Improvisation as a Means for Teaching Beginning Recorder
Presented to the New York State School Music Association

Dr. Paul Cribari
pcribari@msn.com
paulcribari.com

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Introductory Activities:

Prepping the breath
- Ping Pong Balls- and Bendy Straws
  - Air Pipes – Can you make the ball gently spin?
  - Tabletop/drum head game – How long can you keep the ball on the drum?
- Birthday Candles vs. Fogging Over a Window

Prepping Posture and Grip
- “Quiet Coyote”
- Standing and moving in the space

Prepping Notation
- Melodic Outlines
- Fingering Charts
  - Ping Pong ball halves for fingering chart

Questions to Consider
- Students
  - Can you hear yourself?
  - Can you feel the holes?
  - Do you feel like you’re blowing, or is the air “falling out of your mouth?”
  - Are your elbows touching anything?
  - Do you know the name of the note you are playing?
- Teacher
  - How can you get small groups of children to play (instead of the whole class)?
  - Does your accompaniment model the artistry you are asking of the kids?
  - Is the learning technical or musical?
Moon

Poem: Anonymous Japanese
Music: Paul Cribari

The moon hangs up at night;
Her beams are cold and bright;

See her shadow low,
The water's frozen now.
Melodic Outlines for Recorder Improvisation
Created by Paul Cribari

C'    A

C'    C'    C'    C'    C'    C'
A    A    A    A    A

C'    D'    C'    C'    D'    C'    C'
A    A    A    A