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Soul music in the USA

READING

LEVEL
Advanced

NUMBER
C1_1013R_EN

LANGUAGE
English

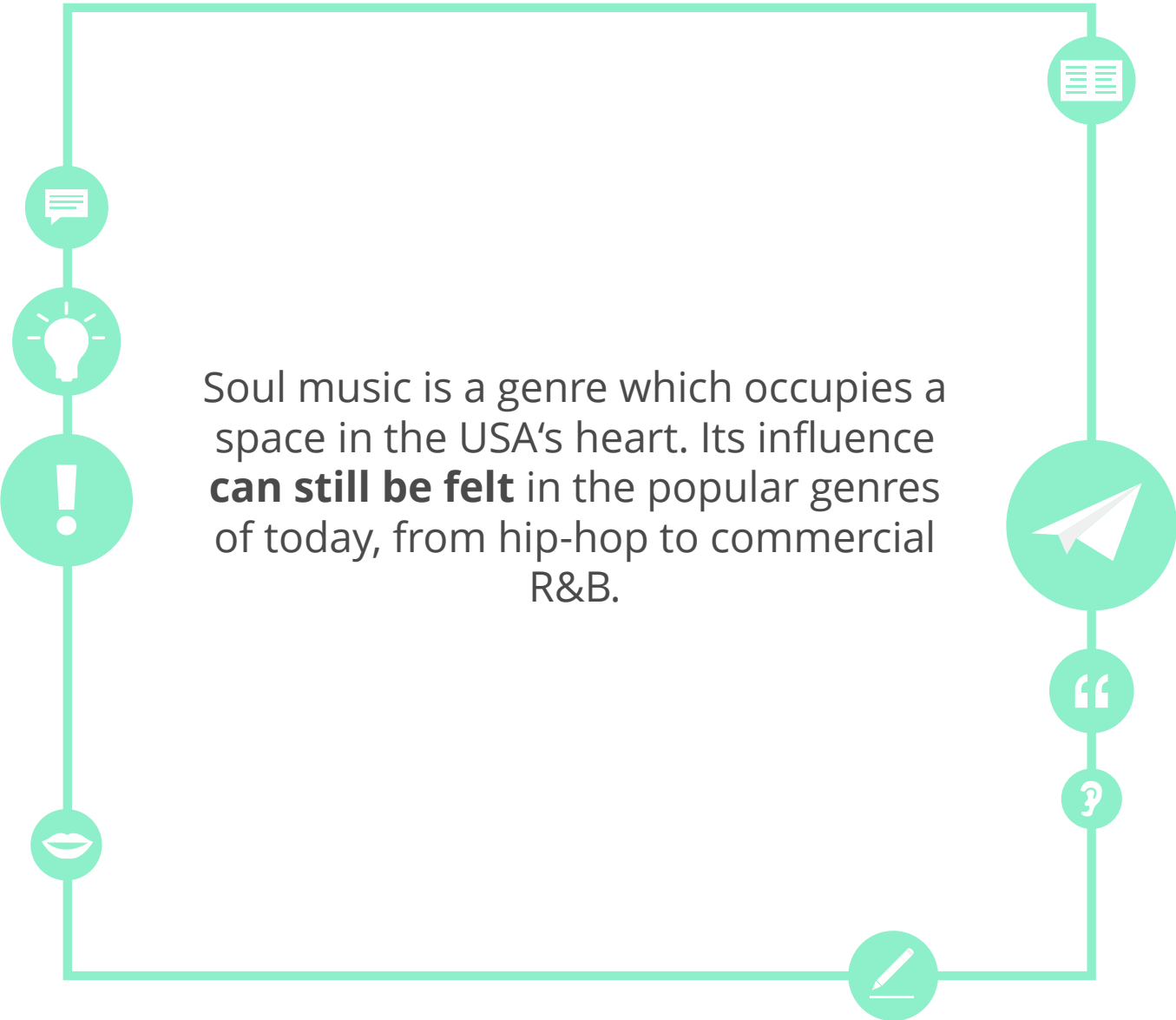




Goals

- Can understand a longer text about soul music in the USA with new vocabulary.
- Can describe and discuss musical genres and journalism in detail.





