

ROCK HISTORY REVAMP

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HON 401, and as part of the requirements for graduation from the Honors Program

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Rock History Revamp Overview:

This nine-lesson unit is designed to be taught in a 7th or 8th Grade General Music class. While they were written to fill a 15-20 minute segment of class time, they could easily be extended to fit the needs of a different class. The content of these lessons is “Rock History,” starting in the 1800s and continuing till present day. While obviously not every band, artist, or movement can be covered in this short amount of time, an effort was made to include the most important cornerstones of the genre.

For the format of the lessons, the first eight are informal “lectures,” where students are encouraged to answer questions and engage in thoughtful discussion. Additionally, each of the first eight lessons has a corresponding question worksheet, which the students are required to fill out during class time. These are the unit's main form of formative assessment. The summative assessment is delivered in lesson nine in the form of a game-show style trivia competition. In this lesson, students will compete in predetermined-teams to answer questions pertaining to each of the areas covered in the first eight lessons.

Because of the lessons’ flexible nature, this document is not supposed to be a step-by-step guide of how to teach them. Rather, it will provide the main ideas behind each lesson, some strategies of how to deliver the content, and the different assessment tools being employed.

Lastly, do not treat these lessons as individual entities, but as part of a larger whole. Take any opportunity to have students recall information from previous lessons to inform the current lesson. This is not only a great way of tying the material together, but also an opportunity to assess students’ knowledge.

Rock History I

Teaching Materials

- Rock History I slideshow
- Rock History I worksheet

Lesson Overview:

This lesson introduces the origins of Rock and Roll, starting from its roots in the music of the 1800s, and going until its conception in the 1950s and early 60s. A crucial component of the lesson is to emphasize the impact artists of color had on the genre and the racist motives behind

the backlash to artists like Chuck Berry and Fats Domino. It is designed to lead directly into introducing the most notable example of “whitewashed” rock & roll: Elvis, who will be a primary focus on Lesson 2.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- As with every lesson in this unit, ask lots of leading questions. Don’t treat these as lectures where you are delivering information. The goal is to engage the students by leading them to make discoveries on their own.
- The legend of Robert Johnson’s supposed “deal with the devil” is purposefully omitted from this lesson as it is an entirely unconfirmed story that only serves to undermine Johnson’s talent and impact on the genre. You could argue that the Rocket 88 story about the amp falling off the car serves a similar purpose, but in my opinion that is a more credible story that also doesn’t rob the artists of the credit. If you want, you can bring the students’ attention to these things, as well as the “Johnny B Goode” scene in Back to the Future, as attempts to continually discredit artists of color and/or centering white figures as the real creators of the genre.
- You can draw a direct parallel from the backlash of Rock and Roll to the backlash against Hip-Hop/Rap, both past and present. This backlash stems from the same roots as it did in the 1950s: racism and moral panics.


Assessment tools:

- Leading questions, HOT (higher order thinking) questions, and class discussion
- Rock History I Question Worksheet:
 1. What genres is Rock and Roll a combination of? (Hint: there are four)
Answer: Bluegrass, R&B, Gospel, Jazz
 2. What is said to be the first “Rock & Roll” song?
Answer: Rocket 88
 3. What prejudice was really behind the media & general public’s aversion to Rock & Roll music?
Answer: Racism


Video Links:

- [Cross Road Blues - Robert Johnson \(1936\)](#)
- [1951 Jackie Brenston Rocket "88" \(#1 R&B hit\)](#)
- [Chuck Berry - Johnny B. Goode \(Live 1958\)](#)
- [Fats Domino - Ain't That A Shame \(1956\) 4K](#)
- [Preaching against rock and roll \(1950's\)](#)
- [KWK 1958: Rock and Roll Has Got to Go!](#)
- [Pat Boone - Aint That A Shame](#)

Slides:



Roots



- Rock 'n' roll is a genre spawned almost entirely from Black genres of music:
 - Bluegrass
 - R&B
 - Gospel
 - Jazz
- These genres can be traced back to the days of slavery, when enslaved people would sing to each other to pass along messages and share their life stories
- Blues music spawned as a result of the Black community's disappointment in the lack of freedoms and rights that came in a post-slavery, Jim Crow society.

Robert Johnson



- Lived May 8, 1911 – August 16, 1938
- Little recognized in his time, but his recordings were re-released in 1961 and became hugely influential
- Now looked at as one of the seminal Blues artists and was named the first Rock Star of all time



The Beginnings



- What is "Rock and Roll" and who coined the term?
- While the name came from "Sixty-Minute Man," "Rocket 88" is generally said to be the first "Rock and Roll" song ever
- Said to have gotten distorted guitar sound from amp that fell off their car on the way to the studio

Chuck Berry, Fats Domino, and More

- More Rock and Roll artists started emerging in the 50s like Fats Domino, Chuck Berry, and Little Richard
- These songs took heavy influence from blues music but added a driving beat and energy behind it
- Though it was very popular with young people at the time, there was a hesitance growing towards Rock & Roll among older generations



Backlash



- In the 1950's there is a movement to prevent rock and roll led by older generations
- Some think that Rock and Roll has led to the youth of America acting out.
- What do you think might have been behind these concerns?
- Are there any examples of this today?

The Answer:

Hire white artists to cover songs by
Artists of color and air those on the radio & TV



Who Is The Best Example of This?



Rock History I Questions

Answers to all three questions will be revealed in the lesson if you pay attention!

Name:

1. What genres is Rock and Roll a combination of? (Hint: there are four)
2. What is said to be the first "Rock & Roll" song?
3. What prejudice was really behind the media & general public's aversion to Rock & Roll music?

Rock History II

Teaching Materials

- Rock History II slideshow
- Rock History II worksheet

Lesson Overview:

This lesson covers the origin of Elvis and the sterilization of Rock & Roll that came in a post-Elvis world. It goes up until the early 60s, and teases the British Invasion as the thing that would “save” rock. It is important to emphasize the commercialization of Rock that was taking place around this time, which can easily be paralleled to the commercialization of Rap/Hip-Hop that is taking place today. The videos of Fabian and the American Bandstand episode are examples of how bland and uninteresting Rock had become since its inception.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- When discussing how Elvis’ style was an amalgamation of different genres, ask if the students know any artists that are had to put under a specific “genre” label. This phenomenon has become more and more prevalent as we get more and more access to other cultures. Here are some artists I thought of:
 - Taylor Swift
 - Drake
 - The 1975
 - Tyler The Creator
- When talking about the cover of That’s All Right, you can ask for a definition of what a cover is and if they know any covers that are more popular than the original. Here are some examples:
 - “I Will Always Love You” by Whitney Houston (Originally by Dolly Parton)
 - “Respect” by Aretha Franklin (Originally by Otis Redding)
 - “Twist & Shout” by The Beatles (Originally by The Isley Brothers)
- When talking about the “watering down” of Rock and Roll, ask if there are any examples of artists or songs today that they feel are less interesting, mainstream versions of music that you like. If they can’t think of anything, lead their attention to how the Rap music played on the radio is not like the Rap they would listen to, whether that be clean versions or different songs entirely.
- Point out how Elvis’ cover of That’s All Right getting the credit instead of Arthur Crudup’s original is a perfect example of what was happening during this time, with white artists taking songs that black artists wrote and making them more popular.

