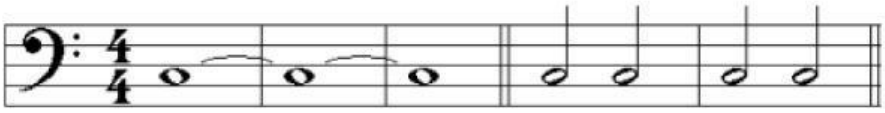
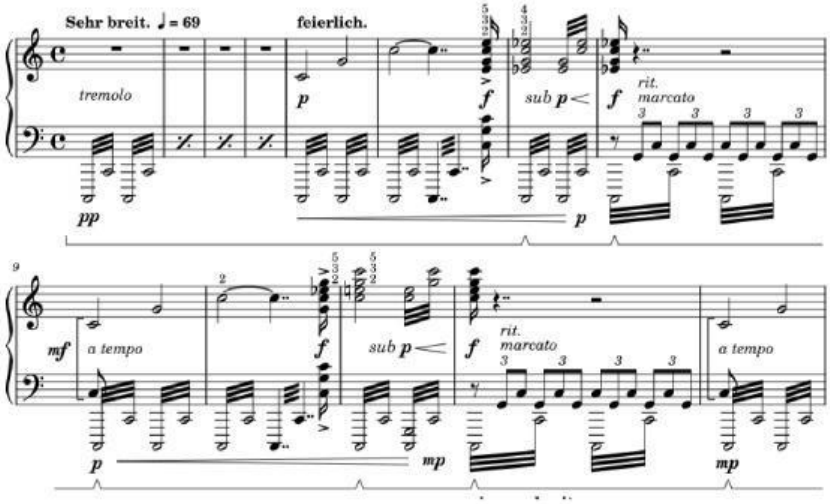
- # PEDAL / PEDAL POINT

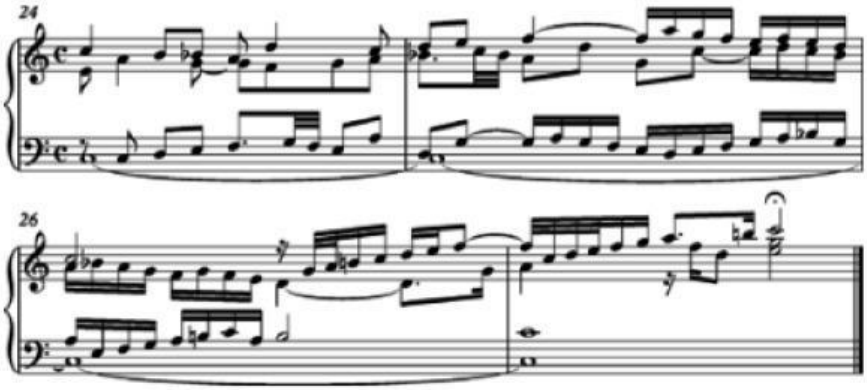
PEDAL NOTES, also called **PEDAL POINTS** or simply **PEDALS,** are notes of **LONG DURATION**, either **SUSTAINED** or **REPEATED**, often in **BASS LINE PART**, using the **ROOT** (where it's called a **TONIC PEDAL**) or the **FIFTH** (where' it's called a **DOMINANT PEDAL**). Changing chords, harmonies, and a melody line "fit over the top" of a **PEDAL** note.



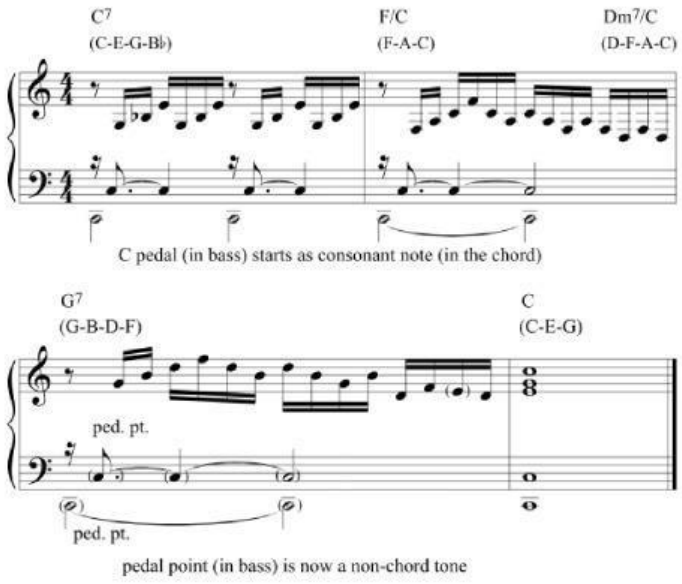
e.g. opening of Also Sprach Zarathustra



PEDAL NOTES are often used at the end of pieces of music called **FUGUES**, to give a clear sense of the key of the music, most commonly using a **TONIC PEDAL**. Look and listen to this example of a Fugue by another Baroque composer, J. S. Bach and see if you can identify the **PEDAL NOTE**.



