

Jazz Styles

“Jazz” is a broad genre that includes many different styles. The activities in this pack will familiarize students, historically and aurally, with the styles listed below. Present the information from the talking points that follow that best matches your students’ previous experiences and the focus of your lesson.

Ragtime

Ragtime is a piano-based jazz style that developed in the early 1900s and was popular for about 20 years. Ragtime has a two-beat rhythm that’s played in the left hand of the piano while the right hand plays “ragged rhythms” in the melody. Ragtime music was written down rather than improvised. The city of St. Louis is associated with the development of the ragtime style and some ragtime players include Scott Joplin, Ferdinand “Jelly Roll” Morton, and James P. Johnson.

Blues

The blues grew out of field hollers, work songs, and spirituals. It was originally a vocal style of jazz that expressed the challenges of a difficult life. Flatted third, fifth, and seventh scale degrees give blues its “blue” feeling. The 12-bar blues contains 3 four-measure phrases. The lyrics of the first two phrases usually state a problem and the third phrase resolves it in some manner. The singing style includes scooped and bent notes and the tempo is usually slow and expressive. A lot of the improvisation that is done in today’s jazz is based on the 12-bar blues formula. *Memphis Blues*, written by W.C. Handy in 1912, was one of the first blues pieces to be published. Bessie Smith was a famous blues singer who was popular in the 1930s.

Boogie Woogie

Boogie Woogie is a piano style based on the blues but resembling ragtime. The style appeared about 1918 and was popular through the early 1940s. A repeated figure is played by the left hand on the piano while the right hand plays exciting, driving melodies. The left hand plays a walking bass line that usually consists of eight pitches per measure, so boogie woogie is sometimes called “eight to the bar.”

Dixieland

This early style of jazz grew out of the marching brass bands of New Orleans near the turn of the twentieth century. The Africans brought their own rhythmic and improvisatory style to the European instruments they learned to play, and soon, smaller bands and combos were playing the style we now refer to as Dixieland. Trumpets, cornets, trombones, and drums were common, with saxophones, clarinets, and even banjos being added later. Louis Armstrong, King Oliver, and Sidney Bechet all are famous names in the Dixieland style. The first recordings of Dixieland music were performed by The Original Dixieland Jass Band in the early 1920s.

Swing

Swing style began in the 1930s and surged to the forefront in popularity. The swing feel moved away from the stiffer rhythms used in early jazz forms and beats 2 and 4 were accented. Swing bands (which were called Big Bands) grew in size to include eight brasses (four trumpets, four trombones), five woodwinds, and a four-player rhythm section. Most big band in the swing era included a singer. Some of the most famous big band leaders are Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, and Glenn Miller.

Bebop

Bebop was a very innovative style of jazz that appeared in the 1940s. Fast and furious, it contains complex melodies and improvisatory sections. The radical, new sound of bebop was shocking, and quite controversial, to many people.



The most famous bop players included saxophonist Charlie Parker (“Bird”) and trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie (“Diz”). Other early bebop artists included Sonny Stitt (saxophone), Oscar Pettiford (bass), and Bud Powell (piano).

Cool Jazz

Cool Jazz was a direct contrast to bebop. Smaller ensembles were employed and the beat was less strict than earlier jazz forms. Trumpeters Miles Davis and Chet Baker, as well as pianist Dave Brubeck, made this style of jazz popular.

Rock 'n' Roll

A direct descendant of jazz, rock 'n' roll became popular in the 1950s. Many early rock 'n' roll songs are actually covers of old blues songs, performed with electric instruments and a stronger accenting of the off-beats.

Latin

Joao Gilberto released the first major album in the bossa nova style, *Chega de Saudade*, in 1959. The influence of Afro-Cuban, Caribbean, and Brazilian music on jazz only became stronger, with Dizzy Gillespie, among others, embracing the style. In addition to piano, drums, bass, guitar, and a solo instrument, like trumpet or saxophone, a second percussionist is often heard playing timbales and other Latin percussion instruments. This style continues to be a big part of the jazz scene today.

Jazz-Rock

Developed in the United States during the 1970s and '80s, jazz-rock combines the improvisational, melodic, and harmonic components of jazz with the rhythmic drive and electric instrumentation of rock. Electric guitar, bass, and piano are all common instruments used in jazz-rock, as is the synthesizer. Miles Davis was one of the first musicians to explore jazz-rock in the late 1960s, creating a sound that was controversial at the time, but later recognized as a ground-breaking new style. Other jazz-rock artists include Chick Corea; Joe Zawinul and Wayne Shorter and their band, Weather Report; Pat Metheny; and Herbie Hancock. Many of these same artists explore other modern jazz styles, including fusion and free jazz, and continue to perform and record today. Some, including Herbie Hancock, are branching out even further to collaborate with pop artists, including Annie Lennox, Sting, Joss Stone, and John Mayer.