Assessment tools:

- Leading questions, HOT (higher order thinking) questions, and class discussion
- Rock History II Question Worksheet:
 1. What is the name of the song that launched Elvis Presley into stardom and who originally wrote it?
Answer: That's All Right, Arthur Crudup
 2. Where was Elvis sent in 1958 to hide from the controversy garnered over his performances?
Answer: The War
 3. What was the name of the popular 50s/60s television show that featured teenagers dancing to Top 40 hits?
Answer: American Bandstand

Video Links:

- [That's All Right](#)
- [Elvis Presley - That's All Right \(Official Audio\)](#)
- [Elvis Presley "Hound Dog" on The Ed Sullivan Show](#)
- [Fabian - Tiger](#)
- [American Bandstand - November 9, 1963- FULL EPISODE](#)

Slides:



Rock History II

Highs & Lows



Recap

- Rock emerges from the genres:
 - Bluegrass
 - R&B
 - Gospel
 - Jazz
- The majority of Rock artists in the 50s were black (Chuck Berry, Fats Domino, Little Richard)
- There is a racially motivated moral panic around Rock & Roll in the 50s, resulting in radio censorship
- The industry's solution is to promote covers popular songs performed by white artists

Sam Phillips & Sun Records

- Sam Phillips was a disc jockey who started the Memphis Recording Service on January 3, 1950.
- It later became the Sun Records label.
- From 1950-1954 he primarily recorded songs by black R&B artists
- Was concerned his black artists would not be able to break through into the "white mainstream" market.
- Began searching for a white artist "who could play and sing in this same exciting, alive way."
- Who would be that artist?



Elvis Presley

- Born January 8, 1935 in Tupelo, Mississippi
- Music is an amalgamation of Blues, Gospel, and R&B he grew up listening to
- In 1950 he began hearing Sam Phillips' Sun Studios recordings.
- In 1953 he paid \$4 to record "My Happiness" and "That's When Your Heartaches Begin" at Sun Studios.
- During a break in a 1954 recording session with guitarist Scotty Moore and bassist Bill Black, Elvis began singing an Arthur Crudup blues song, "That's All Right."
- It was released 2 weeks later with "Blue Moon of Kentucky" and caused a sensation.



“That’s All Right”

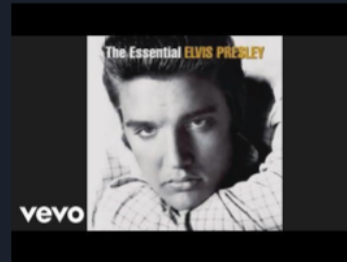
Original:

- Recorded by Arthur Crudup in 1946
- Not super successful
- Some Rock historians say it could be one of the earliest recordings of a guitar solo break



Elvis version

- Recorded at Sun Studios in 1954
- Launched Presley into stardom
- Some Rock historians call it the first rock n' roll record



Can you think of any other famous examples of cover songs?

Elvis' Dominance

- In 1956, Elvis had the #1 country single ("I Forgot to Remember to Forget"), the #1 R&B single ("Heartbreak Hotel"), and the #1 Pop single ("I Want You, I Need You, I Love You).
- In 1957, he released the following hit singles: "Hound Dog," "Don't Be Cruel," "Love Me Tender," "Jailhouse Rock," "All Shook Up," and "Teddy Bear."
- There was controversy among media for his dancing/performing being too suggestive
- Sent to war in 1958 till the controversy blew over
- When he returned he was given a much tamer image and started doing movies



Watering Down

- The success of exciting artists such as Elvis, Buddy Holly, and Ritchie Valens led to a decline in originality in the late 50s as more artists imitated rather than originated.
- Bobby Rydell, Bobby Vee, Jimmy Clanton, Frankie Avalon, and Fabian replaced rockers Eddie Cochran, Chuck Berry, and Gene Vincent on radio and the charts.
- Chancellor Records' Bob Marcucci later admitted Fabian "couldn't sing. He knew it and I knew it."
- Looks began to be as or more important than sound.



American Bandstand - November 9, 1963

- Show hosted by Dick Clark where teenagers would dance to Top 40 hits
- A perfect representation of how commercial Rock & Roll had become during this time
- Less than a year later though, another Rock & Roll act would be introduced to America through television that would change the genre forever



Who Is This Band?



Rock History II Questions

Answers to all three questions will be revealed in the lesson if you pay attention!

Name:

1. What is the name of the song that launched Elvis Presley into stardom and who originally wrote it?
2. Where was Elvis sent in 1958 to hide from the controversy garnered over his performances?
3. What was the name of the popular 50s/60s television show that featured teenagers dancing to Top 40 hits?

Rock History III

Teaching Materials

- Rock History III worksheet
- Rock History III slideshow

Lesson Overview:

This lesson covers the British Invasion and its impact on Rock History. Since there is limited time, only two bands can be covered in some detail, which in this case is The Beatles and The Rolling Stones. However, there is a slide listing some of the other big British Invasion acts, so you can extrapolate on that how you wish. The slide on the Beach Boys is meant to be a representation of the effect the British Invasion had on American Rock music. The Beach Boys originally played very basic “surf” rock, but were inspired by Rubber Soul to create Pet Sounds. The final slide is meant to be posed as a question to tease the next lesson, which is on the impact the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights movement had on Rock.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- Emphasize the importance that the Ed Sullivan Show had on music at the time. The show was watched by everyone and if you were on it it meant you had made it. This can possibly be paralleled/compared to something in the music business today.
- Use Beatlemania to explore the idea of fan culture and how it has evolved over time. Today, we don’t often have this level of craze over a person or group of people because the internet allows us much more access to these people’s lives. Still, there are cases where it does happen today.
- The fact that The Beatles got popular on their original songs instead of their covers is a change from how Rock has worked previously and should be noted.
- The Rolling Stones should be directly compared to The Beatles. The similarities and differences between their Ed Sullivan performances should be discussed as well as how their musical and stylistic progression paralleled The Beatles in the 60s.
- When playing God Only Knows, play some of the beginning and then the instrumental break at the middle of the song

Assessment tools:

- Leading questions, HOT (higher order thinking) questions, and class discussion
- Rock History III Question Worksheet:
 1. Who was the person who discovered The Beatles and became their first manager?
Answer: Brian Epstein

2. What was the name of The Rolling Stone's first top 10 single?

Answer: Time Is On My Side

3. What is the name of the 1966 Beach Boys album that featured a lot of experimental techniques and stretched the limits of what a "pop album" could be?