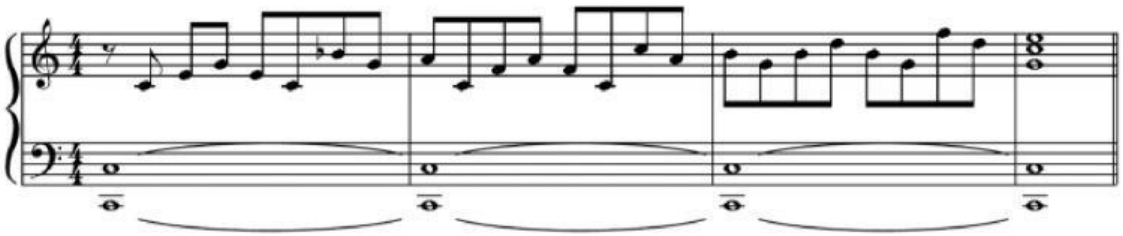
e.g. Bach Prelude in C major



LIVEWORKSHEETS

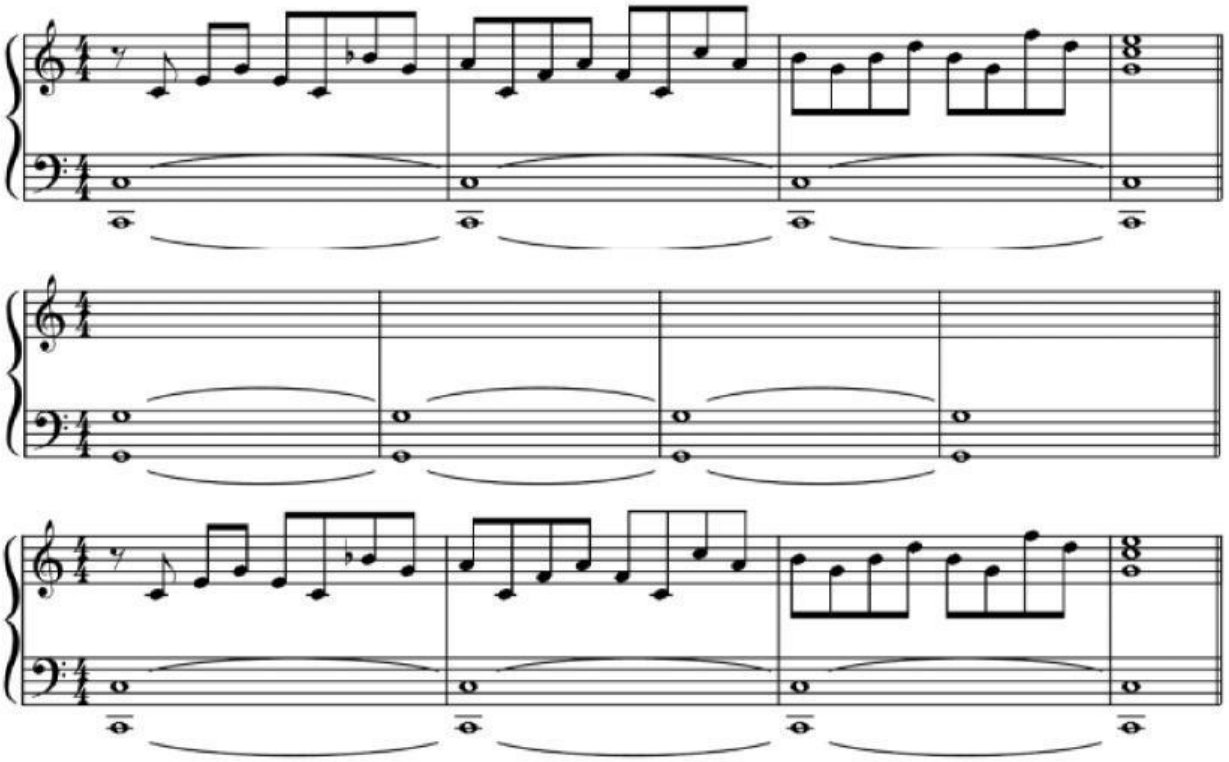
Performing the opening of a Bach Prelude that uses a TONIC PEDAL

Toccatas such as J. S. Bach's **Toccata in F Major** that you have watched and listened to the opening of, are exceedingly difficult to play! Bach did write some easier keyboard music, such as his **Little Prelude in C Major**, which opens in the "style" of a toccata with a **TONIC PEDAL**. Perform the opening of Bach's **Little Prelude in C Major**, using an organ sound/voice/timbre/sonority from your keyboard and making sure the **TONIC PEDAL** sounds continuously and doesn't 'die away' (as it would on a piano!)
If you're working in pairs, take turns to be the **"PEDAL"** and **"MELODY"** part and perform the melody part as fast as you're able to! Each of the bars is based on a **PRIMARY CHORD** in **C MAJOR: I7, IV, V7, I.**



Create your own "**B**" section to follow on from the opening of Bach's **Little Prelude in C Major**, but this time use a **DOMINANT PEDAL** on the note **G** in the **BASS** (in **OCTAVES**) for four bars. Create a melody line that will 'fit over the top' of the **DOMINANT PEDAL**, perhaps using quavers, as Bach did, or use Bach's chord pattern from the first 4 bars: **I7, IV, V7, I** in G Major (as this section is in the key of the **DOMINANT** note G) and include extra (passing) non-chord notes. Write your "**B**" section melody onto the correct stave below and then perform the toccata in **TERNARY FORM: ABA**.

Toccata in C Major (based on Bach's Little Prelude in C Major)



Stretch and Challenge: How can you make your toccata even more 'showy'? Create an extended **PEDAL SOLO** section for the organist to 'show off'. Move the **PEDAL NOTE** into the treble clef (higher in pitch), perhaps 'over the top' of the pedal solo? (It's still called a **PEDAL** even in a different pitch – as long as it's either a sustained, or repeated note).
Use **SEMIQUAVERS** in your **B** section to make the duration of the notes even shorter and appear faster and more technical!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Pedal Notes in Jazz

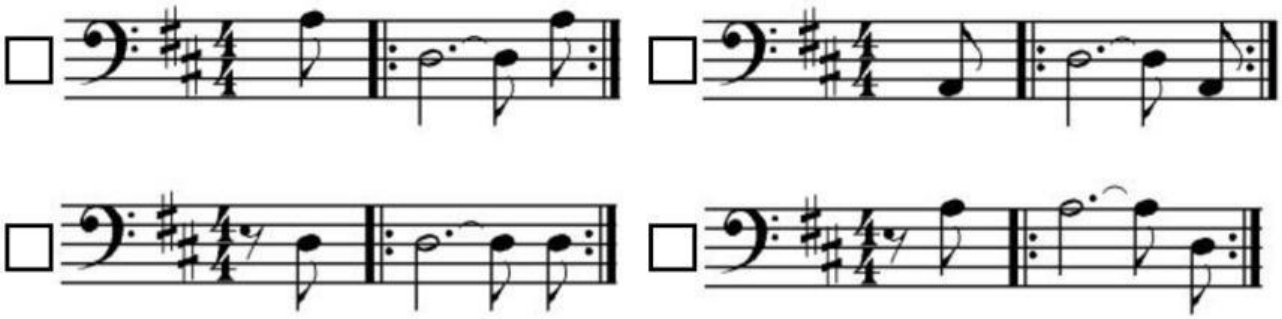
Listen to the opening extract of a track called *"Shhh/Peaceful"* by the American jazz trumpeter, composer, and bandleader musician Miles Davis *(shown right)* from his 1969 album called *"In a Silent Way"*. As you listen, answer the questions below.

