

NFA Guide to Levels for Pedagogy Publications

Level	Pitch and Key Range	Rhythm and Meter	Articulations	Musical Symbols	Pedagogical Focus
A	G1- A2 Occasionally extended to D1 – D3. Major and minor key signatures using up to 1# (occasionally 2#) & 2b. Limited use of accidentals beyond key signature. Possible use of accidentals within composition to establish key en lieu of key signature.	Basic rhythms using whole, dotted half, half, quarter, eighths in 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4. No syncopation, dotted rhythms, or partial beat pick-ups. Restricted use of 2/2 and cut time. Cut time may be treated as 4/4 .	Basic single tonguing techniques. Simple slurred, legato, and staccato articulations.	Treble clef pitch notation; accidentals; symbols for repeat, D.C., D.S, and dynamics.	Basics of position and posture, tone production, fingering, articulation, and notation reading (where applicable). Rudiments of playing softer and louder (p and f). Performance of short phrases and successful handling of predominantly conjunct melodies with occasional leaps of up to one octave.
B	D1-D3 Occasionally extended to Eb3. Major and minor key signatures using up to 2# and 3b . Limited use of accidentals beyond key signature. Possible use of accidentals within composition to establish key en lieu of key signature.	Basic rhythms using whole, dotted half, half, quarter, eighths in 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4. Isolated appearances of rhythms designated for higher levels, such as triplets and dotted notes. No syncopation. Basic rhythms using dotted half, dotted quarter, quarter, eighth in 6/8 and 3/8. Limited use of 2/2 and cut time.	Basic single tonguing techniques. Slurred, legato, and staccato articulations.	Treble clef pitch notation; accidentals; symbols for repeat, D.C., D. S., and dynamics. Limited use of ritardando, accelerando, and fermatas. Symbols for simple ornaments including grace notes, trills, mordents; small cadenza-figures.	Basics of position and posture, tone production, fingering, articulation, and notation reading (where applicable). Rudiments of playing softer and louder (p and f). Performance of short phrases and successful handling of predominantly conjunct melodies with occasional leaps of up to one octave.
C	C1-F3; occasionally extended to G3. Major and minor key signatures using up to 3# and 3b . Moderate use of accidentals. Short chromatic passages. Change of key signature within a piece.	Basic combinations of whole, dotted half, half, dotted quarter, dotted eighth, eighth, sixteenth, and eighth-note triplets in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 5/4, and 6/4. Basic combinations of dotted half, dotted quarter, quarter, eighth, and sixteenth in 6/8 and 3/8. Basic combinations of whole, half, quarter, and eighth in 2/2/ and 3/2. Use of cut time. Possible changes between meters in which the beat note remains constant. Isolated appearances of rhythms designated for later grades. Possible use of simple syncopation, use of ties and rests resulting in syncopated rhythms and dotted figures, and thirty-second note pairs designating terminations of Baroque-type trills.	A variety of single tongue articulation patterns (legato, staccato, and détaché). Possible use of articulated eighth-note slurs.	Symbols for standard rhythm, meter, treble clef pitch notation, dynamics, articulation, repeats, D.C., D.S etc. Symbols for simple ornamentation including grace notes, mordents, and trills: small cadenza-figures.	Basics of position and posture, tone production and dynamics, fingering, articulation, and notation reading (where applicable). Extension of rhythmical and metrical understanding. Control of dynamic spectrum p and f and crescendo/diminuendo over short phrases of two bars. Performance of phrases approximately four measures long incorporating leaps of up to one octave.
