



# Figurenotes.org

## Register

This pack explores the use of pitch and register in Laura Shighihara's Grasswalk.

Learners will:

- Compare high and low registers
- Recognise different registers through listening
- Relate register to different sound-worlds and connected characteristics
- Compose within boundaries of register

Contents:

- Movement Activity - High vs Low
- Listening Activity - Low Sounds
- Listening Activity - High Sounds
- Composition Activity - Crosses (Low) and Triangles (High)

Suggestions for adaptations and extensions are included within this document. Please tailor these activities to improve accessibility and engagement for the people you are working with. You can work through the activities in order or pick your favourite to focus on. Many of these activities can be done one-to-one, in small groups, or in larger classes.

These resources were created by [Drake Music Scotland](https://www.drakemusicscotland.org). We use [Figurenotes](https://figurenotes.org) to support learning. To find out more visit [Figurenotes.org](https://figurenotes.org). We'd love you to get in touch for more discussion and ideas. Email [Figurenotes@DrakeMusicScotland.org](mailto:Figurenotes@DrakeMusicScotland.org) or call 0131 659 4766.

# Register

## Movement Activity - High vs Low

In this activity we will identify, and respond to, sounds in a high register and a low register. It is helpful to have a keyboard or piano with Figurenotes stickers on it.

Stick a Figurenotes triangle symbol on the wall or floor at one end of the room, and a Figurenotes cross symbol at the other. You can use the flashcards on the following pages.

Position the group in the middle of the room. Explain that when they hear a high sound they must move towards the triangle. When they hear a low sound, they must move towards the cross. You can demonstrate a high sound and a low sound by playing triangles and crosses on your Figurenoted keyboard.

To start the game, play a single note or a short melody using only the notes labelled with crosses. These are your low sounds. Then switch to triangles, which are your high sounds. Once the group get the hang of it, really make them listen by heading back to the middle of the room between notes. This means you can do lots of one register in a row without them having to stand still for too long. You can use the supporting audio track for this game, if you prefer.

### Adaptations:

- Instead of moving around the room, crouch or reach down for low sounds and reach up for high sounds.
- Use buttons or switches which say high or low. Press in response to what you hear.
- Say 'low' in your silliest low voice, or 'high' in your squeakiest high voice, depending on the note you hear. Silly faces are an added bonus.

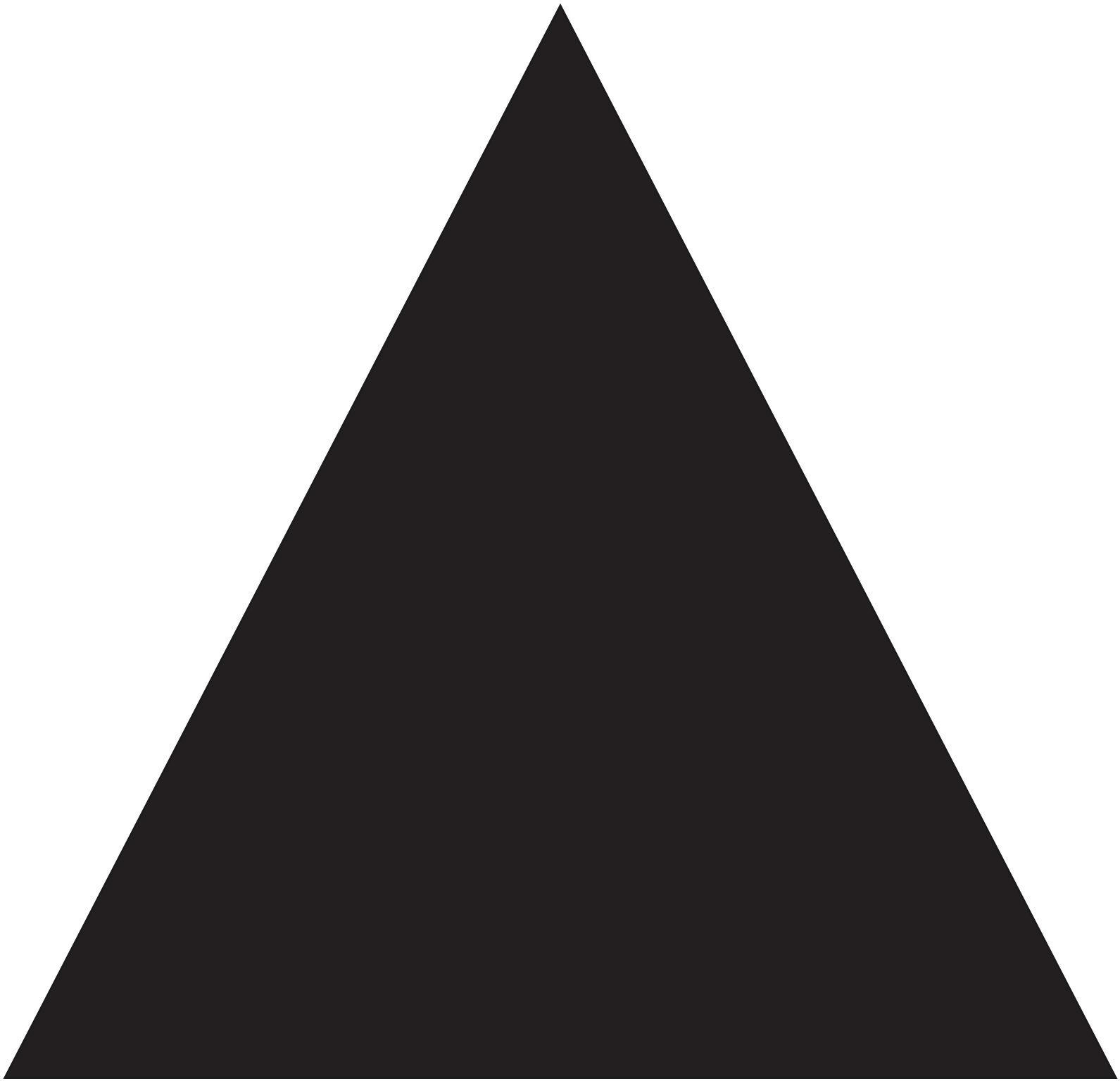
### Extension:

