



The History of Rock and Roll: Part 1 - Rock and Roll Explodes

**VH1 Music Studio
Cable in the Classroom**

Lessons for Middle and High School Music Classes

Music Reflects The Times

Lesson 2

Note to Teachers: Parts of the content of these programs may be found, in many communities, to be inappropriate for classroom use because of references, consistent with the era portraying, sexual, political, and violent lyrics and acts. Many sections, however, provide educational content to enhance the music and interdisciplinary curriculum. Please review this program before presenting it to your students and choose sections that enhance your curriculum and are acceptable for use in your classroom.

Objective

Students will discuss the technological advancements in music and broadcast medium over the decades.

National Standards 6, 9 – Listening to, analyzing, and describing music; Understanding music in relation to history and culture

Materials

VHS VCR Player

Television

VH1 Cable in the Classroom program The History of Rock and Roll: Part 1 – Rock and Roll Explodes (HRR: Part 1)

Web-based lesson materials

Teacher approved musical excerpts such as:

Dmitri Shostakovich – “Symphony No. 7, Leningrad”

Johnny Mercer – “Ac-cent-tchu-ate the Positive”

Little Richard – “Tutti Frutti” (from HRR: Part 1 video)

For additional instructional materials pertaining to influences that have affected the development of Rock and Roll, refer to “The History of Rock and Roll “ overview lesson “Roots of Rock and Roll”.

Procedures

1. Cue video to where Ray Manzarek of The Doors begins speaking about Chuck Berry.
2. Explain to students that, historically, social issues have had influence on many different aspects of culture. Ask students to name historical periods where social issues have played a prevalent role in society (Civil Rights Movement, Civil War, Vietnam War, Russian Revolution, French Revolution, etc.)
3. Ask students to name any fine arts that were affected or influenced by the social issues in an era (include painting, sculpture, music, poetry, etc.) Ask students if they are aware of specific examples such as protest music of the Sixties; Songs and marches of the Civil War; visual arts following the Russian and French Revolutions.
4. Play an excerpt from Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 7 Guide students’ listening by telling the history behind the piece, explaining that Dmitri Shostakovich lived through the 900-day siege of Leningrad during World War II and his seventh symphony depicts the horrors of the time and the defiant spirit of the city’s people. Students should make notes of what they hear regarding items such as tempo, orchestration, harmony, rhythm, melody, and dynamics. Explain the following as needed to students:

Shostakovich was one of the Russian composers living under totalitarian Stalinism and the chaotic horrors of war and executions. Because of the social impact of these experiences, he conveyed the painful sufferings of Soviet people through the music he composed throughout his life. Shostakovich used music as a medium to express his anger; sympathy for victims killed in the war; his own sufferings from unjust governmental control and interference; and as strong protest against Stalinism. In the rare instances that his music seems to be expressing emotions such as happiness or excitement, it is widely agreed he is actually mocking the Soviet leadership through satire.

5. Play video excerpt from HRR: Part 1. Continue through Chuck Berry’s excerpted performance of “Maybellene” and the feature on Little Richard and Pat Boone. Ask students to pay special attention to the discussion the influence of black culture, and the comparison between Little Richard and Pat Boone. Also, students should make notes of what they hear regarding items such as tempo, orchestration, harmony, rhythm, melody, and dynamics. [End when Dick Clark begins to speak.] (approx. 7 minutes).
6. Out of what parts of black culture did commentators say popular music developed? Why was there no controversy over Pat Boone singing Little Richard’s songs at that time? Would it be as accepted today? What other social matters were affecting music at that time?
7. Help students to identify movies that were either made during or depicting World War II (ex. Casablanca, For the Boys, etc.) What music is featured? How would it be described using correct musical terminology?
8. Explain the following as needed to students:

As the era of big bands and swing music, World War II America (1941-1945) produced a significant number of popular songs ranging from the patriotic to the sentimental. Americans on the homefront or overseas closer to the war zones, gathered to listen and dance to popular bands led by Glenn Miller, Harry James, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and countless others. Vocalists such as Bing Crosby, Dinah Shore, Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, the Andrews Sisters, the Mills Brothers, and Peggy Lee gained popularity.

Popular songs during World War II fall into a variety of categories. There were patriotic tunes such as Remember Pearl Harbor and Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition. Morale boosters represented by Johnny Mercer's Accent-tchu-ate the Positive helped lift wartime spirits. Many songs such as Bell-Bottom Trousers and A Boy in Khaki-a Girl in Lace told the stories of soldiers and their sweethearts. The themes of wartime love and separation and separation appeared in As Time Goes By and I'll Be Seeing You. Nearing the war's end, there were songs about homecoming and reunion: My Guy's Come Back, It's Been a Long Long Time, and My Dreams are Getting Better All the Time. Socially, the increasing number of women into the American workforce resulted in examples such as Rosie the Riveter.

9. Play Mercer excerpt. Students should make notes of what they here regarding items such as tempo, orchestration, harmony, rhythm, melody, and dynamics.

10. Ask students to compare the three pieces of music using correct terminology. What are the similarities and differences? Did the artists succeed in communicating their message? Was their message necessarily related to a social issue? If not, did a social issue affect their career? Do any of those same issues still exist today?

For more information about music as a means to communicate access www.vh1musicstudio.com and click on "Specials" – "Say It Loud! A Celebration of Black Music In America."



VH1, in partnership with Cable in the Classroom, collaborated with MENC: The National Association for Music Education to develop this series of lessons.