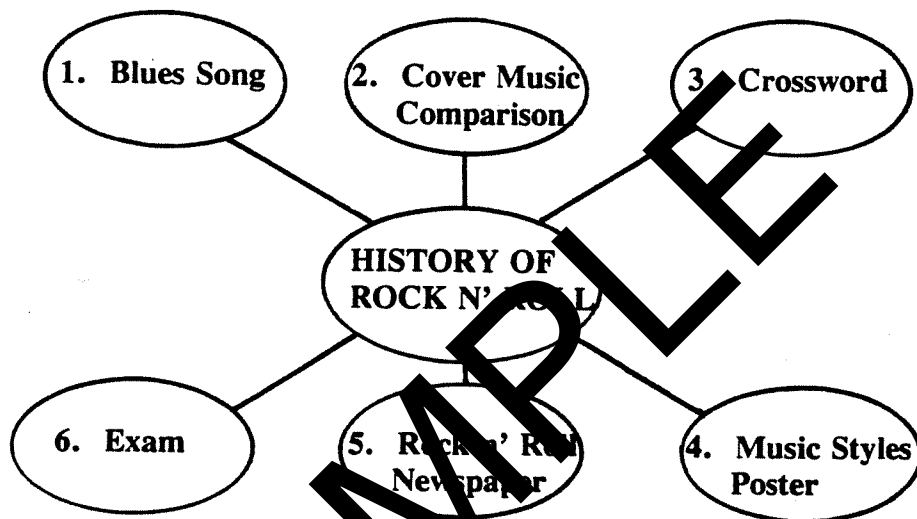


# HISTORY OF ROCK N' ROLL

## UNIT OVERVIEW

In this unit, students trace the development of Rock n' Roll, from African Tribal music through to the modern music styles of today. Due to the academic nature of the material, this unit can be taught with a great deal of structure, much like a social studies history unit. This makes it an excellent way to begin the year.

## STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS



1. **Blues Song** - Students write words for their own blues song, trying to capture a sad, low-down feeling.
2. **Cover Music Comparison** - Students, in pairs are to select an original song and its crossover version and present these songs to the class.
3. **Music Styles Crossword Puzzle** - Students develop an understanding of the different styles of Rock Music.
4. **Music Styles Poster** - In a group of two or three students, choose a particular music style and make a poster or banner that: (1) has visual appeal and (2) reflects a style of music.
5. **Rock n' Roll Newspaper** - Individually, students write and illustrate a newspaper that covers both sides of a 24" by 36" piece of paper (Articles should use Rock n' Roll personalities whenever possible). Things to include may be - editorials, comics, horoscopes, sports and gossip. Creativity and humour should be encouraged.
6. **Exam** - Sample exam is provided.

## ASSIGNMENT #4 - COVER SONG

### Student Objectives

- Students compare and contrast an original song with its cover version.

### Suggested Teaching Strategies

- Let students listen to an example of a song that has been covered. e.g. "Don't Be Cruel" by Elvis and Cheap Trick. After listening to the cover version, students will list three similarities as well as three differences in the song. (Student task sheet provided)
- Students will then choose which version they like the most and give at least one concrete reason for their answer.
- In pairs, students will then find their own examples of a cover song and its original and present the songs to the class.
- Some possible suggestions include: Don't Be Cruel - Elvis / Cheap Trick, Can't Help Falling In Love - Elvis / UB 40, Signs Signs - Bob Dylan / Guns and Roses, Jailhouse Rock - Elvis / Motley Crue, Mony Mony - Tommy James and the Shondells / Billy Idol, When a Man Loves a Woman - Percy Sledge / Michael Boulton, Locomotion - Little Eva / Kylie Minogue, Summertime Blues - Allan Jackson / ?, La Bamba - Ritchie Valens / Los Lobos, Cats in the Cradle - Harry Chapin / Ugly Kid Joe
- Students should complete the task sheet for each pair of songs as they are presented in front of the class.

## ASSIGNMENT #5 - ROCK n' ROLL NEWSPAPER (Major Project)

### Student Activities

- Individually, students write and illustrate their own newspaper that covers both sides of a 24" by 36" piece of paper. Articles should use Rock n' Roll personalities (past and present) wherever possible.

### Suggested Teaching Strategies

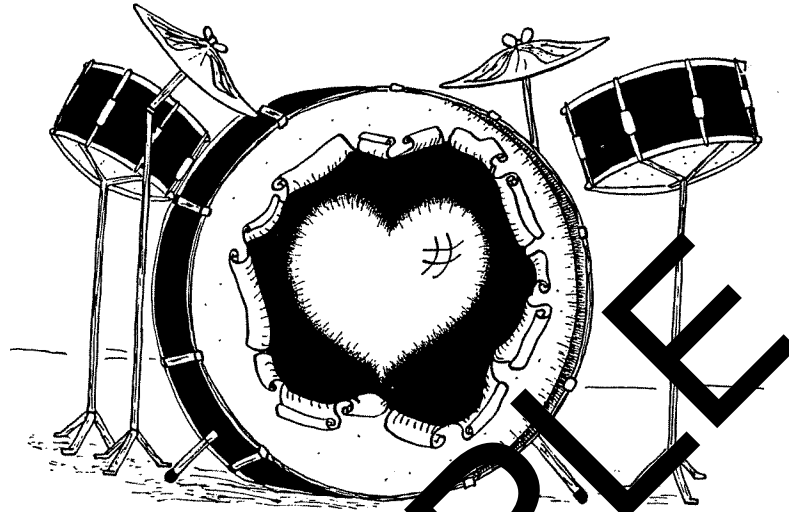
- One suggested method of beginning the lesson is to ask the students about "The Day the Music Died..." and play "American Pie" by Don MacLean. Discuss the famous plane crash that killed Ritchie Valens, The Big Bopper and Buddy Holly as inspiration for the song and as a possible newspaper Headline.
- "Elvis is Alive" headlines also make for interesting stories.
- Both sides of the paper should be entirely covered. (Unless you don't have time)

### \*\*\* Note \*\*\*

Stress that marks will be given for **creativity** and **humor** in the newspaper. This will eliminate much of the risk of premature death by boredom while marking this assignment.

# ROOTS OF ROCK N' ROLL

*"The Heart of Rock n' Roll is the beat!"*  
*Huey Lewis*



The early roots of Rock n' Roll can be traced back to Africa. Music with a hard driving rhythm played an important part in daily tribal life. Songs were used during work and for entertainment. Songs also kept a kind of vocal history instead of a history written in books. When slaves were taken to America in the 1600s, they brought their music with them. African music supplies the rhythm or beat, which eventually developed into Rock n' Roll.

## THE END OF RADIO???

In the 50's 60's and 70's, young people would listen to the latest rock n'roll songs on the radio. Today, more and more young people hear (and see) the latest music on TV video networks. This switch to video has caused radio stations all over North America to change their format from current music aimed at young people to classic rock n' roll aimed at their parents. Because there are more people aged 30 to 50 (baby-boomers) who still listen to radio, radio stations are ignoring today's youth (called generation X) and targeting the huge baby-boomer audience. The latest, newest music has moved from the radio to the television.

