



Introduction to Popular Music Course Syllabus for Teachers

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Introduction to Popular Music Course Syllabus for Teachers

In this course, students will explore many styles of American Popular Music. Lessons include a wide variety of listening, responding, performing, and creating activities. Throughout the course, students are encouraged to connect the historical, cultural, and technological contexts of the times, and with current musical artists.

Each unit focuses on a different genre, musical style, or decade and is aligned with the National Core Arts Standards of Creating, Presenting/Performing/Producing, Responding, and Connecting.

This course is intended for use in-class with students, flipped-classroom activities, or as substitute plans.

Units and lessons can be used in your choice of sequence or as standalone activities. As with all MusicFirst Library content, lessons can be adapted to meet the needs of your students and class schedule.

Activity types include:

- Remixes, Mash-Ups, Sampling, and Composing projects using your choice of DAW, such as Soundtrap or OGenPlus
- Karaoke singing and performing song covers
- Presentations and Podcasts about artists, bands, musical styles, and related events
- Music listening and discussion tasks including Critiques, Music Reviews, and Song Comparisons
- Fan Quizzes, Album Cover, and Storyboarding projects where students can share independent learning and links to prior knowledge in creative ways

Before assigning lessons, tasks, and assessments:

- **Preview all content.** If you find glitches or errors, please report them to support@musicfirst.com. Many lessons contain links outside of MusicFirst. All links have been tested but cannot be guaranteed for functionality.
- **Review the lessons and listen to the songs** in the playlists **in their entirety** to ensure that they are appropriate for your students and the norms of your school community. Care has been taken to select 'clean' songs, but some included music and activities are better suited to older students.
- **PLEASE customize the content for your students!** Add, delete, or simplify as appropriate for your learners. Easily add or change images, photos, links, or text to adapt instruction for your students.
- **Encourage your students to connect their favorite musicians and styles.** By design, most of the content presented in the lessons is from the latter decades of the 20th century. These lessons are intended to help provide context, facilitate connections to more contemporary performers, and offer multiple ways to explore, create, and demonstrate learning.

Make your own! Template versions of these lessons provide classroom-tested models for meaningful learning, performance, and creation.

Course Contents and Suggested Unit Sequence

The unit structure and sequences provided serve as a guide. Many artists and bands cross genres and time periods. *No course in Popular Music can be comprehensive.*

This course is organized to provide *options* for instruction. As with all MusicFirst courses, lessons and assessments, you can rearrange, edit and customize the material to suit the needs of your students and school community.

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|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Early Rock | 15. Glam Rock |
| 2. Grand Ole Opry | 16. Adult Contemporary |
| 3. Surf Music | 17. The 70's – Disco |
| 4. The British Invasion | 18. Arena Rock |
| 5. Motown | 19. 80's Pop Stars |
| 6. Folk-Rock-Pop | 20. Heavy Metal |
| 7. Blues Rock | 21. New Wave |
| 8. Country Superstars | 22. Alt Rock |
| 9. Southern Rock | 23. Country Crossover |
| 10. West Coast Sound | 24. Girl Groups of the 80's & 90's |
| 11. Progressive Rock | 25. 90's Grunge |
| 12. Album-Oriented Prog Rock | 26. Hip Hop Origins |
| 13. Psychedelic Rock | 27. Hip Hop for Social Justice |
| 14. Storytellers | 28. Electronic Dance Music (EDM) |
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Across Styles and Time Periods

- Doo Wop to Boy Bands
 - Teen Queens
 - Master Songwriters
 - Master Guitarists
 - Pop Music Bonus Lesson Pack (PMBP)
 - American Popular Song Today
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Pop Music Bonus Pack (PMBP)

includes single lessons covering multiple bands/artists:

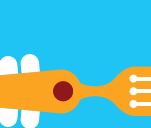
- Women Who Rock
- Vocal Legends
- Punk Rock
- Humorists & Novelties
- Cowboy Country
- Same Title, Different Songs
- One-Hit Wonders

American Popular Song Today

This collection of videos created by Matt Corriel provides ways of thinking about and analyzing music as an engaged listener. Each episode focuses on a song that spent time on the pop charts. Matt explains various features of each song including the structure, form, melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic devices. His commentary sheds light on musical choices by creators and performers through the lens of popular culture, and often includes references to other musical works. With his furry sidekick Teddy Roosevelt, Matt uses songs that many students will recognize right away to make learning about music fundamentals fun.