Soul music is a genre which occupies a space in the USA's heart. Its influence **can still be felt** in the popular genres of today, from hip-hop to commercial R&B.



Music and you

**What's your
favourite musical
genre and why?**

hip-hop

classical

soul

R&B



Music and you



What do you already know
about soul music?

What kind of instruments do
you think are used?



Music and you

What does the word **soul** mean?
Do you know?

Why do you think **soul music**
has been given this name?





Origins of Soul

Soul music emerged in the USA in the late 1950s. Its **origins** can be traced to African-American gospel music and rhythm and blues. Soul merged the religious and **secular** styles of the two genres, creating a **hybrid** genre. Its development throughout the 60s and 70s was **extensive** and varied, and it played a significant role during the Civil Rights Movement as the music which **embodied** African American life.





Origins of Soul

The 1960s was the decade for soul music. Before the genre started to **splinter** into a wide range of **sub-genres**, soul could be best divided into the northern soul of Detroit and Chicago and the southern soul of Memphis. In Detroit, record label Motown boasted artists such as Marvin Gaye and The Jackson 5, producing nearly 80 top-ten hits **during the course of** the decade. Michael Jackson was perhaps their most **coveted** star, whose vocal capacities and endearing **persona** immediately won over the public.





Soul music in the USA



Motown's trademark *Motown Sound* relied heavily on a group of **in-house** musicians, known collectively as the Funk Brothers, who provided the instrumentals to the label's major releases. Motown was the master label of pop-soul. Vee-Jay records in Chicago, meanwhile, released more **politically-charged** tracks by the likes of Curtis Mayfield.

In the south, Memphis label Stax Records launched the stars of Otis Redding and Aretha Franklin.



Discuss the meanings

origins

secular	politically-charged	persona
to splinter		to covet
in-house		during the course of
extensive		sub-genre
		to embody



Fill in the gaps

Fill in the gaps using the words that we have discussed. Don't look back to the text!

1. Its _____ can be traced to African-American gospel music and rhythm and blues.
2. Soul merged the religious and _____ styles of the two genres, creating a _____ genre.
3. Its development throughout the 60s and 70s was _____ and varied.
4. Soul is the music which _____ African American life.
5. Soul now has many _____.
6. Motown produced nearly 80 top-ten hits _____ the decade.
7. Michael Jackson was the most _____ star, perhaps due to his endearing _____.

hybrid

secular

during the course of

embodied

origins

sub-genres

extensive

persona

coveted



Comprehension lists

Divide 1960s soul music into two categories based on your understanding of the text. Write the names of artists and the style of their sounds in each list.



Big question

**What makes a
performance
powerful?**





Soul music in the USA



In the 70s, the genre of soul music was **evolving**. While Motown artists were enjoying success in pop-soul, the newly-established Hi Records label continued to produce music in the Stax tradition. Al Green, soon-to-be king of funk, began his career at Hi Records. Together with James Brown and Stevie Wonder, Green brought funk to the **mainstream**.

Drawing inspiration from psychedelic rock, psychedelic soul emerged as a new genre and was fronted by **legends** such as Jimi Hendrix. Jimi Hendrix would go on to give some of the most memorable performances in the history of psychedelic rock, such as the infamous **closing set** of Woodstock festival in 1969.



Soul music in the USA



With the decline of disco and funk in the 80s, a new **strand** of soul was taking off. Contemporary R&B, more than ever before, used technology to **electronically enhance** records. The result: smooth tracks with even smoother vocals and countless number 1 tracks by Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey.

Elsewhere, British soul was emerging as a **distinct** genre in the 80s with artists such as George Michael, Sade and Simply Red enjoying widespread commercial popularity.