1. In which 'musical layer' can you hear the **PEDAL**?

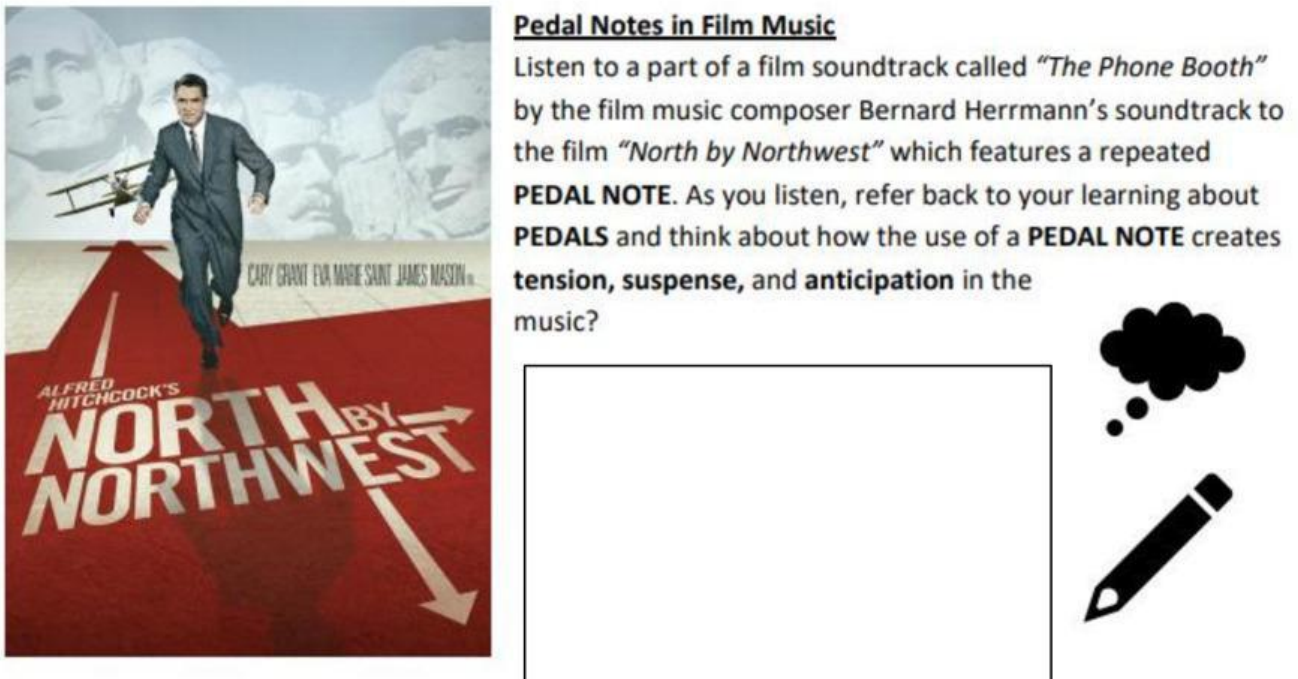
- ☐ In the Melody Line
- ☐ In the Bass Line
- ☐ In a Counter Melody Line
- ☐ In the Percussion Part

2. What musical instrument is playing the **PEDAL**?

3. The **PEDAL** in *"Shhh/Peaceful"* is made up of two notes, one long sustained note which keeps getting interrupted by a shorter one (a quaver). Which of the following patterns best describes the pattern of the **PEDAL**?



4. Apart from the musical instrument playing the **PEDAL**, what other instruments can you hear?



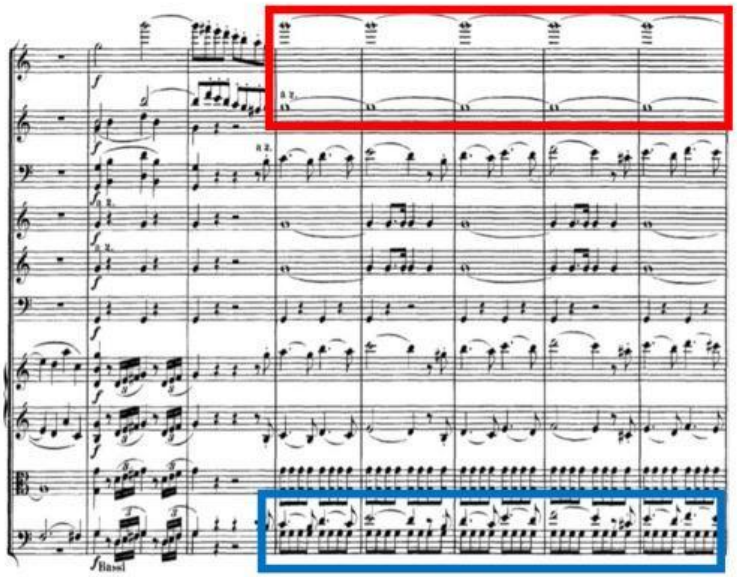
Pedal Notes in Film Music

Listen to a part of a film soundtrack called *"The Phone Booth"* by the film music composer Bernard Herrmann's soundtrack to the film *"North by Northwest"* which features a repeated **PEDAL NOTE**. As you listen, refer back to your learning about **PEDALS** and think about how the use of a **PEDAL NOTE** creates **tension, suspense,** and **anticipation** in the music?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

• INVERTED PEDAL

An **INVERTED PEDAL** is a pedal in the TOP PART instead of the bass



- Listen to the inverted pedal in *'With or without you'* by U2. As you listen, identify the chord progression that is heard repeatedly. It is in D major

☐

I	IV	VI	V

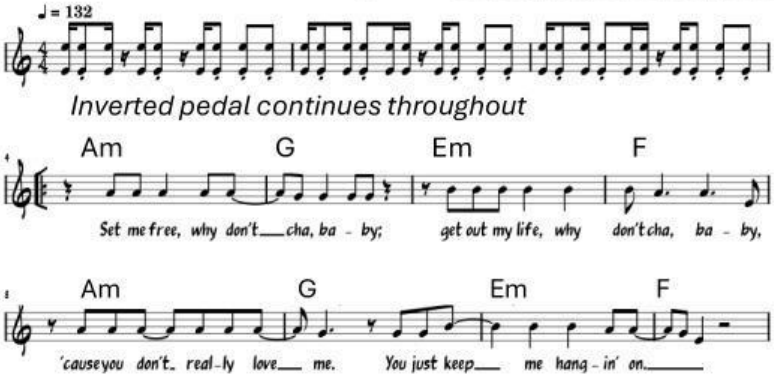
☐

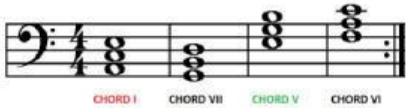
I	VI	IV	V

☐

I	V	VI	IV

- Listen to the inverted pedal in *' The Wizard and I '* from *Wicked*
- Listen to the inverted pedal in *'You keep me hangin' on'* by the Supremes.





Name the key	☐ C major ☐ F major ☐ G major ☐ A minor
What instrument plays the **inverted pedal**?	
What other instruments do you hear?	
What RHYTHMIC features do you hear?	