Be sure to subscribe to Matt Corriel's YouTube channel to get the latest episodes.

www.youtube.com/channel/UCEICjsE5jwejHhVtAhPdLGg



Pop Music Activity Templates

are provided as reusable tasks. They are generic versions of the activities throughout the Introduction to Popular Music Course, and are applicable to most any type of performer, ensemble or genre:

Listen/Respond/Connect

- Listen
- Playlist
- Compare Versions
- Compare Songs

Create/Arrange

- Remix
- Mash-up
- Sampling
- Compose
- Album Cover Art
- Storyboarding through Songs

Perform

- Perform a song cover
- Karaoke singing

Research, Respond/Connect & Critique

- Presentation
- Podcast Discussion
- Cultural Connections Video Discussion
- Music Critic/Review (audio and video options)
- Fan Quiz
- Discuss/Respond: Student choice from 4 options (individual written, audio, or video response, or group podcast)

Thematic Sequencing Suggestions

Country Influences

- Grand Ole Opry
- Country Crossover
- Cowboy Country (PMBP)
- Country Superstars
- Southern Rock

Rock Origins

- Early Rock
- Surf Music
- British Invasion
- Blues Rock
- Punk Rock (PMBP)

Softer Sounds

- Folk-Rock-Pop
- Storytellers
- Adult Contemporary
- Master Songwriters
- Vocal Legends (PMBP)

Innovations

- West Coast Sound
- Progressive Rock
- Album-Oriented Prog Rock
- Psychedelic Rock

Mega Concerts

- Glam Rock
- Arena Rock
- Heavy Metal
- 90's Grunge

Synths and Impact of Technology

- Progressive Rock
- Album-Oriented Prog Rock
- Psychedelic Rock
- Alt Rock
- New Wave
- Hip Hop Origins
- Electronic Dance Music (EDM)

(PMBP = single lesson in Pop Music Bonus Pack)

Feel free to use and adapt the lessons to best meet your curriculum, time frame, and students' needs. Use all of the lessons in order, use just a few, or reuse individual lessons into new units that you design. Assign as many activities (tasks) within each lesson as you wish. Adapt types of tasks to other artists. Add or change artists/bands. Maybe even divide students into groups to cover different eras and styles, which they present to their classmates...it's all up to you!

If you need help learning to modify lessons, tasks, or assessments, please contact support@musicfirst.com.

Lessons within each Unit

Early Rock

- Elvis Presley
- Jerry Lee Lewis
- Chuck Berry
- Ray Charles

Grand Ole Opry

- Roy Acuff
- Hank Williams
- Patsy Cline
- Loretta Lynn

Surf Music

- The Beach Boys
- The Surfaris
- The Ventures
- Dick Dale

The British Invasion

- The Beatles
- The Rolling Stones
- The Kinks
- Herman's Hermits

Motown

- The Jackson 5
- Diana Ross & The Supremes
- The Temptations
- Marvin Gaye

Folk-Rock-Pop

- Bob Dylan
- Joan Baez
- The Byrds
- Peter, Paul & Mary
- Buffalo Springfield
- John Denver
- Simon & Garfunkel

Blues-Rock

- John Mayall and the Bluesbreakers
- Cream
- Stevie Ray Vaughan
- Janis Joplin

Country Superstars

- Johnny Cash
- Dolly Parton
- Willie Nelson
- Reba McEntire

Southern Rock

- The Allman Brothers Band
- Creedence Clearwater Revival
- Lynyrd Skynyrd
- The Eagles