Jazz Timeline

Objective

Introduction or review of jazz styles

Suggestions for Use

- Students may fill in the *Jazz Timeline* reproducible, found on page 10, as you present the jazz styles to the class.
- It is also useful during guided-listening activities. Students identify what they're hearing and place it correctly within jazz history.

Name _____

Date _____



Jazz Timeline



Read the descriptions in the timeline below and fill in the name of the style that each is describing in the blank provided.

1900s	Scott Joplin wrote a lot of music in this piano-based style.	1910s	Lasting into the 1930s, this style grew out of field hollers and work songs. Its tunes are usually 12 measures long.	1920s	An early style of jazz that grew out of the marching bands in New Orleans. Drums, trumpets, trombone, saxes, clarinets and even banjos were played.	1930s	Jazz in this style is usually played by big bands.	1940s	Fast, furious, and complex, Bird and Diz defined this style.	1950s	Early songs in this style were covers of blues tunes, including some by Elvis.	1960s	Influenced by music from Brazil, the Caribbean, and Africa. The bossa nova was one of the first examples of this style.	1970s	Mixing electric instruments including guitars, bass, and synthesizers, with improvisation and jazz harmonies resulted in this style.
				<div data-bbox="706 569 953 810" data-label="Text"> <p>This piano-based style features fast melodies over a walking bass line.</p> <p>1920s</p> </div>						<div data-bbox="706 1283 953 1524" data-label="Text"> <p>This style of jazz features more relaxed rhythms.</p> <p>1950s</p> </div>					

Jazz Styles Dial

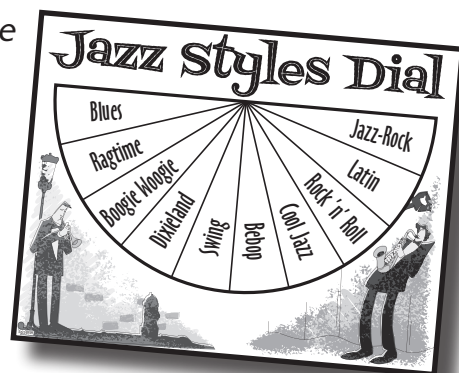
A Guided-Listening Activity and Game

Objective

Aural identification of jazz styles

Directions

1. Laminate activity boards for durability. If desired, cut out the pointers provided in this pack and attach them with a metal brad to the top of the board where the lines converge. Inexpensive plastic arrows are also available for purchase at most school supply stores. Otherwise, students may touch the correct answers with their fingers.
2. Track 1 of the included CD contains excerpts of each jazz style, with its name announced before the sample is played. Consider beginning this guided-listening activity by playing Track 1 or 2 and pausing the CD between each excerpt to impart basic information about that particular style to the students. (Tracks 1 and 2 include different recorded examples of each style. Information about each style is provided on pages 8 and 9.)
3. Once students are familiar with each style, use Track 3 or 4 to play a style guessing game. These tracks have performances of jazz styles in random order (no style names announced). Students guess what style they are hearing by drawing on the information they were given at the beginning of the lesson. Students should use the activity boards to indicate their answers. (The styles excerpts on each track are listed in order below.)
4. Consider using Track 3 or 4 for a formal assessment of students' knowledge of jazz styles. Have students number a blank page from 1 to 8. Play the CD Track and instruct students to write down the name of each style as they hear it.



CD Track Information

Track 1

*The Styles of Jazz—
Names announced before each
excerpt*

- Ragtime
- Dixieland
- Blues
- Boogie Woogie
- Swing
- Bebop
- Rock 'n' Roll
- Cool Jazz
- Latin
- Jazz-Rock

Track 2

*The Styles of Jazz—
Names announced before each
excerpt*

- Cool Jazz
- Bebop
- Swing
- Blues
- Dixieland
- Rock 'n' Roll
- Jazz-Rock
- Ragtime
- Latin
- Boogie Woogie

Track 3

*The Styles of Jazz—
Guessing game, no names
announced*

- Jazz-Rock
- Boogie Woogie
- Dixieland
- Cool Jazz
- Ragtime
- Blues
- Latin
- Swing

Track 4

*The Styles of Jazz—
Guessing game, no names
announced*

- Bebop
- Swing
- Cool Jazz
- Jazz-Rock
- Latin
- Dixieland
- Boogie Woogie
- Blues