Name _____ Date _____

Woodwind and Brass Instruments: How Reeds, Lips and Tubes Make Sound

Directions: Every instrument in these questions is a woodwind or a brass instrument. Think about what starts each sound, and how long a tube of air the player is using.

1. Match each instrument to what starts its sound.

Write the letter of the matching answer on each line.

1. _____ flute
2. _____ clarinet
3. _____ oboe
4. _____ trumpet

Choices for question 1

A. a single reed beating against the mouthpiece
B. a stick striking a drumhead
C. a double reed: two thin blades of cane beating against each other
D. the player's lips buzzing in the mouthpiece
E. breath striking the edge of a hole, with no reed
F. a bow pulled across strings

2. Which of these instruments uses a double reed, just as the oboe does?

A. flute B. clarinet C. saxophone D. bassoon

3. Which kind of reed starts the sound of a saxophone?

A. no reed, because the player buzzes the lips
B. a double reed, like an oboe
C. no reed, like a flute
D. a single reed, like a clarinet

4. The English horn has the word horn in its name, but its player blows through a double reed, like an oboe player. Which family is it in?

A. percussion B. woodwind C. brass D. string

5. Choose the words that tell what a trumpet valve does.

Word bank
up • shorter • down • longer

Pressing a valve on a trumpet sends the air through an extra loop of tubing. That makes the tube _____, so the pitch goes _____.

6. A trombone player pushes the slide all the way out and changes nothing else. What happens to the note?

A. It gets higher, because the tube gets shorter.

B. It gets louder, because the bell gets wider.

C. It gets higher, because the tube gets longer.

D. It gets lower, because the tube gets longer.

7. The tuba and the trumpet are both brass instruments, yet the tuba's notes are far lower. What is the main reason?

A. The tuba is made of a different metal.

B. The tuba uses a reed, and the trumpet does not.

C. The tuba's tubing is much longer.

D. The tuba player blows much harder.

8. A piccolo is played the same way as a flute, but it is much shorter. How do its notes compare with the flute's?

A. They are higher.

B. They are the same notes, only louder.

C. They are lower.

D. They are the same notes, only softer.

9. On a recorder, covering more of the finger holes, working down from the top, makes the note lower. Why?

A. The player's breath gets colder.

B. The air inside vibrates along a longer part of the tube.

C. The air rushes out faster.

D. The recorder's reed gets thicker.

10. A bugle is a simple brass tube with no valves, no slide and no finger holes, yet a bugler can play several different notes. How?

A. by plucking a string inside the bell

B. by blowing across the edge of the mouthpiece, like a flute player

C. by switching to a thicker reed

D. by changing how tightly the lips buzz