

History of Rock 'n' Roll

Sam Greene
Camas High School
26900 SE 15th St.
Camas, WA 98607

Room 710 / Phone: 360.833.5750 X 7070
Conference Period: 2:10 - 2:40 P.M.
E-mail: sam.greene@camas.wednet.edu
Class Web: www.mistergweb.com

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The History of Rock 'n' Roll, a semester based elective, is an in depth study of the origins of popular music in the 20th century and the social and historical context that gave birth to it and related genres and musical offshoots. From blues and country to punk and heavy metal, students will familiarize themselves with landmark groups, music, and movements of different periods, exploring connections between modern music and the artists from the past who have paved the way for the popular music of today.

BASIC STANDARDS & POLICIES:

In order for us to have a successful semester, classroom members need to strive to adhere to the following standards and policies:

BE PROMPT

- When the bell rings be inside the classroom (*class tardy/attendance policy is outlined in the CHS Student Handbook*)

BE PREPARED

- Come to class well-rested and ready to learn with your classroom materials, supplies, and homework.

BE POLITE

- Respect everyone's personal rights, property, and opinion

BE ATTENTIVE

- Practice active listening skills when the teacher, visitors, or other students are addressing the class. If you have a question or would like to contribute to the discussion, please raise your hand

BE COOPERATIVE

- Cooperate with your teachers and classmates

BE RESPONSIBLE

- Ask for help when you need it
- Keep track of your books and assignments
- Turn your work in on time
- Do your part in cooperative learning projects
- Challenge yourself to grow
- Accept responsibility for your grades and actions

MATERIALS & RESOURCES:

Students will use a variety of resources and materials to build their knowledge of rock history and popular music of the 20th and 21st century. Due to the content, themes, and language of some of the material, a mature attitude is required and expected. As always, students will be given the option of opting out of learning experiences/material that makes them uncomfortable for whatever reason. Following are some but not all of the videos, texts, and Internet sites that will be used:

- [The Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock & Roll](#)
- [Turning Points in Rock and Roll](#), Hank Bordowitz
- *History of Rock* Class Reader
- DVD: Time/Life: The History of Rock & Roll
- DVD: Ray
- DVD: Walk the Line
- DVD: The Buddy Holly Story
- DVD: That Thing You Do
- DVD: School of Rock
- Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Web Site: <http://www.rockhall.com/>
- Rolling Stone Magazine Web Site: <http://www.rollingstone.com>
- Class Web Site: <http://www.mistergweb.com/rock.htm>
- Recording Industry Association of America: <http://www.riaa.com/default.asp>

Depending on how students decide to approach the class activities, they will need to supply the following materials:

- 1 spiral-bound notebooks, 8 ½ x 11, college ruled, 100+ pages for in class notes or activities (OPTIONAL)
- 3.5" diskette or storage device (USB flash drive); please label the disk with your name (OPTIONAL)

GRADING POLICY:

A student's letter grade in a course is just one of the ways progress and learning in a subject is measured. Progress reports and final semester grades will reflect work done up to that point in the grading cycle. In accordance with the Camas High School grading policy, letter grades will be awarded using the standard grading scale in the CHS Student Handbook.

Grades are based on work done in four weighted categories:

- **Daily Class Work:** Totalling *80 percent* of the course grade, this category covers student participation in class activities and assignments such as daily journals, listening labs, discussions, multimedia, jam of the day, etc. Students compile evidence of their daily work in a class portfolio and present their work about once every 3 weeks or so. See the attached rubric at the end of the syllabus for specific categories and behaviors.
- **Tests & Quizzes:** Students are expected to demonstrate some accountability and level of proficiency in identifying genres, artists, concepts, and trends from the history of Rock & Roll. From time to time students will be quizzed in various formats to achieve this goal. This category is *20 percent* of the student's grade.

To help improve communication with home and empower students to be responsible for their academic progress, students and parents will have access to grades and class information online through the district grading system. If you don't already have a password and individual logon, those should be established and communicated in the first few weeks of school.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Plagiarism is when a person passes off someone else's work as his or her own, whether it be a classmate, published author, college professor, etc. Students caught plagiarizing or being academically dishonest will receive a zero/"0" for that assignment and a grade of "F" in the course until an acceptable make-up is completed. At that time, the student's grade on the assignment will be finalized as a zero/"0". Depending on the degree and severity of the offense, an opportunity may be presented to the student by the instructor to earn back some but never all of the lost credit. Protect yourself as a student by erring on the side of caution and discussing questions you might have on the topic with your teacher. Quite simply, just say no ... and don't do it.

LATE WORK / ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Quite simply put, unexcused late work is not acceptable. While I encourage and expect every student to complete each assignment and/or project to the best of their ability, partial credit will be awarded, at my discretion, for incomplete work submitted on time, but not for work turned in late without prior arrangements having been made.

