Reed Exercises

1. Play a C on the reed alone, with a normal embouchure. Hold the C as long as you can. Then do the same thing at piano.
2. Play C, B, C, C#, C on the reed alone. Use the corners of your mouth to manipulate the pitch.
3. Play a long tone on C (or B or C#) on the reed alone, keeping the pitch steady.
4. Play a legato-tongued long tone on the reed alone.
5. Practice winding quarter notes on a C (or B or C#), like we sometimes do when working on staccato or vibrato. Listen for a clear, controlled beginning, a rounded ending, and consistent pitch. Try it at different dynamics (forte, mezzo forte, piano).
6. On C (or a B or C#), play a mezzo forte note with slow vibrato. Speed the vibrato up, then slow it down again, without changing pitch or volume or losing the note.
7. Do the same thing at a piano dynamic.
8. Practice tonguing legato. Try adding vibrato. Try it at piano and at forte.
9. Do the same thing staccato. Remember to end the note with the air.
10. Practice gradually speeding up your tonguing to see how fast you can go.
11. Try doing all of these things **without** holding the reed. You can keep a hand under it to make sure it doesn’t fall. The reed should stay fairly still when you’re tonguing.