Answer: Pet Sounds

Video Links:

- [The Beatles - I Want To Hold Your Hand - Performed Live On The Ed Sullivan Show 2/9/64](#)
- [A taste of Beatlemania in the 1960s](#)
- [The Rolling Stones - Around and Around](#)
- [The Beach Boys - Surfin' USA](#)
- [Beach Boys - God Only Knows lyrics \(Lyric Video\)](#)

Slides:



Rock History III

Change In The Wind



Recap

- Sam Phillips from Sun Records is looking for a white artist to make Rock and Roll more palatable to Americans
- Elvis Presley fills that void, starting with his hit song "That's All Right," a song that was originally written by black Blues artist, Arthur Crudup
- Elvis' dancing during performances is considered too provocative and he is sent to war till the controversy dies down. When he returns, his image is much tamer
- Rock and Roll is getting watered down, with too much imitation and not enough innovation
- What will happen to save the genre from itself?

Beginnings

- John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison were in a Liverpool-based band called The Beatles with drummer Pete Best and bassist Stuart Sutcliffe
- They were discovered by Brian Epstein who they appointed as their manager
- Over time Stuart dropped the band to pursue art and Pete was replaced with Ringo Starr at the request of George Martin



"I Want To Hold Your Hand" Performed Live On The Ed Sullivan Show 2/9/64



Beatlemania

- In January 1963 "I Want to Hold Your Hand" reaches #1 on the pop charts.
- In February 1963 The Beatles debuted on The Ed Sullivan Show.
- The craze around them became coined "Beatlemania"



From Tours to Albums

- In 1965 they released *Rubber Soul* and stopped touring
- Rubber Soul, their first album of all original material included: "Norwegian Wood," "Nowhere Man," "Michelle," and "In My Life." It established Lennon and McCartney as the "preeminent popular songwriting team of their generation."
- It started an incredible 6 album run

The Rolling Stones



- Most successful of the hard rock, blues-inspired British bands.
- Their image was clearly inspired by The Beatles, and it always seemed they were one step behind
- In 1964 released their first top ten single, "Time Is on My Side."
- With the 1965 hit "Satisfaction," the band popularized a more aggressive distorted guitar tone
- They start getting more experimental towards the end of the 60s

"Around and Around" Performed Live On The Ed Sullivan Show 10/25/1964



Other Big British Invasion Artists

- The Animals
- Donovan
- The Who
- The Yardbirds
- The Zombies



American Artists Start Branching Out

- The innovations in Britain inspired other bands to branch out
- The Beach Boys were an American band most known for their “surf” music like Surfin’ USA or I Get Around
- In 1966 The Beach Boys released *Pet Sounds*, which featured a lot of experimental techniques and stretched the limits of what a “pop album” could be



What other things
happening in 1960s
America could have
changed music?

Rock History III Questions

Answers to all three questions will be revealed in the lesson if you pay attention!

Name:

1. Who was the person who discovered The Beatles and became their first manager?

2. What was the name of The Rolling Stone's first top 10 single?

3. What is the name of the 1966 Beach Boys album that featured a lot of experimental techniques and stretched the limits of what a "pop album" could be?

Rock History IV

Teaching Materials

- Rock History IV worksheet
- Rock History IV slideshow

Lesson Overview:

This lesson discusses the political and social issues of 1960s America and how those issues affected the music of the time. Unlike the other lessons in this unit, this is one where there is a chance not every topic can be covered in 15-20 minutes. This means the teacher must make some choices about which things to or not to talk about. The beginning of the presentation is crucial, as it sets up the political & social conflict, but the rest of the lesson is split into two sections: Folk Music and Woodstock. One way to save time would be to omit the Bob Dylan lyric analysis, or to leave out the part where you talk about how many people went to Woodstock. Again, it is the teacher's choice to decide what to and not to include. The final slide is a tease for the next two lessons, which will cover the different Rock genres that came as a result of the 60s.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- Don't just tell the students what the political and social issues of 1960s America were. Determine prior knowledge, ask questions, draw connections, etc. This is where Rock History is really just History.
- The view of folk music as "of the people" and "anti-establishment" should be emphasized enough so that the students could guess why there was backlash to Dylan going electric. You can ask if the students know of any other artists that made a controversial genre switch.
- How the lyric analysis is run is largely up to the teacher. Have the students first analyze who he is speaking to in each verse and then discuss what he is telling them. You can point out the poetic structure of the song, how each verse is a message to a different group of people, separated by harmonica solos.
- Have the students analyze Jimi Hendrix's performance of Star-Spangled Banner. Why do they think it sounds the way it does? Could the distorted sounds have any other meaning?

Assessment tools:

- Leading questions, HOT (higher order thinking) questions, and class discussion
- Rock History IV Question Worksheet:
 1. What were the two major social issues in 1960s America?
Answer: The Vietnam War and The Civil Rights Movement
 2. What did Bob Dylan do that made his fans so angry?

Answer: Went electric

3. What patriotic song did Jimi Hendrix cover at Woodstock?

Answer: The Star Spangled Banner

Video Links:

- [Anti war demonstrators storm Pentagon 1967](#)
- [Bob Dylan - The Times They Are A-Changin' \(Official Audio\)](#)
- [Bob Dylan Live at the Newport Folk Festival](#)k
- [Jimi Hendrix - The Star Spangled Banner \[National Anthem \] \(Live at Woodstock 1969 \)](#)

Slides:



Rock History IV

The Times They are A-Changin



Recap

- Bands like The Beatles and The Rolling Stones emerge from the U.K. with a more exciting brand of Rock and Roll.
- The Beatles write their own music, which sounds fresher than the covers that people were used to, and The Rolling Stones brought more “hard” energy to their performances and recordings
- These bands inspired other American bands, such as The Beach Boys, to change their styles and try new things
- There was something else going on in 1960s America that led to a change in music

What was happening
politically & socially in 1960s
America?

