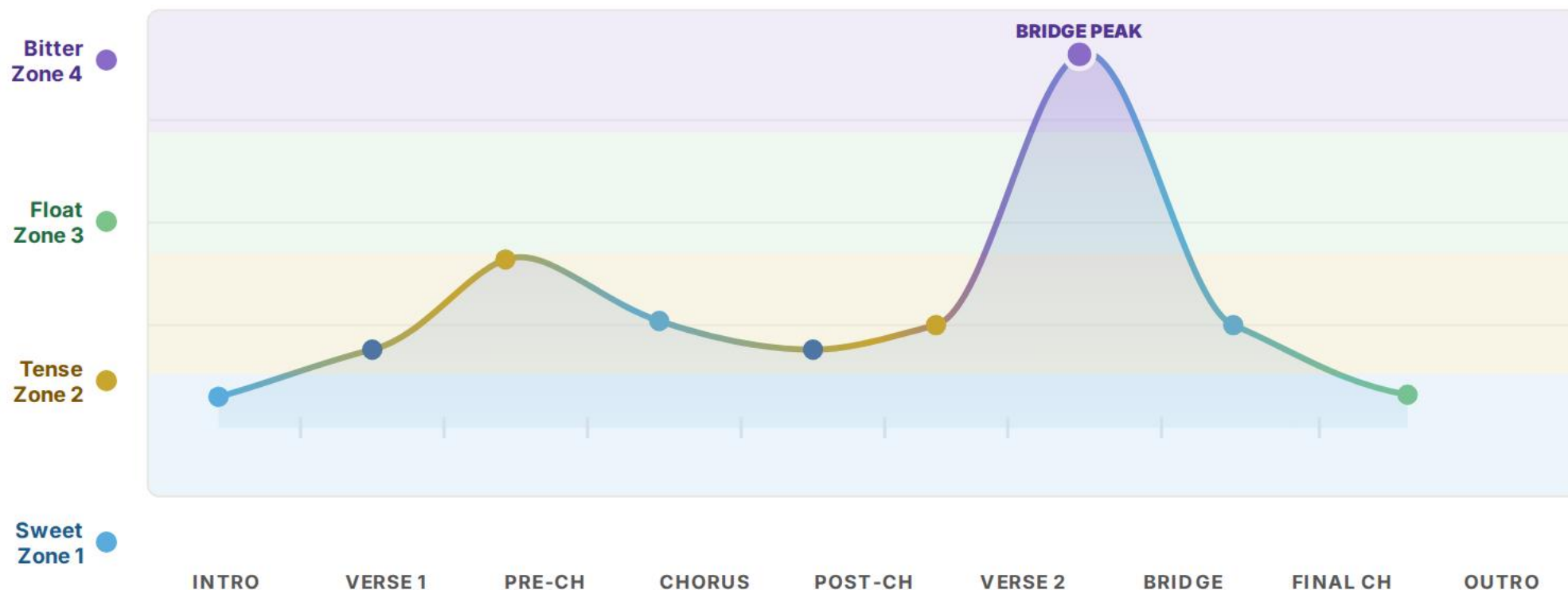


TENSION CURVE

VERSE • CHORUS • BRIDGE

The classic emotional arc of a pop/R&B song — from first note to final chord, mapped against the four emotional zones. Use as a reference poster for song structure decisions.



INTRO / VERSE 1

Zone 1–2. Establish the key with stable chord tones. Leave openness for growth — don't peak too early. Keep a question in the phrase.

PRE-CHORUS

Shift toward Zone 2–3. Unstable notes and non-chord tones build expectation. The ear should be leaning forward into the chorus.

BRIDGE

Zone 3–4 territory. Maximum contrast. Explore FA, TI as non-chord tones. This is the emotional climax — the furthest from home the song travels.

CHORUS

Land in Zone 1. The contrast with pre-chorus creates the "payoff" feeling. The hook note should be a stable chord tone — Zone 1 at the peak.

VERSE 2 / POST-CH

Similar to Verse 1 but can tolerate slightly more tension — the listener knows the story now and can handle more complexity before the chorus.

FINAL CHORUS / OUTRO

Return to Zone 1. After bridge tension, the final chorus resolution feels cathartic. Outro descends gradually toward DO — let the listener land in peace.