**Evolution of Popular Music**

Grades 9-12

Half year course

**Prerequisites**

None

**Objectives**

* Students will be able to discern between different styles of popular music from the last century
* Students will understand the historical context of the evolution of various musical styles

**Course Description**

The purpose of the Evolution of Popular Music course is to allow students to learn about the history and evolution of the music they listen to on a regular basis. This course was developed with both musicians and non-musicians in mind. The student-centered nature of the class allowed students to pick the music they want to research from each decade, allowing their own musical proclivities to guide their learning. All in all, the course was designed to help students expand their own musical tastes.

Structurally, the course works as follows: First, the instructor gives a lecture and some reading assignments on the decade being covered to present historical and musical context. Then, each student studies their own choice of musician or genre (from a prescribed list) and present their findings to the class in the form of a PowerPoint presentation which included historical/biographical context as well as five recordings and analyses of the music, generally in terms of instrumentation, structure, and lyrics. After students had their opportunity to present, an exam would be given, which included questions on history, style, and a listening section in which students would have to name certain songs and their genres.

Students who happened to be musicians were invited to perform music rather than play a recording during their presentation for extra credit.

Assessments included unit exams, student presentations (with a checklist outlining expectations), listening quizzes, and reading assignments for classwork and homework.

**Technology Integration**

* PowerPoint (for student presentations)
* ProTools (to record students on the occasion that they chose to perform music rather than play a recording)