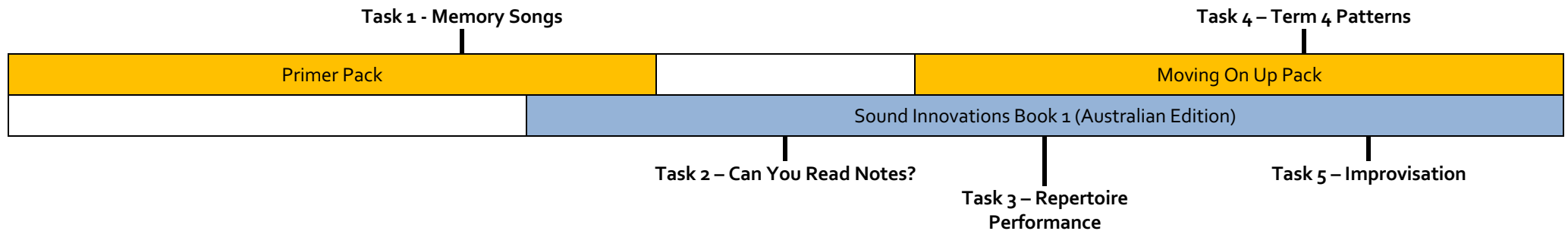


# BEGINNER BRASS COURSE OUTLINE

## CONTENT TIMELINE: TERMS 1 – 4

Students' first year of learning follows the parallel sequence below, starting with the *Primer Pack* they are provided with free of charge in Term 1. Details for the *Sound Innovations* method book and other necessary purchases are given in the [Beginner Brass Booklist](#) included at the start of the *Primer Pack*.



Students participate in a practical session on how to clean their instruments in addition to the regular programming outlined above. Most schools also organise a performance opportunity for their instrumental groups late in Term 4, which we will prepare for in our weekly lessons. After that the hire instruments are returned to IMSS for servicing (~ Week 8 or 9) then stored in readiness for the following year's beginners.

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## ASSESSMENT TASKS & GRADE CALCULATION

Students receive an Instrumental Music comment and grade in their school report at the end of each semester. These are based on 'formative' (informal observations taken during the learning process) and 'summative' (the results of formal assessment tasks) evidence compiled in lessons.

Ideally every student in every beginner class will complete all five scheduled assessment tasks throughout the year. As we only have access to 30 minutes of lesson time per week – which is inevitably disrupted by illness, swimming lessons, camps, NAPLAN and so on – your child's semester grade may be

calculated using their results from only the tasks I feel they had adequate preparation time for and were in attendance to complete. Were a student absent or unable to participate in lessons for extended periods they may receive 'Not Assessed' as their report grade, which is neither a 'pass' nor 'fail'.

As the number of assessments individual students complete varies so greatly each assessment task carries equal weighting and aims to incorporate multiple aspects of musicianship (e.g. performing from written music plus improvisation within one piece of repertoire). A student who completes all five tasks would therefore earn 20% of their final grade from each one, with the weighting rising for every missed activity. This system is intended to ensure students receive a fair, valid report and demonstrate a sufficiently wide range of musical skills with as few as one or two completed tasks per semester.

	TASK DESCRIPTION
Task 1a / 1b – Memory Songs	Students select and perform a short piece by memory that they have learned in class and rehearsed at home. The options become progressively more challenging, allowing students to anticipate and target their results based on the level of preparation they are willing to undertake. [1a = Memory Component, 1b = Technique & Musicianship*]
Task 2 – Can You Read Notes?	Students complete a one-page pitch identification activity in class. They provide the names and slide positions/fingerings for a range of notes that they first played in their Primer Packs then revised in notation within the <i>Sound Innovations</i> method book.
Task 3 – Repertoire Performance	Students perform a piece from <i>Sound Innovations</i> , first with the sheet music then again by memory. The piece will include common musical patterns (often referred to as Technical Work, such as scales and triads).
Task 4 – Term 4 Patterns	Students perform a set of technical exercises based on common musical patterns such as scales and triads in two common keys. The items become progressively more challenging, allowing students to anticipate and target their results based on the level of preparation they are willing to undertake. The C-Grade set is achievable for all students with regular attendance and home practise, while the B- and A-Grade options will require a greater time commitment to perform fluently.
Task 5 – Improvisation	Students perform a simple jazz tune that they have memorised in class, including an improvised solo using an appropriate scale. The melody and scale will utilise notes covered in <i>Sound Innovations</i> and the <i>Moving On Up Pack</i> .

\* Tasks 1 and 3 assess students' instrumental technique and musicianship using five evenly-weighted categories:

- **Beat & Rhythm** – Does the player maintain a steady beat throughout the piece and perform rhythmic patterns accurately in relation to it?
- **Pitch** – Does the player pitch notes accurately? This includes using the correct fingerings / slide positions along with an effective combination of embouchure (i.e. lip muscle position / tension) and air speed.
- **Tone Control** – Does the player maintain a steady, full sound across their playable range of notes? This includes maintaining smooth airflow from note to note to avoid unwanted gaps.
- **Articulation** – Does the player start notes clearly and vary the transitions between notes as indicated in the written music (e.g. slurs, staccato)? 'Articulation' focuses on using the tip of the tongue as if saying "Taa" or "Too" and timing it perfectly with the fast airflow that starts each phrase.
- **Phrasing & Dynamics** – does the player breathe (through the corners of their mouth, not through their nose!) in sensible places according to the melodic phrases? 'Dynamics' refers to using more or less air to create a stronger or quieter sound, as indicated in the written music.