Get volunteers from the group to be the controller and play the sounds. The volunteers can play crosses or triangles on the keyboard, but they must leave enough of a gap between notes for people to move to the correct area of the room.

If you have a confident class or a small group where everyone is comfortable, you can start giving individual challenges, e.g. "Rebecca, this note is for you."



**LOW**



**HIGH**

# Register

## Listening Activity - Low Sounds

In this activity we will identify and discuss low sounds, making connections to imagery and similar sounds, as well as exploring instrumentation in this register.

Suggested excerpt for listening: Bass theme at rehearsal mark B

Listen to the bass theme at rehearsal mark B. Use the following questions to explore low sounds.

### Discussion:

- What do these low sounds make you think of? For example, an elephant walking, a rumbling lorry engine, something big and heavy, etc.
- Use drawings and words to create a class record of your ideas. You can also do this on an individual level.
- How low can we make our voices go?
- What is the lowest sound on your instrument?
- Which instrument in the orchestra goes the lowest?

### Extension:

Listen to rehearsal mark D to compare low and high sounds, as the piccolo and violins start playing at the same time as the bass tune.

### Extension - Exploring the Orchestra

This tune is played by tuba, cello, and double bass. The next page has images of these instruments. You can also spot them on the video.

Ask the learners how they think the sound is made on each instrument. Can you hear these instruments in other parts of the piece? Are there any other low-sounding instruments you can think of?

## Low-Sounding Instruments



**Double Bass**



**Tuba**



**Cello**

# Register

## Listening Activity - High Sounds

In this activity we will identify and discuss high sounds, making connections to imagery and similar sounds, as well as exploring instrumentation in this register.

Suggested excerpt for listening: Rehearsal mark E.

Listen to the section at rehearsal mark E. Use the following questions to explore high sounds.

### Discussion:

- What do these high sounds make you think of? For example, a mouse, something flying, something small and light, etc.
- Use drawings and words to create a class record of your ideas. You can also do this on an individual level.
- How high can we make our voices go?
- What is the highest sound on your instrument?
- Which instrument in the orchestra goes the highest?

### Extension:

Listen to rehearsal mark D to compare low and high sounds, as the piccolo and violins start playing at the same time as the bass tune used in the low sounds listening activity.

### Extension - Exploring the Orchestra

This tune is played by glockenspiel, harp, and upper strings (violins and violas). Ask the learners how they think the sound is made on each instrument. Can you hear these instruments in other parts of the piece? Are there any other high-sounding instruments you can think of?

