

Piano Note Detective

Ear Detective: Higher, Lower or Same?

A grown-up plays two notes on the piano. Was the second one higher, lower or the same? Listen like a detective, then find the sounds yourself on the keys.



IN THIS FREE CASE

- 3 listening cases for beginners
- Higher or lower: big jumps first
- The same note, or a neighbor?
- Three-note paths: up, down, turn
- Choice cards to hold up
- A listening script for the adult



Keys to the right sound higher; keys to the left sound lower.

1 Listen to two notes

2 Hold up a card

3 Check at the piano

4 Play it yourself

Digital download · Print at 100% on US Letter · For beginners, before or alongside note reading · Three sittings of about 10 minutes · A grown-up plays a piano or keyboard

How the case file works

Three cases, about 10 minutes each. You play; the detective listens.

For a beginner of any age who has not learned the staff yet. You play two notes on a piano or keyboard; the detective decides if the second note is higher, lower or the same. The listening script (for you) lists every note to play. Keep it out of sight: the student page shows only the choices.

EACH CASE

The story	Read it aloud together. It says what the detective is looking for.
Learn	The rule for this case, with a picture. Point at it while you read it.
Tasks	Short listening tasks: circle what you hear. Play tasks have no single answer.

YOU NEED

- A piano or keyboard, played by a grown-up
- The choice cards at the back (cut out)
- Three short sittings, one case each

GOOD TO KNOW

- Play both notes at the same loudness: louder is not higher.
- Big jumps are easy; steps next door are harder. Go back a case if it gets hard.
- Let the detective sing the two notes back before answering.

NOT A METHOD BOOK

Ear practice for beginners, not piano lessons. The book makes no sound: a grown-up plays every example on a real piano or keyboard.

Case 1: Up or Down?

Is the second note higher or lower?

THE STORY

A bird sings high; a big drum sounds low. Detective, your ears are your tools. Listen to each pair of notes and decide which way the sound went.

LEARN

- Higher means the sound goes up. Lower means it goes down.
- On a piano, keys to the right sound higher, keys to the left sound lower.
- Listen to the whole sound before you answer.



Left: lower. Right: higher.

1 Listen to each pair. Is the second note higher or lower? Circle it.

Listen: a grown-up plays these on a piano (see the listening script).

- | | | | | | |
|----|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. | ☐ higher | ☐ lower | 2. | ☐ higher | ☐ lower |
| 3. | ☐ higher | ☐ lower | 4. | ☐ higher | ☐ lower |
| 5. | ☐ higher | ☐ lower | 6. | ☐ higher | ☐ lower |

2 Your turn: play one low key and one high key. Let the grown-up say which came first.

☐ I played it

☐ I played it with help

Case 2: The Same Note?

Higher, lower, or the very same note

THE STORY

Now some pairs are tricky: the notes are next-door neighbors, and some are exactly the same.

LEARN

- The same note played twice sounds exactly the same.
- Next-door notes are close: listen carefully for a small step up or down.
- Sing the two notes back. Did your voice move?

1 Listen to each pair. Higher, lower or the same? Circle it.

Listen: a grown-up plays these on a piano (see the listening script).

1. ☐ higher ☐ lower ☐ same

2. ☐ higher ☐ lower ☐ same

3. ☐ higher ☐ lower ☐ same

4. ☐ higher ☐ lower ☐ same

5. ☐ higher ☐ lower ☐ same

6. ☐ higher ☐ lower ☐ same

7. ☐ higher ☐ lower ☐ same

8. ☐ higher ☐ lower ☐ same

2 The grown-up plays Middle C. Play a key that sounds higher, then one that sounds lower.

☐ I played it

☐ I played it with help

Case 3: Follow the Path

Three notes: up, down or a turn

THE STORY

The last clue is a little tune of three notes. Which path does it take?

LEARN

- Three notes make a path: up and up, down and down, or a turn.
- Draw the path in the air with your finger while you listen.
- Then play it back from the same first key.

1 Listen to each three-note path. Circle its letter.

Listen: a grown-up plays these on a piano (see the listening script).