D	C1-G3; occasionally extended to A3. Major and minor key signatures using up to 4# and 4b. Free use of accidentals and enharmonics, accidentals signaling temporary modulation, and forms of the minor scale or chromatic scale.	Basic combinations of whole, dotted half, half, dotted quarter, dotted eighth, eighth, sixteenth, eighth-note triplets, sixteenth-note triplets, 32nd notes, quarter-note triplets and note groupings up to quintuplet in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 5/4, and 6/4. Basic combinations of dotted half, dotted quarter, quarter, eighth, dotted eighth, and sixteenth in 3/8, 5/8, 6/8, 7/8, 9/8, and 12/8 time in both slow and fast counting systems. Basic combinations of whole, dotted half, half, quarter, and eighth in 2/2 and 3/2. Use of cut time. Possible changes between meters in which the beat note remains constant. Possible extended syncopations & hemiola.	A variety of articulations, including flutter-tongue, and exploration of multiple tonguing.	Symbols for standard rhythm, meter, treble clef pitch notation, dynamics, articulation, repeats, D.C., D.S. etc. Symbols for simple ornamentation including grace notes, mordents and trills; small cadenza figures; notation of simple harmonics, multiphonics, and flutter tonguing.	Tone development. Ease with the lower 2½ octaves of the flute range. Extension of rhythmical understanding. Control of dynamic spectrum and p and f crescendo/diminuendo over short phrases of 2 bars. Increased stamina and breath control in phrases of four measures and more. Introduction to harmonics, multiphonics, and flutter tonguing.
E	C1-A3; occasionally extended to Bb3. Major and minor key signatures using up to 5# and 5b. Free use of accidentals and enharmonics, accidentals signaling temporary modulation, and forms of the minor scale and chromatic scale.	Moderately complex rhythmic combinations using values as short as thirty-second notes in slower tempos, and note groups of up to the sextuplet in faster tempos. Full spectrum of most common simple, compound, and mixed meters. Counting patterns for both slow and fast tempos. Possible changes between meters in which the beat note remains constant.	Free use of basic articulation patterns and techniques. Moderate use of multiple tonguing and flutter tonguing.	All standard notational symbols including free use of all the basic symbols for ornaments (trills, graces, gruppettos, mordents), and limited use of notation designating basic extended techniques. Limited use of cadenza passages.	Tone development (vibrato study is appropriate). Ease with lower 2½ octaves of the flute range. Extension of breath control. Control of dynamic spectrum pp to ff with extreme dynamics confined to moderate registers, terraced dynamics and crescendo/diminuendo over four to six bars. Use of harmonics, multiphonics, and flutter tonguing. Increased ease with varied musical styles.
F	C1-Bb3; occasionally extended to B3 Major and minor key signatures using up to 6# and 6b. Extended chromatic passages and complex patterns of accidentals.	Complex rhythms using values as short as thirty-second notes in slower tempos and note groups of up to the septuplet in faster tempos; extended passages of sixteenth notes or triplets. Full spectrum of most common simple, compound, and mixed meters. Counting patterns for both slow and fast tempos. Possible changes between simple and compound meters.	Free use of moderately complex patterns of standard articulation and multiple tonguing, sometimes mixing double and triple tonguing.	All standard notational symbols including free use of symbols for ornaments (trills, graces, gruppettos, mordents, appoggiaturas), alone or in combination. Very moderate use of notation designating basic extended techniques. Moderate use of cadenza passages.	Tone development with appropriate variations in tone color and vibrato. Use of expressive tempo changes and rubato. Control of dynamic spectrum pp to ff with extreme dynamics confined to moderate registers, terraced dynamics and crescendo/diminuendo over four to six bars. Fluency with the upper register of the flute. Ease with symbols for ornamentation. Familiarity with extended techniques. Focus on managing the challenges of piano as equal partner.