West Coast Sound

- Jefferson Airplane
- The Mamas and the Papas
- Sly and the Family Stone
- Steve Miller Band
- The 5th Dimension

Progressive Rock

- Led Zeppelin
- Emerson, Lake & Palmer
- Yes
- Deep Purple
- Chicago

Album-Oriented Prog Rock

- Pink Floyd
- King Crimson
- The Who
- The Moody Blues
- Jethro Tull

Psychedelic Rock

- The Zombies
- The Beatles (later years)
- Jimi Hendrix
- The Doors
- The Grateful Dead

Storytellers

- Crosby, Stills, Nash (& Young)
- Carly Simon
- James Taylor
- Joni Mitchell
- Gordon Lightfoot
- Jim Croce
- Cat Stevens
- Dan Fogelberg
- Jackson Browne

Glam Rock

- KISS
- David Bowie
- Alice Cooper
- Queen

Adult Contemporary

- The Carpenters
- Fleetwood Mac
- Barry Manilow
- Seals & Croft

The 70's - Disco

- Donna Summer
- K.C. and the Sunshine Band
- The Village People
- The Bee Gees

80's Pop Stars

- Michael Jackson
- Prince
- Whitney Houston
- Madonna

Arena Rock

- Aerosmith
- Foreigner
- Journey
- The Police
- U2

New Wave

- New Order
- Duran Duran
- Depeche Mode
- Simple Minds
- Tears for Fears

Alt Rock

- R.E.M
- Talking Heads
- B-52s
- The Cure

Heavy Metal

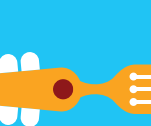
- Black Sabbath
- Metallica
- Iron Maiden
- Guns N' Roses

Country Crossover

- Billy Ray Cyrus
- Shania Twain
- Garth Brooks
- Keith Urban

Girl Groups

- The Bangles
- The GoGos
- Indigo Girls
- The Spice Girls



90's Grunge

- Nirvana
- Pearl Jam
- Soundgarden
- Foo Fighters

Hip Hop Origins

- Hip Hop 1: Born in the Bronx
- Hip Hop 2: New School, Old School & Mainstream
- Hip Hop 3: West Coast Hip Hop
- Hip Hop Wrap Up

Hip Hop for Social Justice

- HHSJ 1: Personal 'DNA' Project
- HHSJ 2: Sampling Project
- HHSJ 3: Hip-Hop Instrumental
- HHSJ 4: Social Justice Project

Electronic Dance Music (EDM)

- Avicii
- Skrillex
- David Guetta
- deadmau5

Doo Wop to Boy Bands

- The Drifters
- The Four Seasons
- Backstreet Boys
- 'N Sync

Teen Queens

- Brittany Spears
- Christina Aguilera
- Jessica Simpson
- Mandy Moore

Master Songwriters

- Bruce Springsteen
- Billy Joel
- Stevie Wonder
- Elton John
- Carole King

Master Guitarists

- Eric Clapton
- Jimmy Page
- Jimi Hendrix
- Eddie Van Halen

Pop Music Bonus Pack

(single lessons covering multiple artists)

- Women Who Rock
- Vocal Legends
- Punk Rock
- Humorists & Novelties
- Cowboy Country
- Same Title, Different Songs
- One-Hit Wonders

American Popular Song Today

Visit Matt Corriel's [YouTube channel](#) for available song discussions.

IMPORTANT:

As with any popular music selected for classroom use, you should always **review the lessons** and **listen to the songs** in the playlists **in their entirety** to ensure that they are appropriate for your students and the norms of your school community. Some of the songs and activities contain language and topics better suited to older students.

The choice of which popular music to include in a school setting is always a uniquely individual decision. This course is designed to provide starting points and options.