LIVEWORKSHEETS

• GROUND BASS

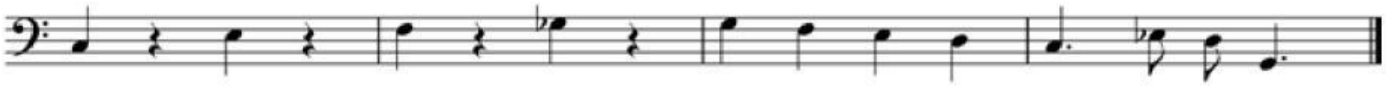
This is a **theme in the bass which is repeated many times** while the upper parts are varied.

e.g. Monteverdi *Zefiro torna*

- Listen to the music and fill in concepts for each category in the grid below:

Melody/ Harmony	Rhythm/ Tempo	Texture/ Structure	Timbre *(Instruments/ techniques)*	Style	Dynamics

e.g. Little Brown Jug – NB this is an example of SWING music



- Listen to the music and fill in concepts for each category in the grid below

Melody/ Harmony	Rhythm/ Tempo	Texture/ Structure	Timbre *(Instruments/ techniques)*	Style	Dynamics

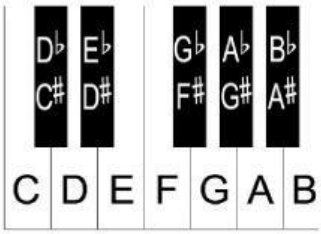
LIVEWORKSHEETS

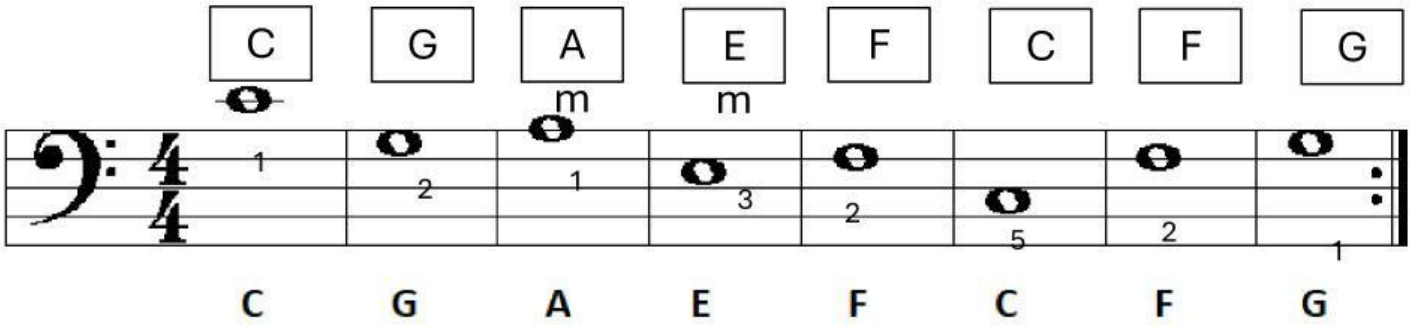
GROUND BASS

– LH chords or play single LH notes

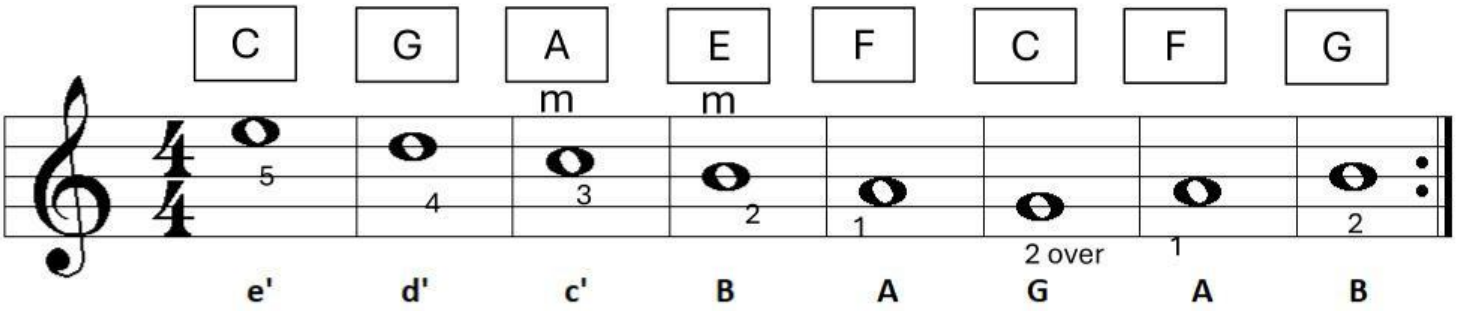
To play Am – hold down A and G# (black key to left of A)

To play Em – hold down E and D# (black key to left of E)