As always, late work issues not specifically covered in this policy will arise due to family emergencies, extenuating circumstances, etc. Students should see me with any individual concerns they may have, preferably prior to due dates. Please make every effort to minimize unnecessary absences. It is impossible to replace the learning situations and whole class activities students miss while out of the classroom. For specifics on the CHS attendance policy we adhere to, consult the student handbook. *Please note the following: For each day of excused absence one day is given to complete or make up work.*

ADVANCED CREDIT:

Students are welcome to repeat the class if they enjoyed their initial experience or are trying to earn credit they failed to receive in their initial attempt or improve their grade. With that in mind, please note that you can not earn elective credit for a repeated class at CHS. For those students who earned a letter grade of "B" or better in their first attempt, however, there is an option for students to earn advanced credit. Students wishing to do so will meet with the instructor in the first week of the course and go over the requirements for doing so, which will include some independent reading, supplemental assignments, and independent project study.

MAJOR UNITS OF STUDY / COURSE OUTLINE:

The class is divided into 3 units, moving forward in rough chronological order by genre from about the beginning of the 20th century through to present day.

UNIT 1: Unit 1 focuses on the historical, social, and cultural context that eventually led to the birth to rock 'n' roll in America. Deriving influence and character from West Africa and Europe via the slave trade and colonization of the Americas, the distinctive rock 'n' roll sound that emerged in North America in the 20th century was a unique syncretic blend of cultural elements that fused and forever changed the face of music. Beyond just the music, though, rock 'n' roll challenged the existing political and social order of a country increasingly divided by race and its unresolved legacy of discrimination. All of this was soon to change.

The promise that rock 'n' roll represented when it emerged in the mid to late 1950s with the genre of "rockabilly" and others, however, ultimately proved to be short lived in this country. The new music, often identified by the dominant white culture as "race" music, became mired in the social and political conservatism of post World War II America, initially giving rock 'n' roll little long-term commercial viability.

UNIT 2: By the dawn of the 1960s, popular music had fallen into an all too predictable and formulaic rut. Songwriters employed by major record labels labored in cubicles writing "hits" designed to appeal to the widest possible commercial audience. Across the Atlantic Ocean in England, however, a revival of American music was taking place, thanks to the work of early American rock icons such as Elvis, Bill Hailey, and Chuck Berry, who exported their blues based, country tinged sound to masses of eager British youth who gobbled it up and built on the music their American heroes had given them.

With the death of JFK, America's increasing entanglement in Cold War politics, and the growing power and presence of a new youth culture created by a bumper crop of baby boomers simultaneously coming of age, the time was ripe for dramatic social, political, and cultural change. The Beatles' February, 1964, performance on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, followed in 1965 by Bob Dylan's electrification of folk music, energized the scene, ushering in a new age of musical innovation and social and political consciousness in music. By the end of the decade, a new international culture of rock, replete with a host of colorful characters, groups, and experimental music, had taken over, providing a soundtrack and backdrop for the turbulent social and political change unfolding in America and abroad.

UNIT 3: A new flavor of music, the likes of which hadn't been heard or seen before, slipped onto the scene in the mid 1970s, partly in response to the excesses of overblown, corporate arena rock, and partly in response to the growing feminist movement gaining traction. Drawing on the musical traditions of soul and funk, disco emerged out of relative obscurity in a few short years to become perhaps the dominant genre of the decade, much to the chagrin of many guitar based rock 'n' rollers. For the first time in rock history, the music and culture of minority groups, as embodied in disco, commercially surpassed that of white culture, particularly after the release of the movie *Saturday Night Fever*. Disco's use of the DJ paved the way for hip hop, which blazed a wide and vitally important path into the following decades.

The trend of new genres emerging in reaction to overly commercialized genres is a readily identify pattern by this point in the history of rock. From punk and new wave's desire to eschew anything mainstream, including the pomposity of prog and glam rock, to the emergence of grunge in the early 90s as a direct result of the commercial excesses of the MTV borne hair metal rockers of the previous decade, rock had come of age, yet again.

From its roots in blues and country, rock 'n' roll has spawned countless genres and sub genres, but always at its core is the mystery and mischief which will forever breathe life into it and future incarnations yet to be born. Long live rock, whatever it may be in its many derivations!

The following outline is by no means meant to be an exhaustive or hard and fast concrete, chronological listing of all musical genres and offshoots before, during, and/or after the birth of rock. It is, rather, a flexible, organic guide from which to begin our discussion and study of the roots of rock AND popular music:

What is Rock 'n' Roll?