The next page has images of orchestral instruments. Which ones are high-sounding and which are low-sounding? Try to spot them in the video.

**Do these instruments sound high or low?**



**Double Bass**

☐

High

☐

Low



**Piccolo**

☐

High

☐

Low



**Violin**

☐

High

☐

Low



**Tuba**

☐

High

☐

Low





# Register

## Composition Activity

In this activity we will compare high and low registers, discuss what the sounds convey, and compose short melodies in contrasting registers.

### Discussion:

Play the bass melody from rehearsal mark B. You can find the notation on the next page. Now play it in a high register. You can use the supporting audio tracks if you prefer.

Discuss the difference in the sound between these two versions of the same melody. Does the difference in register make you think of different things?

You can play other short melodies using crosses and then triangles, for example.

Compare them and discuss what they sound like. Explain that the notes are the same (i.e. the colours are the same), but one version is high and one is low (i.e. the shape is different).

### Composition:

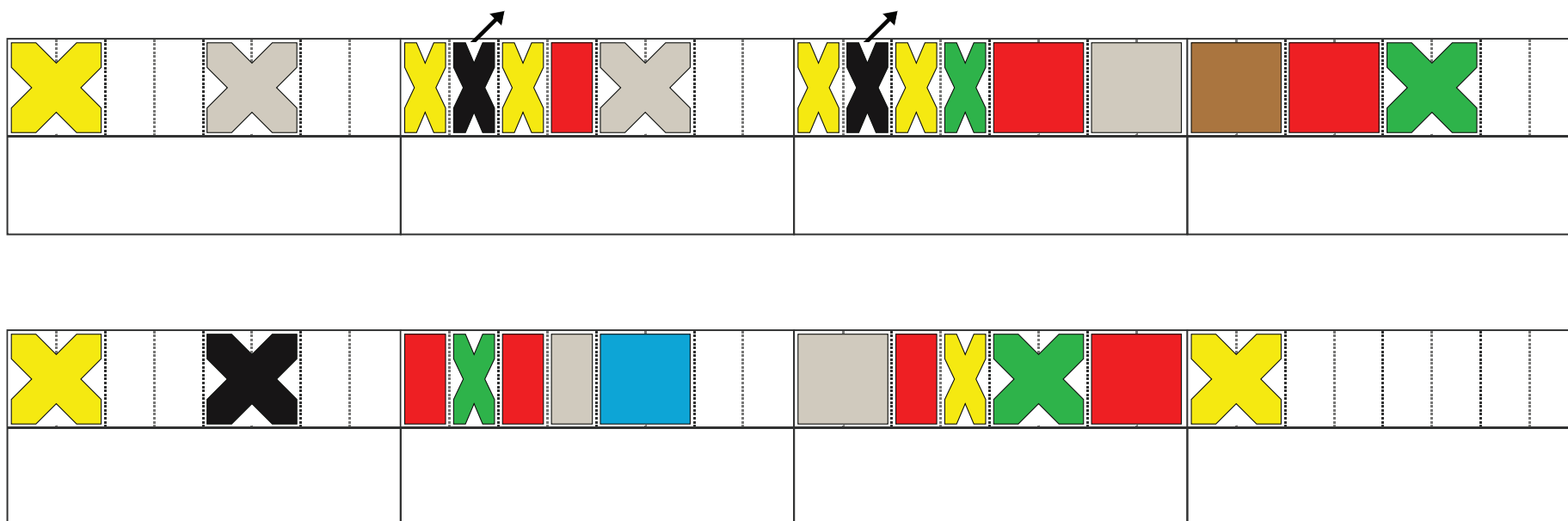
Ask the group to compose 4 bars of music using only crosses. You can limit the palette to a few notes/colours that sound good together. Use words from the low sounds listening activity to inspire you. You can also limit the note durations available, depending on what you've learned so far. Try all crotchets to start with.

Ask the group to compose 4 bars of music using only triangles. You can limit the palette to a few notes/colours that sound good together. Use words from the high sounds listening activity to inspire you. You can also limit the note durations available, depending on what you've learned so far. Try all crotchets to start with.

Play your compositions. Now try swapping the shapes, so your high notes become low notes, and vice versa.