The Storming of the Pentagon (1967)



America in 1960's

- America is going through a tumultuous time in the 1960's
- The Civil Rights movement is raging and the government isn't happy
- The Vietnam War is a dark cloud hanging over every American's head
- Deaths:
 - President John F Kennedy
 - Martin Luther King Jr
 - Malcolm X
- American citizens were looking for something new in music that spoke to them and their struggles

Bob Dylan



- Born Robert Allen Zimmerman (1941-). Took name from Welsh poet Dylan Thomas.
- Arrived in New York in 1961. Debut album that year contained folk standards "In My Time of Dying," "Man of Constant Sorrow," and "The House of the Rising Sun."
- The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan (1963) and The Times They Are A-Changin' (1964) contained multiple originals that spoke to the anxieties and anger of the time
- Early music was mostly acoustic & harmonica (very folk)

"The Times They are A-Changin'" by Bob Dylan



Come writers and critics
Who prophesize with your pen
And keep your eyes wide
The chance won't come again
And don't speak too soon
For the wheel's still in spin
And there's no tellin' who
That it's namin'
For the loser now
Will be later to win
For the times they are a-changin'



Come senators, congressmen
Please heed the call
Don't stand in the doorway
Don't block up the hall
For he that gets hurt
Will be he who has stalled
There's a battle outside
And it is ragin'
It'll soon shake your windows
And rattle your walls
For the times they are a-changin'

Dylan's Switch To Electric

- In 1965 Dylan released the song "Like A Rolling Stone" which featured full rock instrumentation as opposed to just acoustic guitar and harmonica
- This was met with anger from his fans, which can be heard during his first "electric" performance at the Newport Folk Festival
- Why do you think his fans were so angry?



Woodstock

- One of the defining musical moments of the 60s was the Woodstock Music Festival in 1969
- Was a music festival for young people to come to and listen to all their favorite music together. It was promoted as "3 Days of Peace & Music"
- Performers include but not limited to; Jimi Hendrix, Joan Baez, The Who, Sly and the Family Stone, The Grateful Dead, CCR, and Jefferson Airplane
- The only problem was, they couldn't find a space big enough to perform at!



Max Yasgur's Dairy Farm

- At first promoters expected 25,000 people
- Soon the event's popularity grew and the estimated doubled to 50,000
- The only "venue" that would fit everyone was a dairy farm in Bethel, New York
- Before the concert, there were 185,000 tickets pre-sold and estimates were that 200,000 people would go
- Can you guess what the final number of attendees was?

400,000!!!



Jimi Hendrix's "Star-Spangled Banner"

- One of the most famous Woodstock performances was Jimi Hendrix's rendition of "Star-Spangled Banner"
- Hendrix was known at this point for his virtuosic guitar skills and incredible ability to make different sounds and tones people hadn't heard before



While 60s Rock Music is easy to define, the 1970s mark the time when Rock starts to diverge into different paths

Rock History IV Questions

Answers to all three questions will be revealed in the lesson if you pay attention!

Name:

1. What were the two major social issues in 1960s America?

2. What did Bob Dylan do that made his fans so angry?

3. What patriotic song did Jimi Hendrix cover at Woodstock?

Rock History V

Teaching Materials

- Rock History V worksheet
- Rock History V slideshow

Lesson Overview:

This is the first in a two part lesson series about the different Rock genres of the 70s. The opening two slides are supposed to show the transition from the 60s to 70s, and how even big bands like The Beatles had been starting to experiment with new sounds and styles towards the latter half of the decade. The Beatles breaking up in 1970 can be seen as a microcosm of the Rock genre breaking off into different paths. This lesson covers two of the more popular genres of the 1970s: Soft Rock/Folk and Pop/Arena Rock. For each of these, I chose specific artists to highlight and then listed some other examples. Obviously, as with this whole unit, there is a lot of ground to cover in a short amount of time, so the idea is to give a general overview, not dive deep on one topic specifically.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- Depending on time allowed, it may be fun to play a song from each of the Beatles debut solo albums to highlight their differences.
- Highlight the importance of Fleetwood Mac having two women singer songwriters. Maybe play one of the songs by Christine McVie along with Dreams (Everywhere, Songbird, etc.)

Assessment tools:


- Leading questions, HOT (higher order thinking) questions, and class discussion
- Rock History V Question Worksheet:
 1. How did the lyrical content of Soft Rock and Folk music differ from that of 60s Rock?
Answer: It was less politically minded and more introspective and simple
 2. What made Fleetwood Mac stand out from other rock bands of the time?
Answer: Two of the members were women who contributed lyrically and musically
 3. True or False: Elton John wrote his own lyrics
Answer: False

Video Links:

- [Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds](#)
- [Helter Skelter \(2018 Mix\)](#)

- [James Taylor - Fire And Rain \(BBC In Concert, 11/16/1970\)](#)
- [Fleetwood Mac - Dreams \(Official Music Video\)](#)
- [Elton John - Tiny Dancer \(Live in 1970\)](#)
- [Elton John - Bennie and the Jets \(1976\) Live at Earl's Court, London](#)

Slides:



Recap

- 1960s America is dealing with two major social issues: the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights Movement
- Folk Music becomes the genre that the people embrace because it speaks to their problems and struggles
- Bob Dylan became a Folk Music hero in the early 60s, but his fans turned on him once he went "electric"
- Like Dylan, many popular bands like The Beatles and The Beach Boys were also starting to experiment more with their music
- Moving into the 70s, we'll see this experimentation lead to the creation of multiple new subgenres!

The Beatles Albums

1965: Rubber Soul

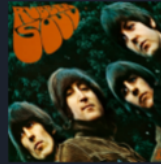
1966: Revolver

1967: Sgt. Peppers Lonely Hearts Club Band

1968: The White Album (double album)

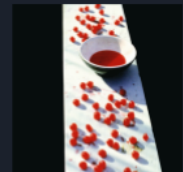
1969: Abbey Road

1970: Let It Be



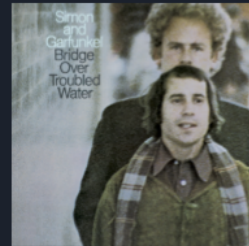
The 70s split

- As the 1970s approached, we saw a few different branches of Rock and Roll being created. There was more variety to choose from and less "singular" artists that everyone loved
- The Beatles split up and all pursued their own solo careers, The Beach Boys' and Bob Dylan's popularity waned, we need new artists to push the genre forward!