New vocabulary: discuss the meanings

to evolve
mainstream
closing
set
legend
distinct
strand
Electronically
enhance



Multiple choice

1. Which artists brought funk to the mainstream?

- a. Al Green, Stevie Wonder and Phil Crosby**
- b. Al Green, James Blunt and Stevie Wonder**
- c. Al Green, James Brown and Stevie Wonder**

2. Psychedelic soul was influenced by the genre of:

- a. Rock and roll**
- b. Jazz**
- c. Hip hop**



Multiple choice

3. Contemporary R&B was the result of:

- a. Increasing popularity of funk and disco**
- b. Fading popularity of funk and disco**

4. British (or Blue Eyed) soul was a(n) _____ genre of soul.

- a. Underground**
- b. Distinct**



All the questions

Think about your favourite musical artist. It can be any genre! If you could meet them, what kinds of questions would you ask them? Think of at least five. There are some examples below to get you into the mood.

- You say you're a _____ artist at heart. Which era of _____ has influenced you the most?
- Are there any artists in particular that have influenced your music?
- What is your favourite thing to listen to when having breakfast on a Sunday morning?





Role-play

Imagine you are lucky enough to meet your favourite artist in person. Role play the interview using the questions you wrote in the previous activity.



You: You have often spoken about the importance of spirituality in your work.
Can you tell me more about that?

Artist: _____



You: _____

Artist: _____





Soul Music in the USA



In the 90s, so-called *neo-soul* was attracting attention in the music industry. **Coined** by entrepreneur Kedar Massenburg, the term was attached to the work of artists such as Erykah Badu, whose *Baduizm* movement **gained momentum** in this decade. *Neo-soul* refers to 90s hip-hop which **reverted back to** 70s classical soul, as in Badu's early hits such as *On & On*.

Since its origin as the soundtrack of the African-American experience in 1950s USA, soul music has taken many **hybrid** forms and enjoyed both **critical** and commercial success. Its relevance **can still be felt today**, be it in Beyonce's *Lemonade*, or William Bell's *This is Where I Live*. The question remains: how will soul look 50 years from now?



New vocabulary: discuss the meanings

can still be felt

critical

hybrid

to revert back to

to coin a phrase

to gain momentum



Discuss: musical genres

This sample of the text speaks about the terms that are attached to genres of music. Why do you think record labels categorise styles of music?

“

In the 90s, so-called *neo-soul* was attracting attention in the music industry. **Coined** by entrepreneur Kedar Massenburg, the term was attached to the work of artists such as Erykah Badu...

”



Discuss: experience

The second sample suggests that soul is the soundtrack of the African-American experience. Do you think this claim is valid? Why (not)?

“

In the 90s, so-called *neo-soul* was attracting attention in the music industry. **Coined** by entrepreneur Kedar Massenburg, the term was attached to the work of artists such as Erykah Badu...

”

“

Since its origin as the soundtrack of the African-American experience in 1950s USA...

”



Dialogue

Below are some opinions from African-Americans on soul music and identity. Use your answers from the last activity to help you discuss one of the opinions.



Singing is my life! Soul music was such a special development in 20th century America in terms of African-American identity. When people talk about Soul, I feel as if they understand both my experiences and my ancestors' experiences better.



To be honest, I prefer to listen to electronic music like house and techno... While I respect the history of Soul, I don't think it necessarily speaks for my personal identity!



I think popular genres of music like Soul just give the public another opportunity to just lump us all in the same category all over again! If you avoid the issue of stereotyping, however, it's an enriching genre to learn about.