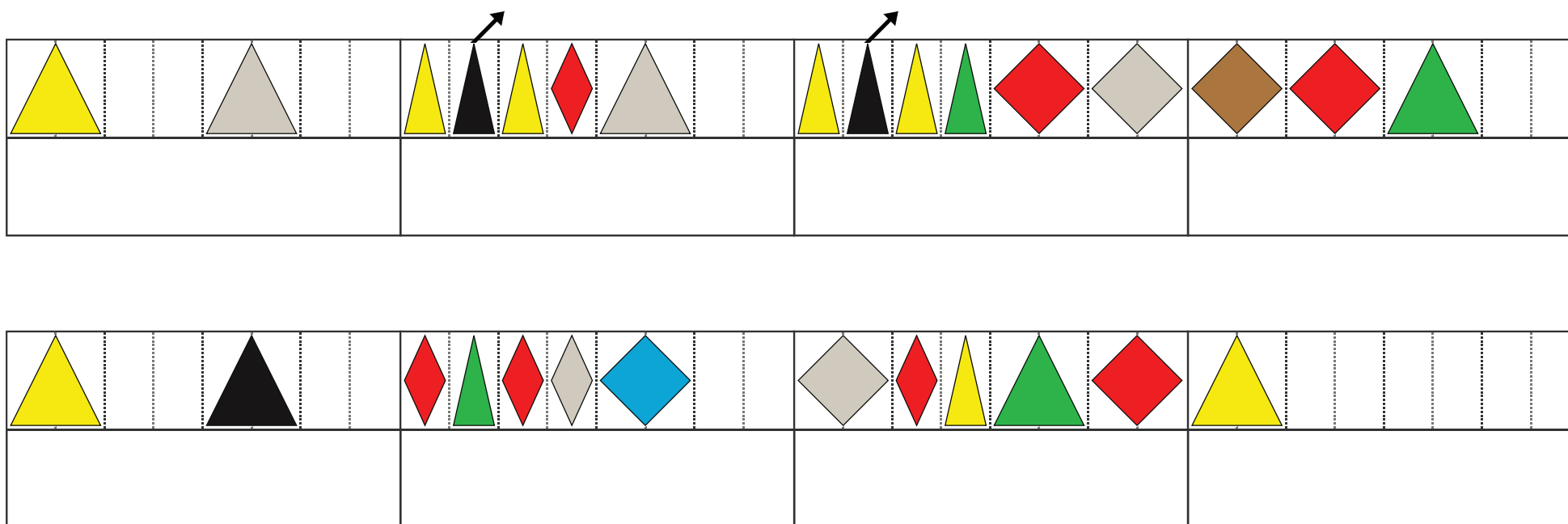
## Grasswalk - Bass Theme

Laura Shighihara



# Grasswalk - Bass Theme, but Higher

Laura Shighihara



## Suggestions for Limited Palettes

Use these ideas to avoid 'blank page anxiety' and provide a starting point for composition.

Set a limited length, such as 4 bars. Multiples of 4 is usually the best way to go.

Remember that you don't necessarily have to use the note names or terms such as 'crotchet'. You can use the visual nature of Figurenotes to show this information, use colour names, or phrases like 'one beat note'. Whatever suits your learners best.

### Pitch:

Using pentatonic scales can make a composition sound harmonious. You can present these in Figurenotes notation. Below are some examples of successful limited note palettes.

C major pentatonic: C D E G A



A C D E - Yellow, Red, Brown, Grey



G A B - Black, Yellow, Green

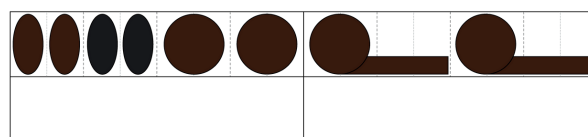
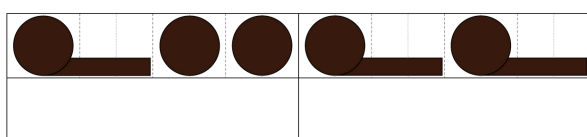


### Rhythm:

Limiting note duration makes it easier to compose rhythms, but you can also provide ready-made rhythmic ideas for the learner to assign pitch to.

Only use crotchets and quavers. You can reference the Plant and Zombies rhythms from the Rhythm resource.

Only use 2 types of note from this list: Minims, Crotchets, Quavers.



High



Low