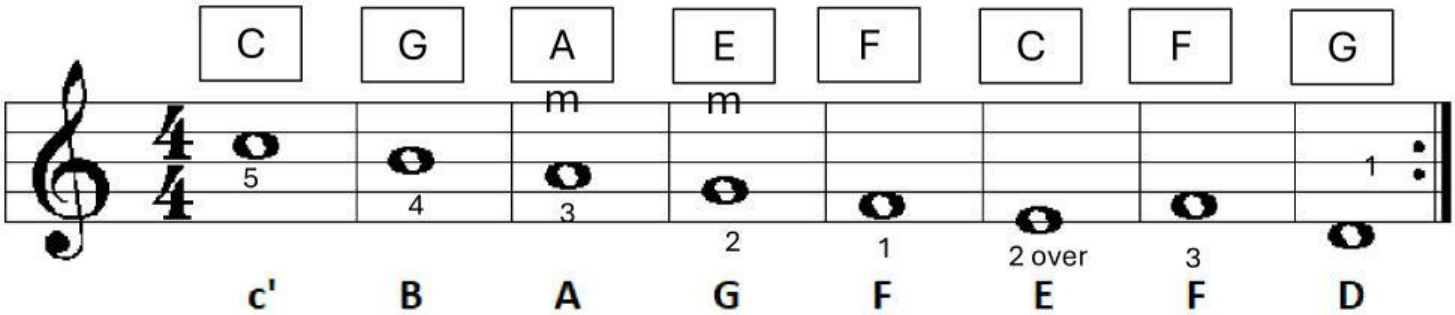




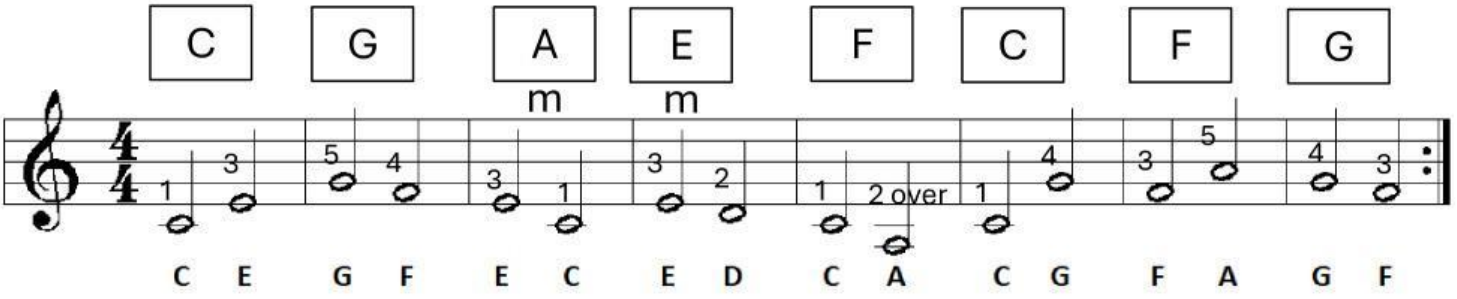
COUNTER MELODY 1

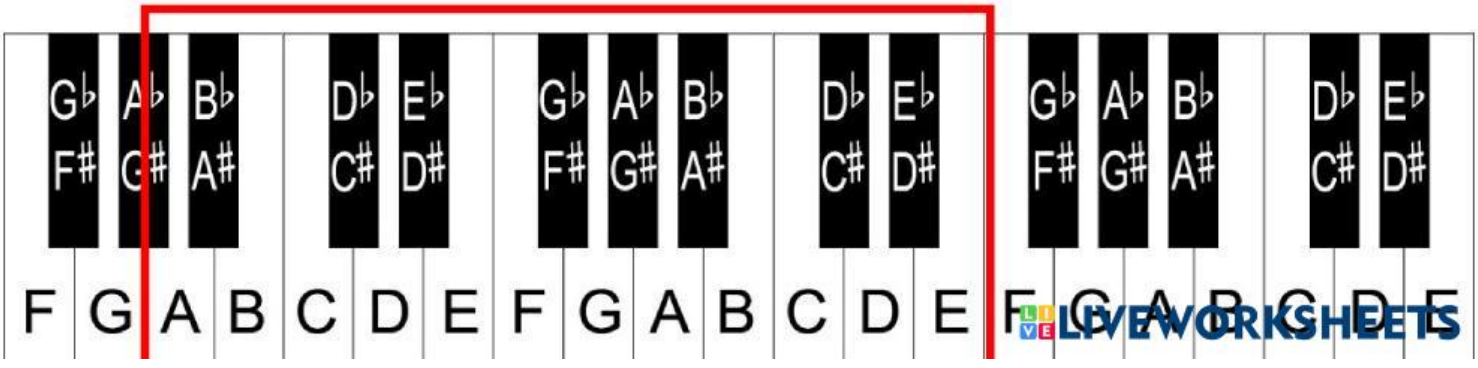


COUNTER MELODY 2



COUNTER MELODY 3