Big question

**How do *you* think
soul music will look
50 years from now?**



Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





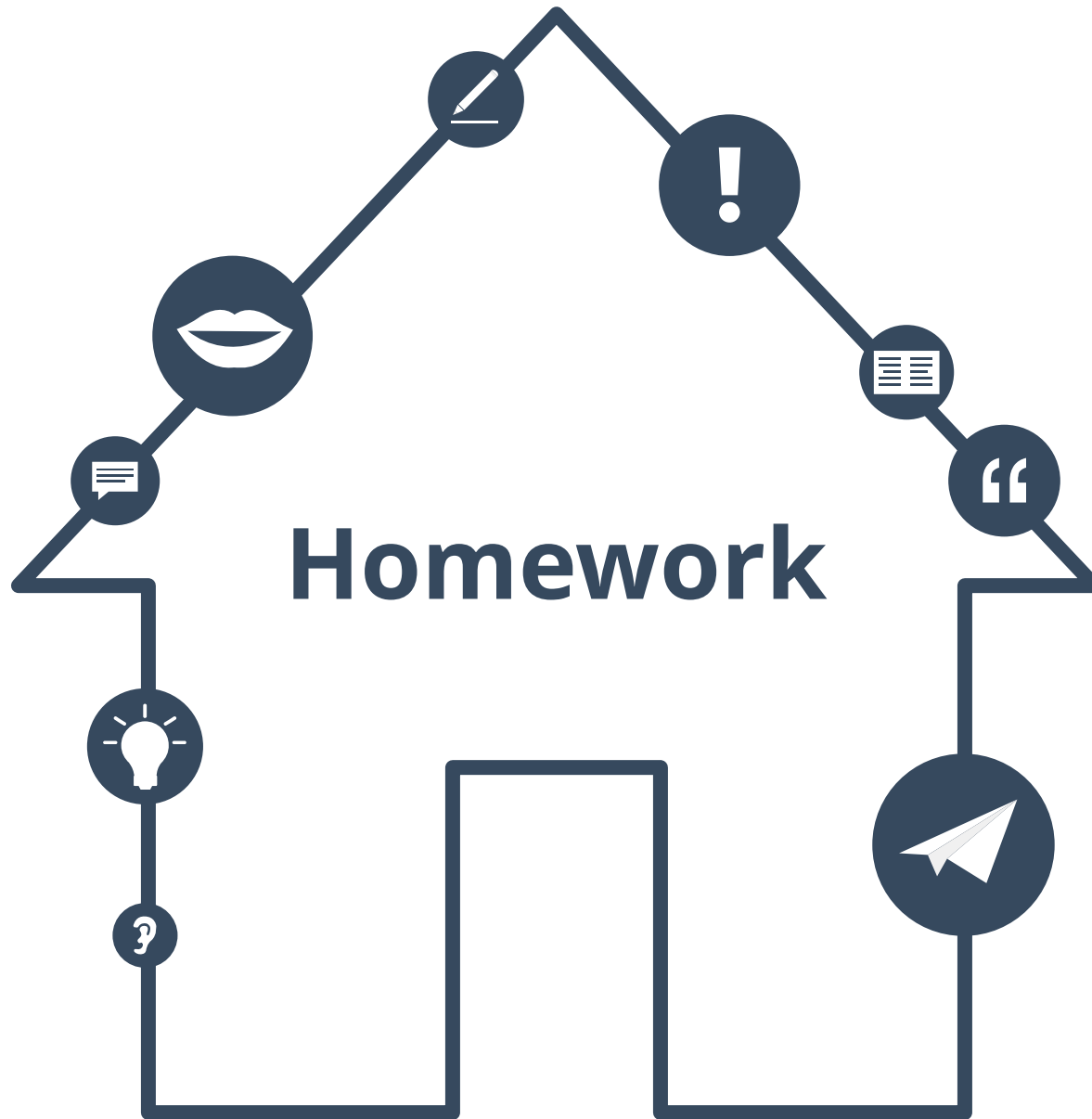
Answer Key

Exercise p. 17-18

1. C
2. A
3. B
4. B

Exercise p. 11

1. Origins
2. Secular, hybrid
3. Extensive
4. Embodied
5. Sub-genres
6. During the course of
7. Coveted, persona





Vocabulary review

Review vocabulary from this lesson and write under the appropriate headings to help you with the following exercise.

Talking about music in
the past

Talking about music in
the present

Talking about music in
the future



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