The Jazz Age, also known as the Roaring Twenties, was a time when jazz music and dance styles became wildly popular, not only in the United States, where it was born, but also across the globe. It's worth noting that, although the Jazz Age is primarily associated with the period between the end of World War I in 1918 and the start of the Great Depression in 1929, the influence of jazz music didn't stop there, but continued to be significant, overlapping into subsequent musical periods.

The war was over, the economy was booming, and folks were just ready to have a good time. And jazz? It was the soundtrack to all of that. Born in the African American communities of New Orleans, jazz music broke many of the rules of traditional Western music. The rhythm, the improvisation, the soul – it was unlike anything people had heard before. It was innovative, lively, and fun, just like the decade itself.

The advent of the Jazz Age also marked a shift towards a more liberal society. People were pushing boundaries and breaking societal norms. Women, known as flappers, were wearing shorter dresses, bobbing their hair, and enjoying a newfound freedom. Jazz, with its vibrant energy and disregard for musical conventions, perfectly mirrored these societal changes.

In this era, the star power of artists like Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington was on the rise. They were not just musicians; they were influencers who played a huge role in spreading jazz music and culture. Jazz clubs were springing up in cities everywhere, and people couldn't get enough of the new sound. Armstrong's innovative trumpet playing and warm, charismatic voice, along with Ellington's genius as a composer and band leader, left an indelible mark on the music world. Their impact on jazz is immeasurable and continues to inspire musicians today.

But it wasn't all smooth sailing. While the Jazz Age was a time of great cultural growth and social change, it was also a time of racial tension and class struggle. Despite these challenges, or perhaps because of them, jazz continued to evolve, influence and inspire, making its mark as one of the most significant cultural movements of the 20th century. And even after the Wall Street crash in 1929 signalled the end of the Roaring Twenties, jazz didn't miss a beat. It continued to grow, shaping and being shaped by the world around it.

Some great tunes from this era to check out: "West End Blues" by Louis Armstrong and "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)" by Duke Ellington.