G	C1-Bb3; occasionally extended to C4 Major and minor key signatures using up to 7# and 7b. Extended chromatic passages and complex patterns of accidentals.	Complex rhythms using values as short as thirty-second notes in slower tempos and note groups of up to the septuplet in faster tempos; extended passages of quick notes. Full spectrum of most common simple, compound, and mixed meters. Counting patterns for both slow and fast tempos. Moderately complex changes between meters, including change of beat note. Possible absence of meter signature or established meter over limited sections.	Moderately complex patterns of multiple tonguing and complicated mixed articulation patterns.	All standard notational symbols including free use of symbols for ornaments (trills, graces, turns, mordents, appoggiaturas), alone or in combination. Moderate use of notation designating basic extended techniques. Free use of cadenza passages.	Tone development with appropriate variations in tone color and vibrato. Ease with phrasing that presents technical and musical challenges. Appropriate use of expressive tempo changes and rubato. Control of dynamic spectrum pp to ff in all registers, terraced dynamics, large-scale crescendo/diminuendo, dynamic accent markings, e.g. fp, fz, sfz. Focus on managing challenging issues of ensemble. Understanding and incorporating elements of period style. Familiarity with a full range of extended techniques.

H	C1-C4 Major and minor key signatures using up to 7# and 7b as well as alternate forms of key signatures (mixed sharps/flats in unusual combinations). Complex patterns of accidentals including unconventional carrying of accidentals throughout sections of music. Extended chromatic passages.	Free use of complex rhythm combinations with the possible addition of complicated accent patterns over and above implications of the meter. Full spectrum of most common simple, compound, and mixed meters. Complex changes between simple and compound meters. Possible absence of meter signature or established meter.	Moderately complicated mixed articulation patterns. Moderately complex patterns of multiple tonguing (e.g. mixing double and triple tonguing with legato).	All standard notational symbols including free use of symbols for ornaments (trills, graces, turns, mordents, appoggiaturas), alone or in combination. Frequent use of notation designating extended techniques. Free use of cadenza passages.	Tone development with appropriate variations in tone color and vibrato. Ease with phrasing that presents technical and musical challenges. Appropriate use of expressive tempo changes and rubato. Control of dynamic spectrum pp to ff in all registers, terraced dynamics, large-scale crescendo/diminuendo, dynamic accent markings, e.g. <i>fp</i> , <i>fz</i> , <i>sfz</i> . Focus on managing challenging issues of ensemble. Understanding and incorporating elements of period style. Familiarity with a full range of extended techniques and with free ornamentation.
I	(B0) C1-C4; occasionally extended to D4. Major and minor key signatures using up to 7# and 7b as well as alternate forms of key signatures (mixed sharps/flats in unusual combinations). Complex patterns of accidentals including unconventional carrying of accidentals throughout sections of music. Chromatic scale patterns through extended range.	Free use of complex rhythm combinations with the possible addition of complicated accent patterns over and above implications of the meter. Full spectrum of most common simple, compound, and mixed meters. Complex meter changes. Possible absence of meter signature or established meter. Possible use of graphic or spatial notation systems or both.	Complex patterns of multiple tonguing and mixed articulation patterns at faster tempos.	All standard notational symbols including free use of all symbols for ornaments, alone or in combination. Free use of notation designating extended techniques. Use of extended cadenza passages.	Familiarity with and interpretation of standard literature. Development of mature tone with expressive tone color and variety in vibrato use. Control of dynamic spectrum niente to ff in all registers, terraced dynamics, large-scale crescendo/diminuendo, dynamic accent markings, e.g. <i>fp</i> , <i>fz</i> , <i>sfz</i> . Control of extreme, sudden dynamic and range changes within stylistically, technically, and musically challenging phrases. Ability to sustain passages in extreme ranges. Comfort with the challenging and complex issues of ensemble. Increased emphasis on elements of period style, including use of free ornamentation, rubato, and extended techniques.