Soft Rock/Folk

- Inspired by acts like Simon & Garfunkel, Soft Rock & Folk made a return in the 1970s
- This music was less politically minded and more introspective & simple
- James Taylor is perhaps the best example of this
- Like Dylan, he had a high, nasal tenor, but lacked Dylan's gifts as a songwriter.
- Taylor and the soft folk rock he inspired was harshly criticized in the rock and roll media. Despite this, he was an extremely popular artist in the mainstream



Fleetwood Mac

- A good example of a band that provided a "softer" version of rock without losing it's edge.
- One of the first prominent Rock and Roll bands that was at least partially women centered
- Started by Mick Fleetwood and John McVie in 1967
- Christine McVie joined her husband in 1970
- Singer-songwriter couple Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham joined in 1975
- Some of the band's most popular and praised songs came from this lineup, including songs written by McVie and Nicks (Landslide, Don't Stop, Dreams, Think About Me)
- The collapse of both relationships led to the 1977 masterpiece "Rumours"



“Dreams” by Fleetwood Mac



Pop Rock

- A more “pop-centric” version of rock was also born in the 70s
- This can arguably be seen as the start of what would become known as “arena rock”
- The live experience/theatrics became as important as the music itself
- Some examples:
 - Elton John
 - Queen
 - Bruce Springsteen



Elton John

- Born Reginald Kenneth Dwight in Pinner, England.
- In 1969 released his first album, Empty Sky. In 1970 had better success with his album, Elton John, because of “Your Song.”
- Was known for his live performances with huge sunglasses (inspired by Buddy Holly) and wild onstage antics.
- Honky Chateau (1972) captured some of that energy and rose to #1 on the pop charts as did his next 6 albums.
- Popular mid-70s singles included: “Benny and the Jets,” “Rocket Man,” and “Philadelphia Freedom.”
- Notably, he did not write his own lyrics but instead wrote the music to lyrics written by his songwriting partner, Bernie Taupin



Rock History V Questions

Answers to all three questions will be revealed in the lesson if you pay attention!

Name:

1. How did the lyrical content of Soft Rock and Folk music differ from that of 60s Rock?

2. What made Fleetwood Mac stand out from other rock bands of the time?

3. True or False: Elton John wrote his own lyrics

Rock History VI

Teaching Materials

- Rock History VI worksheet
- Rock History VI slideshow

Lesson Overview:

This is the second in a two part lesson series about the different Rock genres of the 70s. This lesson focuses on some of the less popular and niche genres of the time. This can be directly connected to the students' experience today, with niche and microgenres being more popular than ever before. The genres that are focused on are: Hard Rock, Art Rock, and Funk. On the final slide, a list of some other genres of the time is provided to give an idea of how many genres came out of the 1970s.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- See if the students can name any niche or microgenres they listen to before revealing the list on the slide. Give examples they would recognize from some of these genres to further the real-world connection being made.
- As with Fleetwood Mac in Lesson V, the importance of The Runaways as an all-women Rock band should not be understated.
- Art Rock is a great example of how some genres of this time can be better described as conglomerations of other genres. Connect this back to Rock History I, where we learned that Rock itself was a combination of genres. We are at the point in history where Rock is established enough to be combined with other established genres.
- Use the backing beat in the James Brown clip to hint at the emergence of Hip-Hop that was to come in the next decade. Funk music can also be contrasted with the other two genres as a stripping down of Rock music to its roots.

Assessment tools:

- Leading questions, HOT (higher order thinking) questions, and class discussion
- Rock History VI Question Worksheet:
 1. What band is arguably the most popular example of 70s Hard Rock?
Answer: Led Zeppelin
 2. What are the two non-Rock musical genres that Art Rock takes inspiration from?
Answer: Jazz and Classical music
 3. What made Funk music feel more “classic” than other Rock music of the time?
Answer: It has direct roots to R&B and gospel music

Video Links:

- [Led Zeppelin - The Ocean \(Live at Madison Square Garden 1973\)](#)
- [The Runaways - School Days \(1977\) • TopPop](#)
- [I'm Waiting For The Man](#)
- [James Brown Cold Sweat Live 1968](#)
- [Cold Sweat \(Instrumental\)](#)

Slides:

A dark blue slide with a geometric design on the left side consisting of overlapping blue and green parallelograms. The title 'Recap' is written in a white, sans-serif font. Below the title is a bulleted list of 1970s rock subgenres and artists, with each item preceded by a hyphen.

- In the 1970s, Rock and Roll starting segmenting into different subgenres
- *Soft Rock & Folk*
 - James Taylor
 - Fleetwood Mac
 - Simon & Garfunkel
- *Pop/Arena Rock*
 - Elton John
 - Queen
 - Bruce Springsteen

Niche Genres

- Although Soft Rock/Folk and Pop Rock were the more popular genres of the time, there were also more niche subgenres and microgenres being created
- Can you think of any niche genres or microgenres that are around today?
 - Bedroom Pop
 - Hyperpop
 - Mumble Rap
 - Yacht Rock
 - Lofi Hip-Hop

“Hard Rock”

- While the mass media was leaning towards soft rock, there was still a fanbase for more hardcore Rock and Roll
- Led Zeppelin was probably the most popular example, and went on to influence most rock bands afterwards
- “Stairway To Heaven” is an interesting blend of soft and hard rock



The Runaways

- Another example of a women-led Rock and Roll band, this time in the hard rock genre
- Employed a "heavier sound" than the public was used to in women-led bands
- The band started in the mid 1970's and had short lived success (mainly overseas)
- Hits included; Cherry Bomb, Hollywood, Queen of Noise.
- Band breaks up soon after achieving success due creative disagreements



Art Rock

- Some rock artists starting getting really experimental with their music, incorporating influence from Jazz and Classical music, as well as from the performance art world
- The Velvet Underground were an early example from the late 60s going into the 70s
- Combined aggressive playing with more artful and poetic lyrics
- The band never quite reached the success of their first album, and eventually broke off to other side projects, leaving Lou Reed the only original member left to record their final album: Squeeze
- Other notable art rock artists:
 - Pink Floyd
 - David Bowie
 - Yes



Funk

- Feels more “classic” than other rock subgenres of the time due to its roots in R&B and gospel.
- James Brown is one of the most popular funk artists of all time due to his incredible voice and energetic stage presence
- In it you can hear the faint whisperings of another completely new genre that is on the horizon...