A

up, then up

B

down, then down

C

up, then down

D

down, then up

Round 1 A B C D

Round 2 A B C D

Round 3 A B C D

Round 4 A B C D

Round 5 A B C D

Round 6 A B C D

2 Make your own three-note path with three different keys (no key twice in a row). The grown-up listens and guesses: up, down or a turn?

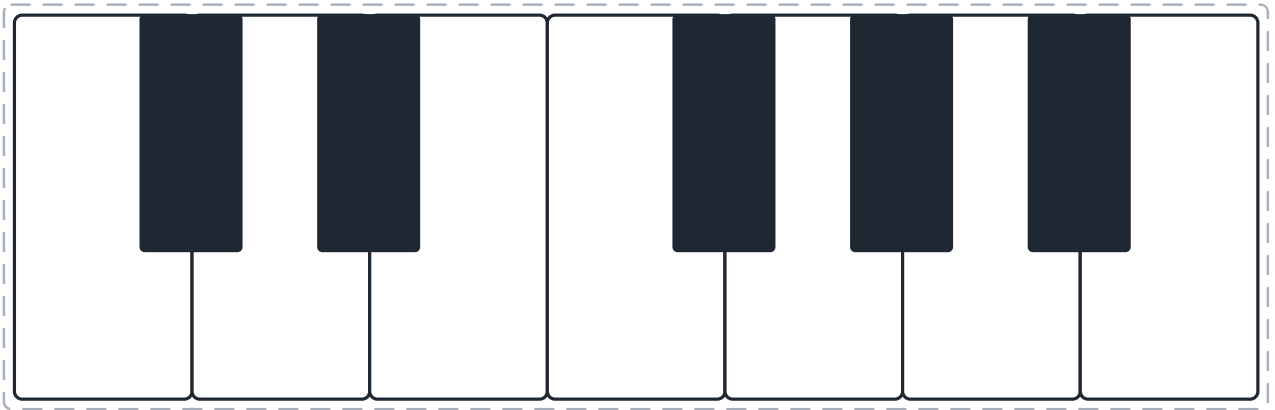
I played it

I played it with help

Paper keyboard

Cut out the rows and tape them in order, low to high. White keys are about as wide as a real piano's.

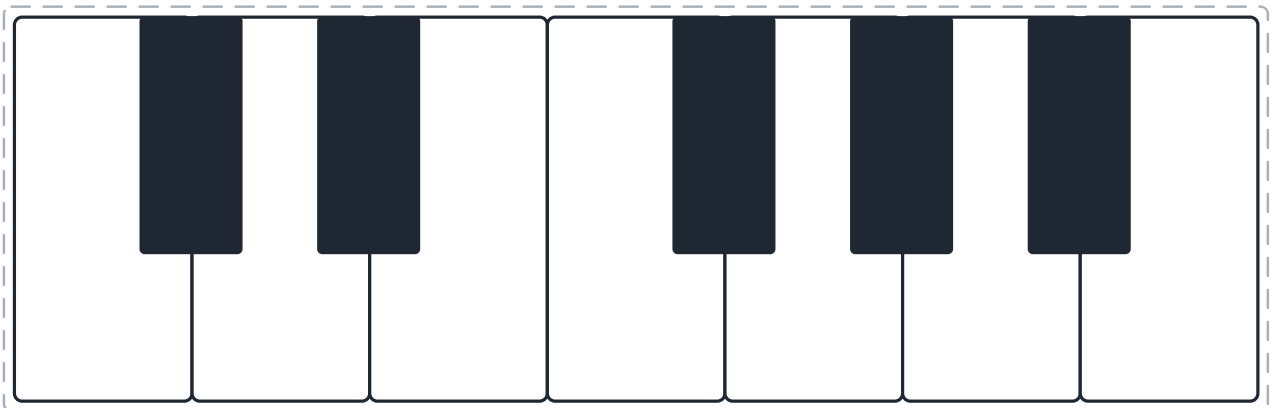
Low



Middle



High



Only Middle C is labeled: finding the other keys is the detective's job. Tape the rows edge to edge (low on the left) to make one long keyboard.