J	(B0) C1-D4. Major and minor key signatures using up to 7# and 7b as well as alternate forms of key signatures (mixed sharps/flats in unusual combinations). Complex patterns of accidentals including unconventional carrying of accidentals throughout sections of music. Chromatic scale patterns through extended range.	Free use of complex rhythm combinations with the possible addition of complicated accent patterns over and above implications of the meter. Full spectrum of meters. Complex meter changes. Possible absence of meter signature or established meter. Possible use of graphic and spatial notation systems or both.	Unexpected and complex articulation patterns with internal accents, multiple tonguing, flutter-tonguing, and other contemporary flute techniques. All of these may occur at very fast tempos.	All standard notational symbols including free use of all symbols for ornaments alone or in combination. Extensive use of notation designating extended techniques. Free use of extended cadenza passages. Possible use of chord symbols as the basis for improvisation.	Mastery and interpretation of works from the standard literature. Learning and interpreting both standard and less familiar complex repertoire. Mature tone development with expressive tone color and variety of vibrato use. Control of dynamic spectrum niente to ff in all registers, terraced dynamics, large-scale crescendo/diminuendo, dynamic accent markings, e.g. <i>fp</i> , <i>fz</i> , <i>sfz</i> . Control of extreme, sudden dynamic and range changes within stylistically, technically, and musically challenging phrases. Ability to sustain passages in extreme ranges. Increased emphasis on elements of period style, use of rubato, and of extended techniques.
K	(B0) C1-Eb4, occasionally extended higher. Major and minor key signatures using up to 7# and 7b as well as alternate forms of key signatures (mixed sharps/flats in unusual combinations). Complex and unconventional use of accidentals. Chromatic, whole tone, quartertone, microtone, nononic, octatonic, tritone, blues, modal and other scales or patterns used throughout the extended range of the flute. May possibly require ability to transpose.	Free use of complex rhythm combinations. Full spectrum of meters. Complex meter changes. Possible absence of meter signature or established meter. Possible use of graphic and spatial notation systems or both. Possible use of rhythmic notation from earlier musical periods which requires interpretation in an historical context, e.g. over- and under-dotting, inégale, and apparently incomplete rhythmic figures.	Use of complex articulation patterns, tonguing strokes, and other articulation syllables including multiple tonguing, flutter-tonguing and specialized techniques employed in contemporary and world musics (e.g. tongue-stop, tongue-click, tongue-pizzicato). Full range of expressive articulations including color-accents, legato-tongue (slur-plus-dot family of notations), and various styles of staccato.	All standard notational symbols. Free use of common symbols for ornamentation, complex articulation styles, and contemporary flute techniques. Possible use of notational systems from earlier musical periods requiring interpretation in an historical context, e.g. Baroque period ornamentation symbols, implied cadenzas or other free ornamentation. Notation expressing multiple voicing for performance by a single player. Notation for specialized tonal qualities such as tone-colors, vibrato speed, and dynamics. Possible use of chord symbols or figured bass as the basis for improvisation. Extensive use of notation designating extended techniques. Compositions employing no notation whatsoever over large sections of the work thus requiring free improvisation. Notation for synchronizing the use of electronic media in performance.	Mastery and interpretation of works from the standard and non-standard literature. Acquisition of complete flute skills leading to informed interpretation and compelling performance of works in all styles with a variety of media. Development and use of mature tone with a full range of expressive tone color, a variety of vibrato speeds, and the necessary tonal tools to convey the subtleties and meaning of a musical phrase. Development and use of timbral techniques including shakuhachi-style playing, extended multiple-sonorities, residual tones, jet whistle, and a spectrum of tone qualities ranging from diffuse to very bright. Control of dynamic spectrum niente to ff in all registers, terraced dynamics, large-scale crescendo/diminuendo, dynamic accent markings, e.g. <i>fp</i> , <i>fz</i> , <i>sfz</i> . Control of extreme, sudden dynamic and range changes within stylistically, technically, and musically challenging phrases. Ability to sustain passages in extreme ranges. Application of informed historical understanding in the performance of music from earlier time periods. Spontaneous and effective performances of such historical works with unique choices of phrasing, articulation, dynamics and ornamentation. Ability to create a musically appropriate cadenza for works in which cadenzas are usually included. Ability to perform comfortably with electronic media. Ability to improvise as required by the literature. Ability to apply all known techniques to other instruments of the family (piccolo, alto or bass flute), transposing as required.