Looking Ahead

- Some other rock subgenres of the 70s
 - Glam Rock
 - Progressive Rock
 - Heavy Metal
 - Punk Rock
- In the late 70s and 80s the lines between what is and isn't rock music will grow even more blurred

Rock History VI Questions

Answers to all three questions will be revealed in the lesson if you pay attention!

Name:

1. What band is arguably the most popular example of 70s Hard Rock?

2. What are the two non-Rock musical genres that Art Rock takes inspiration from?

3. What made Funk music feel more “classic” than other Rock music of the time?

Rock History VII

Teaching Materials

- Rock History VII worksheet
- Rock History VII slideshow

Lesson Overview:

This lesson is all about Rock and Roll in the 1980s, and how at this point it was getting harder to define what Rock and Roll actually was. This stage of Rock is a transition point from the 1970s, where we had somewhat definable genres, to the present day where genres are basically non-existent. At the start of the lesson, Guns and Roses are given as an example of Mainstream Rock, which is definitely not bad, but lacks a bit of innovation and originality. The main focus of this lesson is on the genres Punk and New Wave, which are examples of 80s genres that change the conventions of Rock in different ways. For punk music, I picked The Clash to focus on because they have an easy connection to the students' experience (Stranger Things), and because they have a good mix of more classic punk as well as experimental genre mixing later in their discography. For New Wave I chose Talking Heads, mostly because they are a bit more experimental and more diverse than other New Wave bands of the time.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- When discussing Guns and Roses, make sure not to say the music is bad, because it isn't. Instead, highlight that while it may be enjoyable, it is not very interesting music to discuss in a class like this because they didn't do a lot to innovate the genre. With the short amount of time these lessons provide, we have to pick and choose who to focus on based on which artists did that most to shape the history of Rock and Roll.
- Introduce The Clash by seeing if the students can guess where they may have heard a song by them before. After some guesses, play the song "Should I Stay or Should I Go."
- Besides their genre blending, one thing to highlight about The Clash is their emphasis on activism and raising awareness for marginalized groups. This was radical for the time and can even be compared to someone like Bob Dylan.
- Talking Heads can be used to show how video was starting to be just as important as audio in Rock and Roll
- Emphasize all the different instruments being used in the "Burning Down The House" video. Some are traditional Rock instruments, but there are also synths, a bass synth, and tons of percussion instruments.

Assessment tools:

- Leading questions, HOT (higher order thinking) questions, and class discussion
- Rock History VII Question Worksheet:

1. What are two genres that emerged in the 70s and 80s that pushed the limits of what rock could be?

Answer: Punk and New Wave

2. What made The Clash different from other punk bands of the time?

Answer: They rejected nihilism and tried to enact change

3. What is the name of the Talking Heads' acclaimed concert documentary?

Stop Making Sense

Video Links:

- [Guns N' Roses - Sweet Child O' Mine \(Official Music Video\)](#)
- [The Clash - London's Burning \(Official Audio\)](#)
- [The Clash - Straight to Hell \(Official Audio\)](#)
- [Talking Heads - Once in a Lifetime \(Official Video\)](#)
- [Talking Heads - \[4k Remaster\] - Stop Making Sense \(Full Show\)](#)

Slides:



Rock History VII

What Is Rock?



Recap

- In the 1970s, Rock and Roll starting segmenting into different subgenres
 - *Soft Rock & Folk*
 - *Pop/Arena Rock*
 - *Hard Rock*
 - *Art Rock*
 - *Funk (to name a few!)*
- As we close on the 70s and enter the 80s, the answer to “what is rock and roll?” is becoming less and less clear

Learning Rules: Rock in the 80s

- The 80s were a “bit of a transition period for rock and roll.
- A new wave of bands like the Cars, R.E.M., U2, and the Cure were becoming successful with a lighter, more accessible version of punk.
- “Rock ‘n’ roll which used to be about breaking rules, now seems to be about learning them.” – Music critic Greil Marcus.

Guns and Roses

- One of the biggest rock bands of the 80s
- Band was formed by members of Hollywood Rose and LA Guns in 1984
- Saul Hudson AKA Slash joined in 1985
- Their sound was very representative of the 80s music in that it was made to be as loud and epic as possible



Punk & New Wave: What Is Rock?

Punk

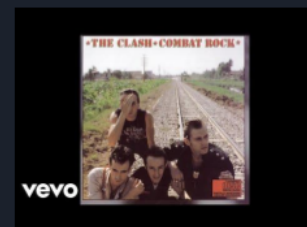
- A subgenre of rock 'n' roll music that emerged in the mid-1970s
- Many punk rockers came from working-class backgrounds and listened to traditional mainstream radio growing up. This exposed them to styles like folk rock, British Invasion rock, country music, rockabilly, '60s psychedelia, and reggae
- Early punk rock can be categorized as being extremely loud, chaotic, and anti-establishment
- Though the genre was born out of youth frustration at government establishments, the music was usually more interested in nihilism than actual change

New Wave

- A broad subgenre of rock 'n' roll that combines elements of punk rock, mainstream pop music, art rock, synth pop, funk, and reggae.
- Less blues influence can be seen in New Wave music, and there is much more fascination with synthesizers and keyboards
- Unlike Punk Music, New Wave was much more mainstream and accepted by popular culture

The Clash

- One of the most influential punk artists of their time
- Defied the nihilistic sentiments of other punk artists; tried to enact real change
- London's Burning is about how the people of London are suffering from their consumerist society, as well as the racial divide between locals and immigrants that's being perpetuated by the government
- Started out pretty straight forward musically, but as their career went on they started experimenting more in the studio with different sounds



Talking Heads

- An early pioneer of New Wave music
- Their musical style is extremely distinct, featuring a wide variety of instruments and a kind of rigid feel
- Lead singer David Byrne sang in a style that bordered the line between talking & singing
- Concert film *Stop Making Sense* is one of the most popular of all time



As we move into the 90s and 2000s, this question of “What Is Rock” will be the primary concern of fans and critics alike

Rock History VII Questions

Answers to all three questions will be revealed in the lesson if you pay attention!

