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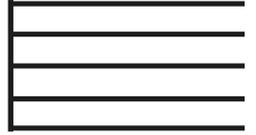


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Musical Styles Through the 20th Century Comprehension Worksheet



Swing and Big Band

Swing began in the late 1920s but it was between 1935 and 1946 when big band swing music became the most popular music in America, also known as the Swing Era.

A typical song played in swing style would include a strong rhythm accompanied by wind, string or brass instruments, also including vocals. A soloist would commonly take centre stage and improvise a solo with the band in the background. One of the best known big band leaders includes Glenn Miller. His famous hit 'In the Mood' stayed at the top of the charts for 13 weeks! There were a large number of musicians in a swing band which meant it was more expensive than a small group.

By the late 1940s, this type of music was less popular, however swing music had a revival in the late 1950s and 1960s when singers, such as Frank Sinatra, sang with swing bands. In 2001, Robbie Williams recorded an album of popular swing covers.

Rock and Roll

Rock and roll is a popular music style which came from America during the late 1940s and early 1950s. It developed out of other African American musical styles such as boogie woogie, blues, country music and gospel music. In the early 1940s, the saxophone or piano were often the lead instrument but this was replaced with the guitar in the 50s. The classic rock and roll sound is created with one or two electric guitars, an electric bass guitar, a string bass and drums.

When people think of Rock and Roll, they think of Elvis Presley. He was a singer and actor and known by many as the King of Rock And Roll. He had many hits including 'Heartbreak Hotel' and 'Blue Suede Shoes'. Elvis recorded 40 top 10 songs and had 18 number one hits.

Another very popular hit from this era was 'Rock Around The Clock' by Bill Haley and The Comets.

Sounds of the 60s

1960s soul music was a style of Black American music. It was influenced by gospel singing, had lyrical melodies, a strong rhythm and large horn sections including saxophones, trombones and trumpets. Popular performers included The Four Tops and Otis Redding.

The 60s was also the beginnings of popular music or 'pop' music. The rock and roll age of Elvis and Bill Haley and The Comets was taken over by popular music groups such as The Monkees and The Beatles. Both bands achieved fame in the UK and America.

Funk

Funk music was also popular in the late 1960s and 1970s with performers such as James Brown and Kool & the Gang. Funk began when African American musicians created music which didn't focus on melody or harmony but had a strong rhythmic groove. Typical 'funk' instruments consist of the electric guitar, electric bass and drums. Funk was influenced by soul music and would sometimes include a horn section of saxophones and/or trumpets.

Disco

The 1970s most popular style was disco – music you could really boogie on down to on the dance floor. Well known performers include Abba, The Bee Gees and Chic with famous hits such as 'Le Freak', 'Stayin' Alive' and 'Dancing Queen'.

Hip Hop

Hip hop began in America in the 1970s and includes programmed beats, rapping, samples and DJing. A sample is a recorded sound. The rapping element comes from Jamaica - a cross between rhythmic chanting and talking.

DJs extend the instrumental sections, otherwise known as breaks. Rapping takes place over the breaks and break dancers would usually perform at this point.

Hip hop began with block parties in New York, where music was brought outside. The block parties were for anyone to enjoy.

DJ Kool Herc is known as the 'Father of Hip Hop'. Hip Hop has become increasingly popular since the 1970s and is still a style of music loved by people all over the world today.

Indie

Indie music or 'indie pop' became popular in the 1980s. Indie music stands for 'independent music' which means that the music doesn't fit into one defined style.

Popular UK bands of the time included The Smiths, made up of Morrissey (singer), Johnny Marr (guitarist), Andy Rourke (bassist) and Mike Joyce (drummer). Many music critics believe that they were the voice of the 80s and the most influential British guitar group of that decade.

Bands of the 90s and 00s such as Blur, and more recently Bastille, are put into the category of 'Indie Rock' - a type of alternative rock which continues to remain popular today.

R 'n' B

R 'n' B began in America during the late 1980s with artists such as Whitney Houston and Janet Jackson (the sister of Michael Jackson). Contemporary R 'n' B shouldn't be confused with earlier R&B (rhythm and blues); Black American music which began in the 1940s combining jazz and blues.

R 'n' B music mixes elements of hip hop and soul. Popular R 'n' B artists of the 90s included Eternal. Today, Rihanna is a popular R 'n' B artist.

Name _____

Date _____

Musical Styles Through the 20th Century Questions

1. Name a successful musician/group from the 1960s.

2. Name a successful musician/group from the contemporary R 'n' B era.

3. Who recorded a swing album in the year 2001?

4. What are the common 'funk' instruments?

5. Which style of music was particular popular during WW2? What do you think were the reasons for this?

6. How did Miles Davis change jazz in the 1960s?

7. Where and how did hip hop begin?

8. How did rock 'n' roll begin?

9. How are hip hop and swing different?

10. What is contemporary R 'n' B a fusion of?