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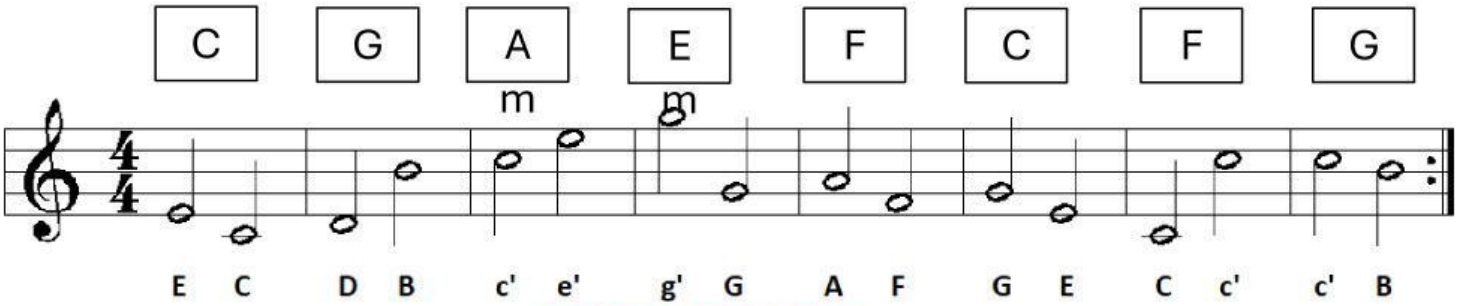
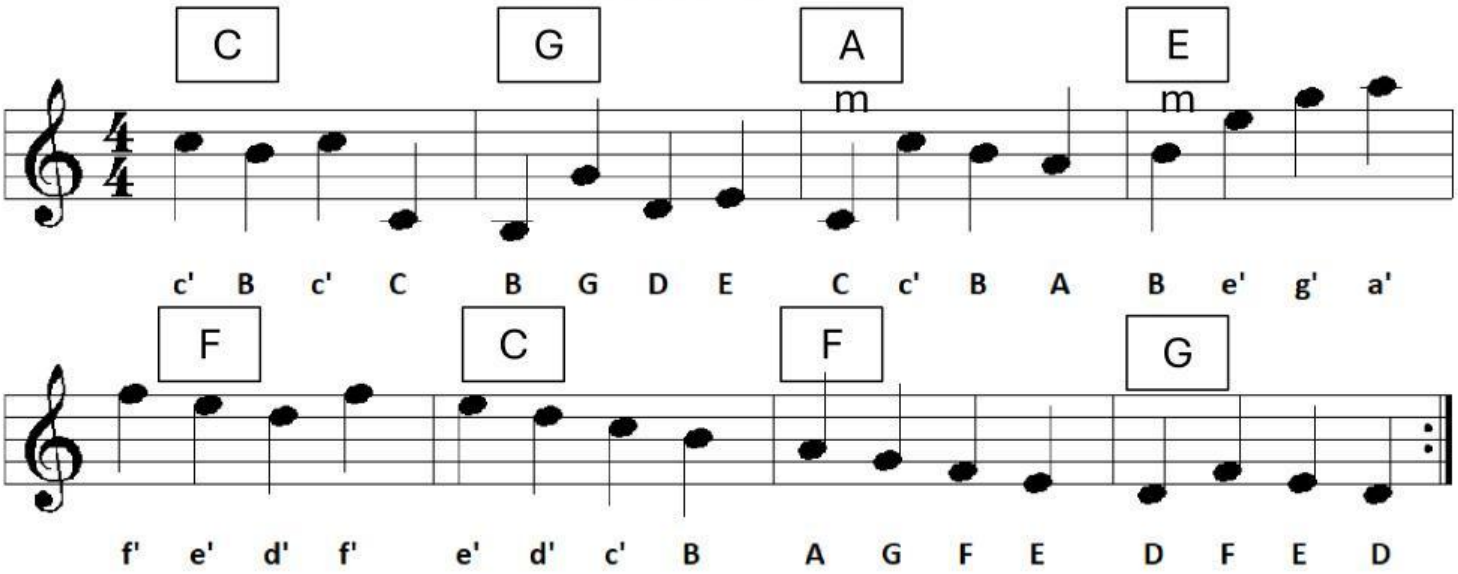
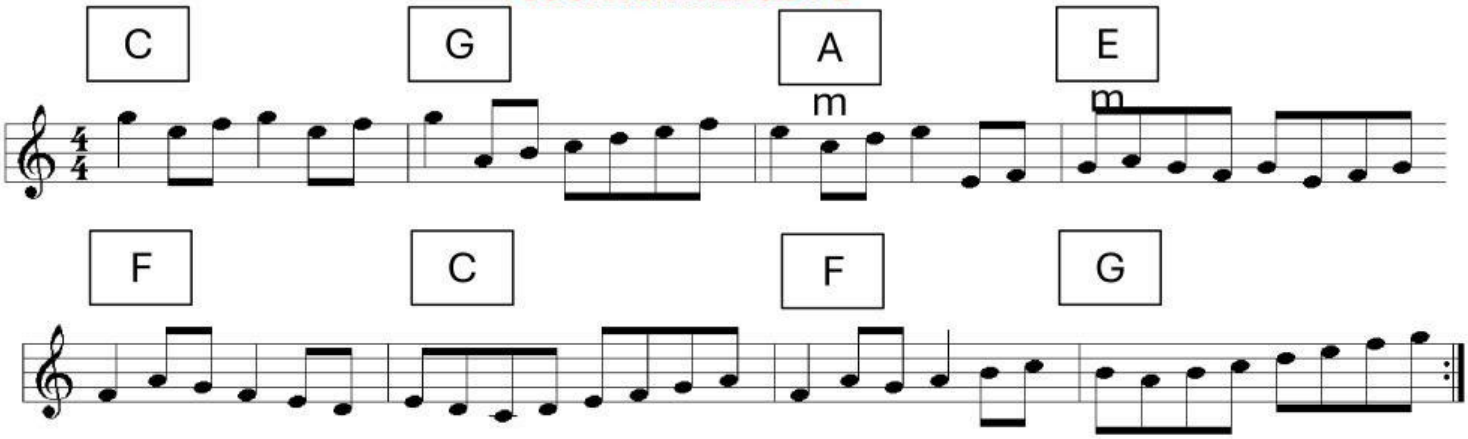
COUNTER MELODY 4