Name:

1. What are two genres that emerged in the 70s and 80s that pushed the limits of what rock could be?

2. What made The Clash different from other punk bands of the time?

3. What is the name of the Talking Heads' acclaimed concert documentary?

Rock History VIII

Teaching Materials

- Rock History VIII worksheet
- Rock History VIII slideshow

Lesson Overview:

This lesson is a *very* general overview of Rock from the 1990s to Present. While there are obviously a ton of Rock artists we could discuss from that time, it isn't easily definable as Rock and doesn't push the history forward much, so it isn't worth discussing for the purposes of this unit. The Grunge movement is highlighted to represent the 90s because it was youth-led. This was a change of pace from 70s and 80s rock and it felt like a return to what made the 50s and 60s exciting. Nirvana is obviously the main band focused on in this segment. The big focus of the 2000s is the inclusion of more women in the genre, shown using the bands No Doubt and Paramore. There is also a slide of some current Women Rock artists who are at this point in time doing more to keep Rock alive than Men. The "State of Mainstream Rock" slide is obviously one that will evolve over time, but for at least the next 5 years should be able to remain the same format. Go through the most recent Rock Grammy award nominees (usually they are all old bands, not really rock, or both), and then play some of the songs on the Rock charts. For all the times I've taught this lesson, the song at #1 has been something that barely sounds like Rock and the students are usually appalled that it is defined as Rock at all. The final slide should be more of a discussion/conclusion to the unit. While conclusions may differ by who the teacher is, my general conclusion is that Rock is no longer a definable genre. Like R&B and Blues before it, it has become so baked into Western Music that there is really no "pure" Rock and Roll music anymore. This is how all genres work as they get more established, and if anything it is a testament to the lasting nature of the genre that people wanted to at its inception.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- At least at this point in time, you can connect Nirvana to the students' experiences by pointing out the use of "Something in the Way" in The Batman and its subsequent popularity on TikTok.
- Point out how in both the No Doubt and Paramore video neither singer is playing guitar. Instead, they are moving around the stage, amping up the crowd. This shows the emphasis on the theatrical nature of Rock music.
- Have students name an artist from the list on slide 8 to hear a song from
- Make students guess what they think will be #1 on the Billboard Rock Charts before revealing it

Assessment tools:

- Leading questions, HOT (higher order thinking) questions, and class discussion
- Rock History VIII Question Worksheet:
 1. True or False: Nirvana only played fast and “heavy” Rock music
Answer: False
 2. Who is the lead singer of No Doubt?
Answer: Gwen Stefani
 3. Who is one Woman Rock artist working today (pick one from the list on screen)?
Answer: Snail Mail, Lucy Dacus, Beabadoobee, Soccer Mommy, Japanese Breakfast, Phoebe Bridgers, Mitski, Julien Baker, or Boygenius

Video Links:

- [Nirvana - Something In The Way \(Live On MTV Unplugged Unedited, 1993\)](#)
- [No Doubt - I'm Just a Girl \(Live @ California 1995\)](#)
- [Paramore - Still Into You \[Live@Rock Am Ring 2013\]](#)
- [Paramore - Still Into You \(Studio Vocals\)](#)
- [Snail Mail: Glory | The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon](#)

Slides:



Rock History VIII

The End



Recap

- Rock in the 80s is in a bit of a flux
- We have genres like New Wave and Punk that are pushing the genre forward but don't sound as much what we would expect "rock" to be
- The popular Rock artists of the 80s were a bit stale and didn't do much to challenge the rules of Rock and Roll

The 1990s

- The 90s was a bit of a response to the sameness of the 80s
- Grunge was a mix of the punk and alternative styles that ruled the previous two decades; very youth led, unlike the rock music of the 80s



Pearl Jam

Nirvana

- One of the defining bands of the 90s, of the grunge movement, and of all time
- Guitarist and lead singer Kurt Cobain was a revelation due to his ability to sing with a raspy tone but also a sweet tone
- Became famous with the 1991 release of *Nevermind* and its hit single "Smells Like Teen Spirit."
- Stood out because of their rejection to popularity and the "grunge" label.
- *In Utero*, released in 1993, was a deliberate turn from the mainstream quality of *Nevermind*
- Kurt Cobain tragically passed away in at 27 in 1994, leaving us to wonder what would have happened to Nirvana



2000s Rock



- Unfortunately, it didn't take long for the grunge movement to lose its bite and as the years went on it became harder to define what "rock" music even is
- Once "hip" establishments like MTV became more commercial and sanitized
- On the brighter side, Rock was becoming more inclusive during this time and Women-fronted bands became more of a norm than an anomaly

No Doubt

- Formed as a ska/punk rock group in the early 1990's.
- Featured Gwen Stefani as the lead vocalist.
- The band was influenced by all musical genres and wanted to incorporate them into their style.
- Gwen Stefani incorporated incredible power and energy in her performances and had continued success as a solo artist in later years.
- Performed at Super Bowl XXXVII



Paramore

- American rock band formed in Tenn. with lead vocalist Hayley Williams
- Their first album reached number 4 on UK Rock charts
- Hayley Williams is in high school when Paramore is created and has incredible vocal talent for someone her age
- The band has won 25 awards and Hayley Williams has achieved tremendous success as the lead of the group
- The band has gone through multiple lineup changes, but they are still working today and set to release their new album "This Is Why" on February 10, 2023



Women in Rock Today

- Today, it is possible there are more exciting Women rock artists than Men, evidenced in 2017 by a New York Times article titled *Rock's Not Dead, It's Ruled by Women*
- Some Women Rock artists working today:
 - Snail Mail
 - Lucy Dacus
 - Beabadoobee
 - Soccer Mommy
 - Japanese Breakfast
 - Phoebe Bridgers
 - Mitski
 - Julien Baker
 - Boygenius



The State of Mainstream Rock in 2023



2023 Grammy Nominations for Best Rock Album:

- **WINNER: Patient Number 9 – Ozzy Osbourne**
- Dropout Boogie – The Black Keys
- The Boy Named If – Elvis Costello & The Imposters
- Crawler – IDLES
- Mainstream Sellout – Machine Gun Kelly
- Lucifer on the Sofa – Spoon

- As time has gone on, other genres have taken precedence and Rock artists have either tried unsuccessfully to commercialize themselves or to change with the times
- Let's look on the Billboard Rock Charts!

Is Rock Dead?

