

The History of Jazz Presentation Guide

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Jazz music was came from a mix of american music styles that were present at the beginning of the 20th Century (1900).

1. Jazz has some specific characteristics that can be easily recognized. What are they?

Lets look at those characteristics more closely. One of the key characteristics is the instruments used in jazz.

2. What instruments are used in jazz music?

3. What is the definition of the swing style?

4. What is improvisation?

Jazz music was born in New Orleans. It was influenced by two major musical styles - The Blues and Ragtime.

-**The Blues** featured rough singing and very personal and emotional lyrics. A unique feature was the slide guitar style that imitated the voice.

5. As you listen to Robert Johnson, list some descriptive words about the song (vocal timbre, lyrics)

-**Ragtime** was a piano only musical style featuring STRIDE PIANO - the left hand keeps an oom-pah rhythm and the right hand plays a very syncopated rhythmic melody.

6. Who is the artist and what is the name of the song?

The syncopated rhythm of the Ragtime melody and the instrumental technique of the blues combined to create the first jazz style - **DIXIELAND jazz**.

Dixieland jazz added instruments to the ragtime piano such as a trombone, trumpet, clarinet, drums and bass(tuba or string bass). The melodies were fast and syncopated and each instrument had its own melody line.

7. As you listen to Black Bottom Stomp by Jelly Roll Morton, identify the instruments you hear below and notice how the piano solo sound similar to the Scott Joplin piano piece.

The next Dixieland example is from the King Olivers Creole Band. The trumpet solo you hear in the middle of the piece is **Louis Armstrong** - one of the first stars of Jazz. His trumpet playing was so powerful. His solo is an improvised solo - meaning he is making it up as he plays. His improvisation set the standard for jazz artists who followed him with lyrical and fast passages included in one solo.

8. Moving on, Louis Armstrong performed until the 1970's. In addition to his trumpet playing, Armstrong had an unmistakable voice. As you listen to What A Wonderful World, write some descriptive words about his Vocal Timbre:

Dixieland became the first Jazz style in the early 1900's and stayed strong until the early 1930's. As the musicians pushed the limits of the small dixieland groups, Jazz became bigger and louder. Instead of one person per part, bands began adding more brass and woodwind players. As more trumpets joined bands, the clarinet could not be heard, so it was replaced with an entire saxophone section. This growth led to the second style of Jazz called the **Big Band era**. This era became so popular because of the danceability of the jazz swing music.

9. As you watch the next two examples - identify how many of each instrument you see:

Trumpets _____
Trombones _____
Saxophones _____
Rhythm _____

10. Describe how the big band music makes you feel....be specific.

Jazz continues to be a popular art form today. With big bands and individual artists, Jazz is performed throughout the world and in schools. Jazz has become a hallmark of the American music scene.