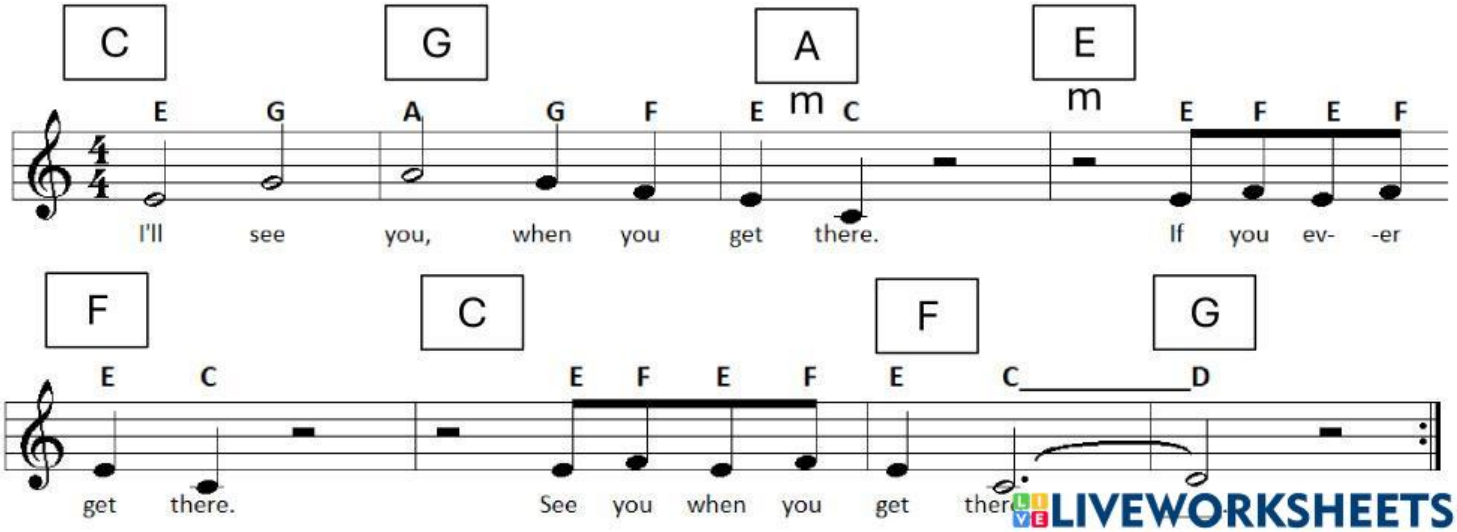
COUNTER MELODY 5



COUNTER MELODY 6

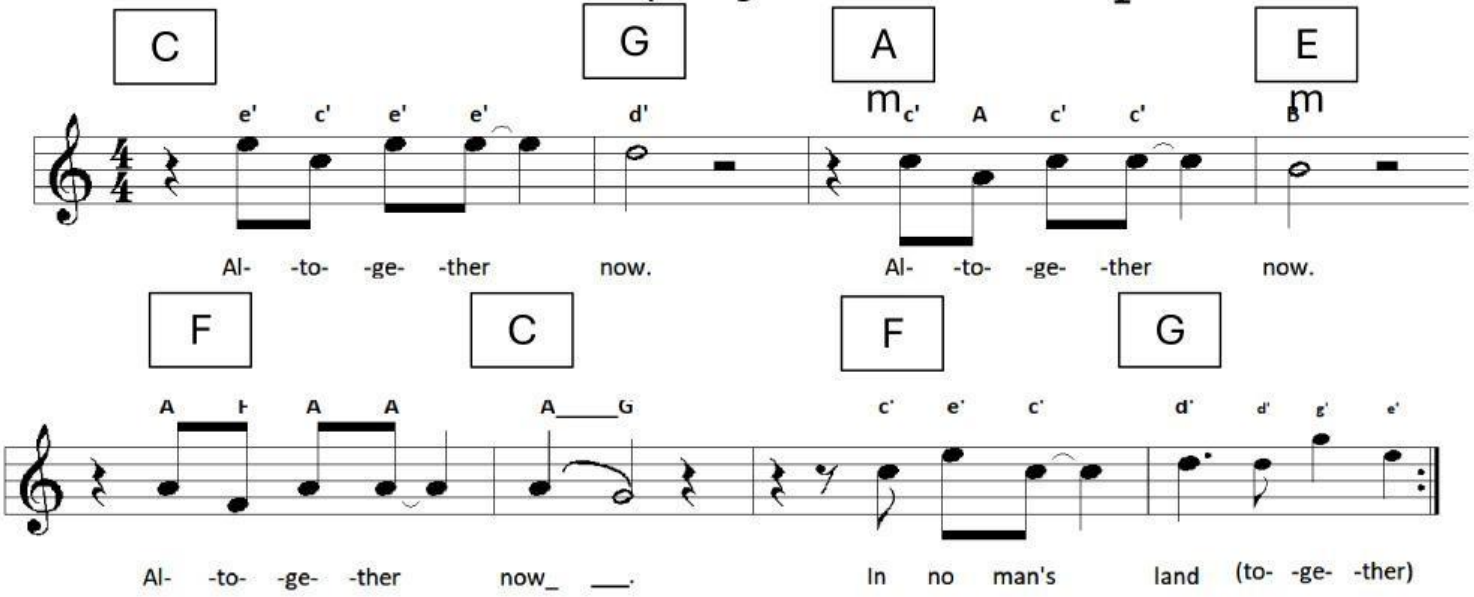


COUNTER MELODY 7 (*"C U When U Get There" - Coolio*)

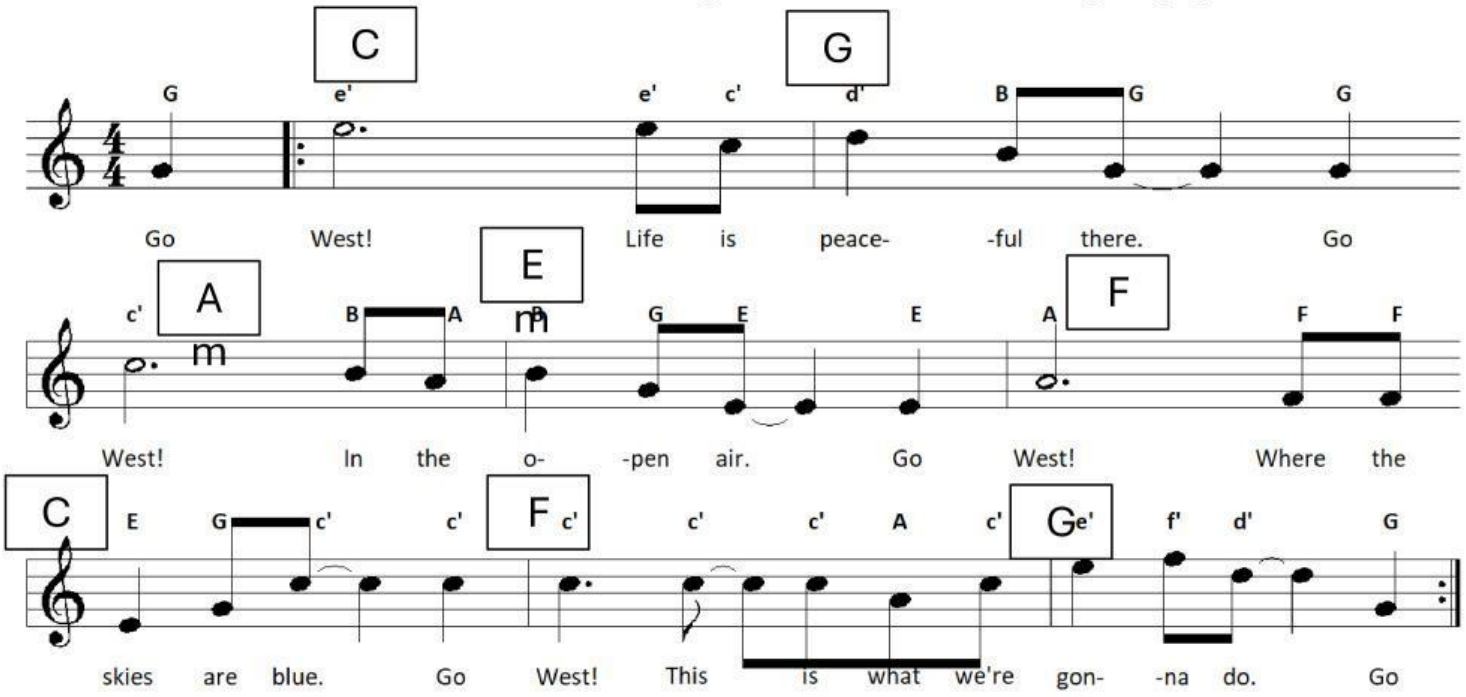


LIVEWORKSHEETS

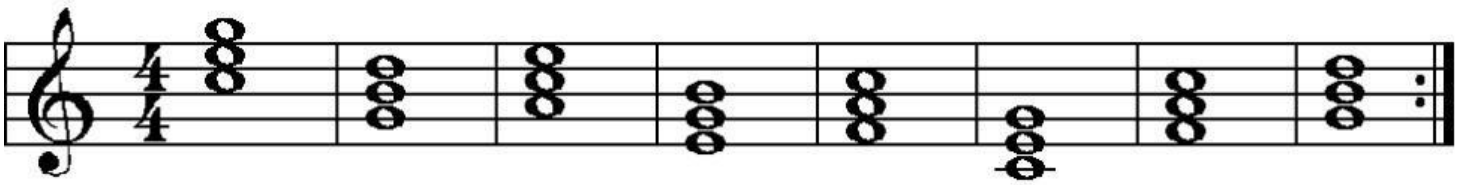
COUNTER MELODY 8 (*"Altogether Now"- The Farm*)



COUNTER MELODY 9 (*"Go West"- The Pet Shop Boys*)