Rock History Trivia

Teaching Materials

- Rock History Trivia slideshow
- Trivia Question Cards for each group (6 pieces of paper that say A, B, C, D, True, and False)

Lesson Overview:

This lesson acts as the summative assessment for the unit. Students will break into even groups and answer the questions on the screen for points. Points will be kept track of as the game goes and whoever has the most points wins. These questions are listed in chronological order of each lesson, and many of them come from the Rock History Question Worksheets. This gives the students an opportunity to not only recall knowledge from all eight lessons, but also see the overall picture of Rock History more clearly. I picked this format for the Trivia over a software like Kahoot for a couple reasons. Firstly, I think the small group work gives more chances for students to talk through their answers and exchange information with each other. Secondly, the act of doing a Kahoot today reads less as a serious lesson and more as a filler lesson. Because this is a summative assessment, I want the students to feel like they need to take this seriously. Thirdly, it takes away the distraction of computers as well as the opportunity to look up answers. Lastly, every time I do this format for trivia games students seem way more engaged than with Kahoots, because it is something that feels fresh.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- Obviously, give 30-60 seconds for students to discuss their answers. Use some sort of music (an easy go-to is the Jeopardy theme) to give the students an idea of how much time they have left. When everyone is ready to answer, countdown from 3 and have groups raise their cards at the same time. If a group is late to hold up their card, their answer does not count. This is to make sure no group cheats by looking at someone else's answer before holding up their own.
- The "Risk It All" slide allows the groups to wager their points on the next question. If they get the question right, they will double their wager, but if they get it wrong they lose their wager. Groups must wager *before* seeing the question and must at least wager one point.
- For a tiebreaker, ask other questions on the Rock History Question Worksheets that were not used

Assessment tools:

- This lesson acts as the final summative assessment

Slides:



QUESTION 1:

What genres is Rock and Roll a combination of?

- A. Jazz, Classical, R&B, Soul
 - B. R&B, Gospel, Soul, Bluegrass
 - C. Bluegrass, R&B, Gospel, Blues
 - D. Hip-Hop, Gospel, Pop, Jazz
-

ANSWER:

C. Bluegrass, R&B,
Gospel, Blues



QUESTION 2:

Where was Elvis sent in 1958 to
hide from the controversy
garnered over his performances?

- A. His House
- B. The Bahamas
- C. The Army
- D. To Work in Retail

ANSWER:

C. The Army



QUESTION 3:

What is the name given to describe the craze around the Beatles in the early 60s?

- A. Beatlemania
- B. The Beatle Craze
- C. Beatle Hysteria
- D. Stans4Beatles

ANSWER:

A. Beatlemania



QUESTION 4:

What is the name of the 1966 Beach Boys album that featured a lot of experimental techniques and stretched the limits of what a “pop album” could be?

- A. Pet Sounds
 - B. Abbey Road
 - C. Animal Farm
 - D. Highway 61 Revisited
-

ANSWER:

A. Pet Sounds



QUESTION 5:

What did Bob Dylan do that made his fans so angry?

- A. Supported the Vietnam War
 - B. Switched from Folk to Electric
 - C. Started Smoking
 - D. Stopped performing live
-

ANSWER:

B. Switched
from Folk to
Electric



Question 6:

True or False: Elton John
wrote his own lyrics

ANSWER:

False



Risk it All (Elton John Edition)!

Who Wrote Elton John's lyrics?

- A. Misty John
 - B. George Harrison
 - C. No one knows
 - D. Bernie Taupin
-

ANSWER:

D. Bernie Taupin



Question 7:

What are the two non-Rock musical genres that Art Rock takes inspiration from?

- A. Jazz and Classical
- B. Classical and Hip Hop
- C. Blues and Pop
- D. Pop and Jazz

ANSWER:

A. Jazz and
Classical



Question 8:

What made The Clash different from other punk bands of the time?

- A. Their shows were free
- B. They had no lyrics
- C. They tried to enact real change
- D. Their music wasn't as "hard" or extreme

ANSWER:

C. They tried to enact real change



Question 9:

True or False: Nirvana only played fast and “heavy” Rock music

ANSWER:

False



Question 10:

What is one significant way that Rock has evolved over the past two decades?

- A. Using less guitar
- B. Being more accepting of women artists
- C. Autotune
- D. Rock hasn't evolved in much during that time

ANSWER:

B. Being more accepting of Women artists



Risk it All (Women Rock Artist Edition)!

Which one of the following is NOT a Rock Band/Artist?

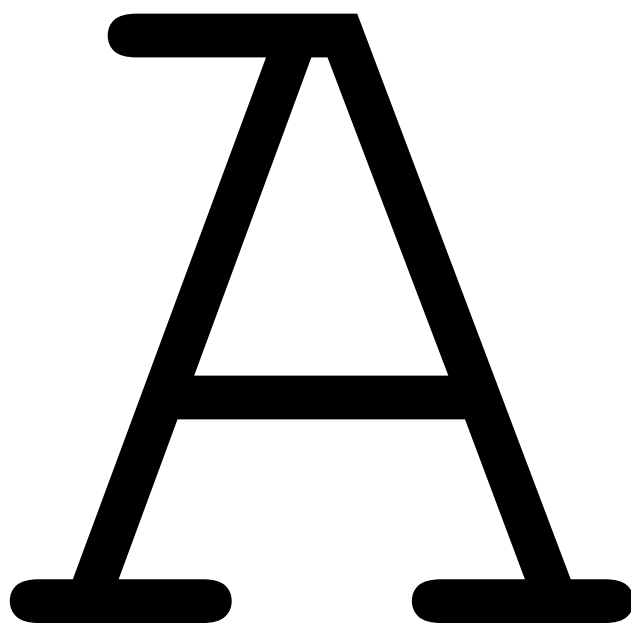
- A. boygenius
 - B. Japanese Breakfast
 - C. Football Bleachers
 - D. Beabadoobee
-

ANSWER:

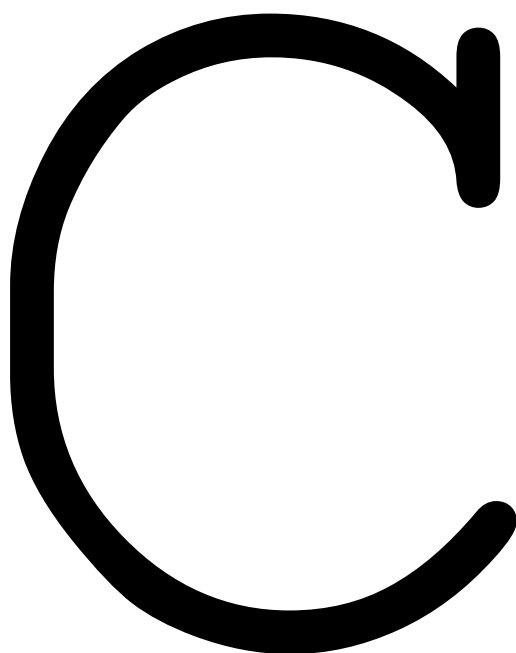
C. Football Bleachers



Let's Check The Scores!



B



D

TRUE

FALSE

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Note: All references only pertain to the additional information added that was not in the original Rock History slidedeck. Because of this, some lessons more have more resources than others

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