg>

Viola:

[http://api.ning.com/files/98n8Hchjx0NmxDqMr\\*cjWIHzSL-TeSRC7OiyII5MWK8E-7Fgd2h\\*DPwcqD3AEUkm2iQP11Vy3xLyzT9AuwJaAVYw4scEKeMU/MomCamera260.jpg](http://api.ning.com/files/98n8Hchjx0NmxDqMr*cjWIHzSL-TeSRC7OiyII5MWK8E-7Fgd2h*DPwcqD3AEUkm2iQP11Vy3xLyzT9AuwJaAVYw4scEKeMU/MomCamera260.jpg)

Cello:

<http://cfs9.tistory.com/image/31/tistory/2008/08/16/00/04/48a59b1a46c27>

Bass:

<http://www.hamstringsmusic.com/Karr%20with%20Athena%20008.jpg>

Thinking about position is another way to engage your brain so that your practice time will fly by. Until next time, HAPPY PRACTICING!

## 8. Lesson Eight: What Is Phrasing and Why Do We Need It

Have you ever sung in the shower? Have you ever noticed how much better you sound in there? Somehow singing in that safe little space helps us to rid ourselves of our inhibitions and allows us to belt out those songs like our favorite artists. When you are alone singing, you probably do something very natural to make your the music sound so good. Most likely, you are phrasing. You are adding highs and lows to your music. You are also probably getting really soft and then really loud. You may be accenting certain notes to bring them out, or maybe you start singing the notes really smooth (legato), or really short (staccato), and as you get to the grand finale, you broaden out the tempo (ritard) and hold the last note as long as you possibly can (fermata) and get louder the longer you hold it (crescendo) until you raise your arms and end the song as dramatically as possible. Then in your head you can hear 10,000 people screaming and cheering as you take your well-deserved bows. That sounds like one dramatic performance!

Have you ever noticed that when you pick up your instrument, it doesn't sound anything like what I just described? That's probably because you don't think of the music that you play on your violin or cello in the same way but it really is the same. Think about what makes a performance great. First you need a melody and whether it is played on an instrument or sung with your voice, it needs high and low points. It also needs all the dramatic stuff that you put into your singing when you are in the shower. That "dramatic stuff" is called *nuance*, which means subtle changes. They would include dynamics, articulations, speeding up, slowing down, and about two- dozen other instructions that are often found in the music to help phrase and color the melodies that we play.

If you pick up a sheet of music and take a good look at it, it is like a road map, which gives directions on how to play the notes until the end of the piece. Right from the start it tells you everything you need to do to make it interesting. This takes experience and skill but this is the most important part of making music. Naturally, this should be part of your practice routine. Studying what is written on a page of music, even without your instrument, is valuable. After you spend some time studying the markings, sing through the first four to eight measures and try to add the directions that are indicated. Without your instrument in your hand, you will find it easier to follow the directions in the music. Once you are sure of what you want to do, pick up your instrument and imitate what you did with your voice. It will be harder but keep at it until you are able to bring out the nuances that are written on the page. If you follow the directions carefully, you should hear a difference. The difference will be that the music is more interesting and engaging. Think about this when you are practicing. The more you are able to bring out the markings in the music, the more engaged you will become with your instrument and with your playing.

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October 2009