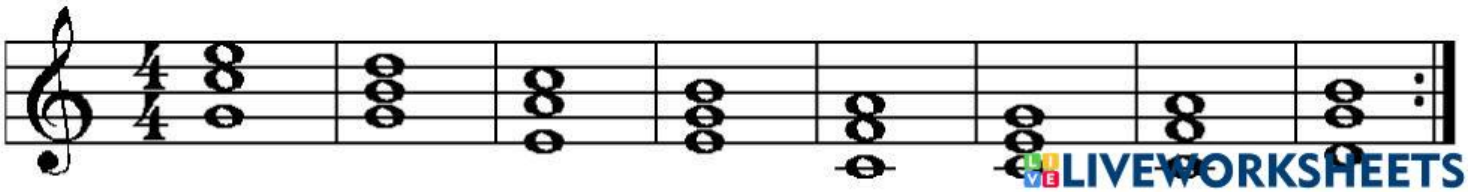


CHORDS AS TRIADS



C	G	Am	Em	F	C	F	G
CHORD I	CHORD V	CHORD VI	CHORD III	CHORD IV	CHORD I	CHORD IV	CHORD V

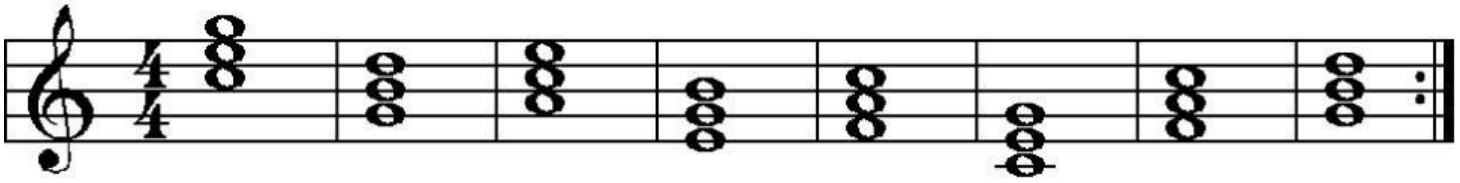
'SMOOTH' CHORDS



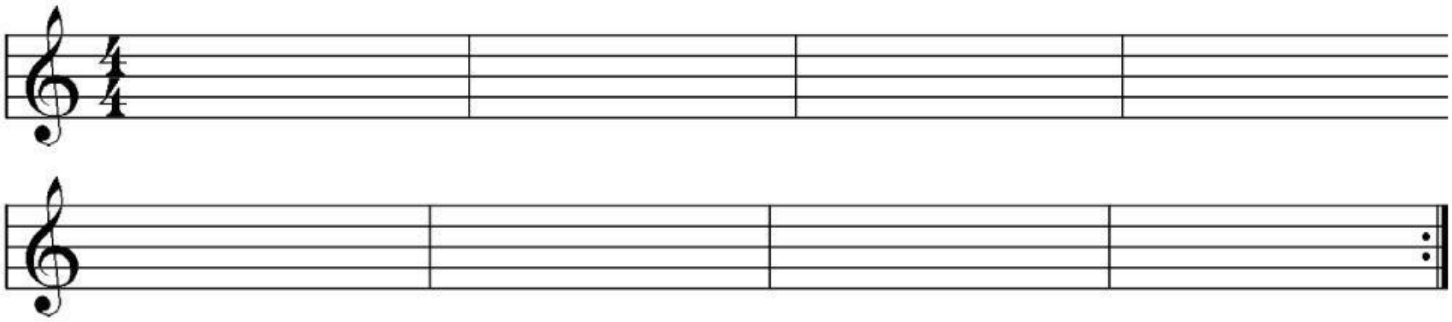
LIVEWORKSHEETS

CREATING YOUR OWN COUNTER MELODIES

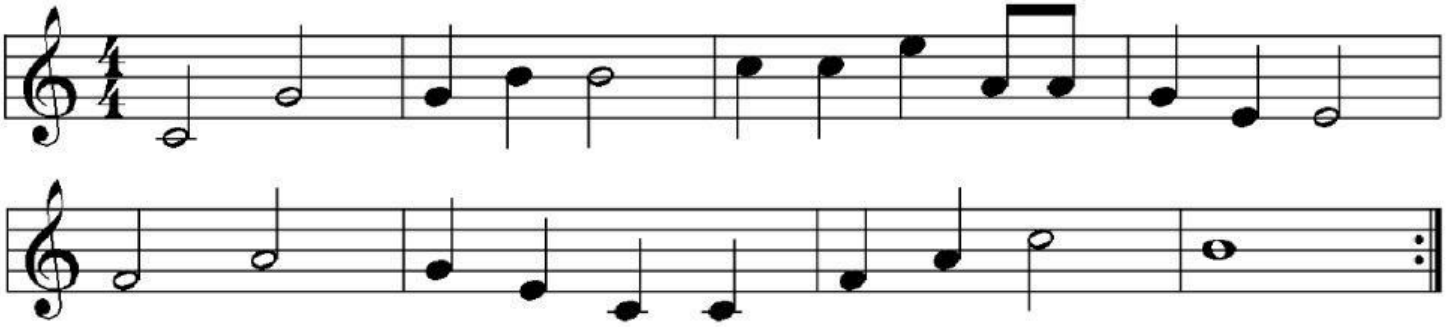
Using some of the notes from each **CHORD**, create your own **COUNTER MELODY** as an extra **TEXTURAL LAYER** and as a means of **VARIATION** within Pachelbel's Canon. The chord pattern and some examples are shown below. Add some **PASSING NOTES** (non-chord notes) to your counter melody to provide further **VARIATION.**



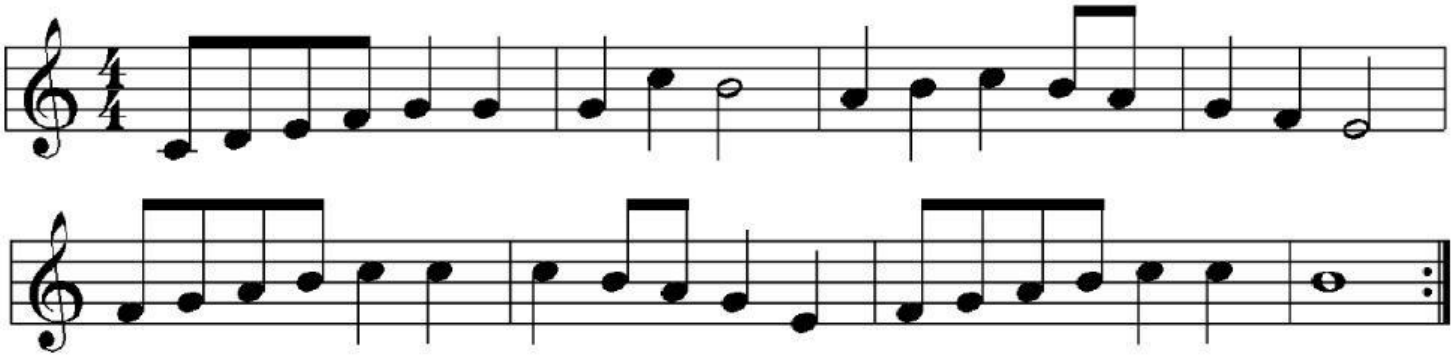
COUNTER MELODY 10 – My own Counter Melody



Example Counter Melody using only the notes from the chords.



*Example Counter Melody using notes from the chords with added **PASSING NOTES** (non-chord notes).*



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