Listening script

Teacher-led listening: what to play for every listening task.

Nothing in this book makes a sound. For each listening task, play (or clap) what the script says while the learner looks only at their own page. Play at a steady, comfortable speed; repeat a round if asked. Keep this page out of sight.

Finding the keys: C4 is Middle C, the white key just left of the two black keys nearest the middle of the keyboard. D4, E4, F4, G4, A4 and B4 are the white keys to its right; C5 is the next C up. Point to the first key of a pattern before you play it.

CASE 1 · TASK 1 (PND41-C1-T1)

- 1. Play C (C4), then G (G4).
- 2. Play A (A4), then D (D4).
- 3. Play E (E4), then C (C5).
- 4. Play G (G4), then C (C4).
- 5. Play D (D4), then A (A4).
- 6. Play B (B4), then F (F4).

CASE 2 · TASK 1 (PND41-C2-T1)

- 1. Play E (E4), then E (E4).
- 2. Play F (F4), then G (G4).
- 3. Play C (C5), then B (B4).
- 4. Play A (A4), then A (A4).
- 5. Play D (D4), then E (E4).
- 6. Play G (G4), then G (G4).
- 7. Play B (B4), then C (C5).
- 8. Play F (F4), then E (E4).

CASE 3 · TASK 1 (PND41-C3-T1)

- Round 1: play option A: C4, E4, G4.
- Round 2: play option C: C4, G4, E4.
- Round 3: play option B: G4, E4, C4.
- Round 4: play option D: G4, C4, E4.
- Round 5: play option C: C4, G4, E4.
- Round 6: play option A: C4, E4, G4.

Choice cards

Cut out the cards. Hold one up after each pair or path.

HIGHER

The second note went up.

LOWER

The second note went down.

SAME

The very same note again.

A: up, then up

Three notes, each higher.

B: down, then down

Three notes, each lower.

C: up, then down

Up, and turn back down.

D: down, then up

Down, and turn back up.

PLAY IT AGAIN

Hold this up to hear it once more.

Answers

Every answer comes with its reason. Read the reasons aloud: they teach.

CASE 1 • UP OR DOWN?

Task 1

PND41-C1-T1

1 higher • 2 lower • 3 higher • 4 lower • 5 higher • 6 lower

The adult plays C (C4) then G (G4): the second note is higher. The adult plays A (A4) then D (D4): the second note is lower. The adult plays E (E4) then C (C5): the second note is higher. The adult plays G (G4) then C (C4): the second note is lower. The adult plays D (D4) then A (A4): the second note is higher. The adult plays B (B4) then F (F4): the second note is lower.

Task 2

PND41-C1-T2

Any low key (to the left) and any high key (to the right).

CASE 2 • THE SAME NOTE?

Task 1

PND41-C2-T1

1 same • 2 higher • 3 lower • 4 same • 5 higher • 6 same • 7 higher • 8 lower

The adult plays E (E4) then E (E4): the second note is the same. The adult plays F (F4) then G (G4): the second note is higher. The adult plays C (C5) then B (B4): the second note is lower. The adult plays A (A4) then A (A4): the second note is the same. The adult plays D (D4) then E (E4): the second note is higher. The adult plays G (G4) then G (G4): the second note is the same. The adult plays B (B4) then C (C5): the second note is higher. The adult plays F (F4) then E (E4): the second note is lower.

Task 2

PND41-C2-T2

Any key to the right of Middle C, then any key to the left.

CASE 3 • FOLLOW THE PATH

Task 1

PND41-C3-T1

1 A • 2 C • 3 B • 4 D • 5 C • 6 A

Round 1: the adult plays A (C4, E4, G4). Round 2: the adult plays C (C4, G4, E4). Round 3: the adult plays B (G4, E4, C4). Round 4: the adult plays D (G4, C4, E4). Round 5: the adult plays C (C4, G4, E4). Round 6: the adult plays A (C4, E4, G4).

Task 2

PND41-C3-T2

Any three different keys in a row; the grown-up names the path: up then up, down then down, or a turn.