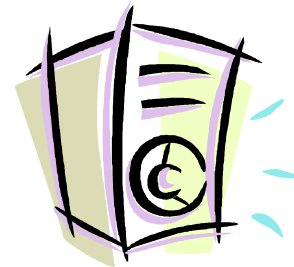
I. Blues

- A. Jazz
- B. Gospel / Spirituals
- C. R & B
 - 1. Rockabilly
- D. Doo Wop
 - 1. Soul
 - a. Psychedelic Rock
 - (1) Southern Rock
 - (2) Glitter/Glam Rock
 - (3) Prog Rock
 - 2. Funk
 - a. Disco
 - b. Hip Hop



II. Country

- A. Folk
 - 1. Folk Rock
 - 2. British Invasion
 - a. New Wave
 - b. Hard Rock
 - (1) Punk
 - (2) Heavy Metal
 - (3) Grunge
 - (4) Hair Metal



CLOSING THOUGHTS:

If you have any questions regarding this syllabus, assignments, materials, or your progress, please feel free to contact me at school via phone or preferably e-mail. I am looking forward to working with you this semester to create a positive and successful learning experience.

Good luck!

Sam Greene

History of Rock Participation Rubric

UNIT 1 / UNIT 2 / UNIT 3 (Circle One) Name: _____

Overall Letter Grade: _____ Comments: _____

CATEGORY	Excellent / "A"	Good / "B"	Satisfactory / "C"	Poor / "D-F"
Portfolio Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent portfolio organization Work stapled and arranged chronologically All assignments labeled with name, date, week, etc. Work neatly organized and presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good portfolio organization Work mostly stapled and arranged chronologically Most assignments labeled with name, date, week, etc. Good organization and presentation of work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic attempt at portfolio organization Some work stapled and arranged chronologically Some assignments partially labeled with name, date, week, etc. Overall neatness, organization, and presentation of work is marginal: sloppy handwriting, errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little attempt or poor effort at portfolio organization Little if any work stapled and arranged chronologically Little if any of the assignments labeled with name, date, week, etc. Content included is not thoughtfully ordered; neatness is lacking; presentation is poor. Work obscured and inhibited by sloppy handwriting, errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc. Schedule a conference with me.
Assignment Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains consistent focus on assignments. All parts completed Abundant and relevant use of supporting details in responses/work. High level of analysis with mature interpretation of the content demonstrated. Clear and compelling evidence of learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains good focus on assignments. All parts completed Good amount of and relevant supporting details in responses/work. Good level of analysis of the content, though a few interpretive gaps may exist. Good evidence of learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a developing and/or inconsistent focus on assignments. Most parts completed Supporting details included, but some extraneous or loosely related support in responses/work noted. Developing level of analysis of the content; many interpretive gaps noted. Some evidence of learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates little or no focus on assignments Little or most parts NOT completed Few if any supporting details included; those present may be irrelevant or interfere with the meaning in the responses/work. Little if any analysis of the content demonstrated. Superficial observations demonstrating little or no critical though process in responses/work. Schedule a conference with me. Little if any evidence of learning.
Class Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dutifully records detailed notes on Jam of the Day, Genre Organizer, and other activities/lectures. Frequently and actively participates in classroom discussions. Thoughtfully attends to visual media presented in class. Is a highly positive, supportive member of the classroom community during presentations: active listening, applause, respectful, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records good notes on Jam of the Day, Genre Organizer, and other activities/lectures. Often participates in classroom discussions. Attends to visual media presented in class. Is a positive, supportive member of the classroom community during presentations: active listening, applause, respectful, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically records basic notes on Jam of the Day, Genre Organizer, and other activities/lectures. Sometimes participates in classroom discussions. Usually attends to visual media presented in class. Is mostly a positive, supportive member of the classroom community during presentations: active listening, applause, respectful, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seldom if ever records notes on Jam of the Day, Genre Organizer, and other activities/lectures. Rarely if ever participates in classroom discussions. Fails to attend to visual media presented in class: sleeping, talking, doing homework, etc. Is not a positive, supportive member of the classroom community during presentations: fails to listen, applaud, be respectful, etc. Schedule a conference with me.
Overall Class Effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignments reflect extra attention to detail, guidelines, and overall assignment specs. Student consistently goes above and beyond basic assignment expectations. Excellent use of class time provided to complete work. No redirection by teacher required; student manages themselves independently. Uses free time after daily assignments constructively for extension activities: extra reading, listening labs, project work time, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignments reflect good attention to detail, guidelines, and overall assignment specs. Student typically meets the minimum requirements for the assignment; in some cases they perhaps go beyond basic requirements. Good use of class time provided to complete work. Little if any redirection by teacher required. Often uses free time after daily assignments constructively for extension activities: extra reading, listening labs, project work time, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignments reflect some attention to detail, guidelines, and overall assignment specs. Student usually meets the bare minimum requirements for the assignment; rarely if ever do they go beyond basic requirements. Satisfactory use of class time given to complete work; Some redirection by teacher required. Seldom uses free time for extension activities: sits, talks, and/or vegetates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignments reflect virtually no attention to detail, guidelines, and overall assignment specs. Student largely fails to meet most or all of the assignment requirements. Poor use of class time provided to complete work; more focus needed. Frequent redirection by teacher needed. Never uses free time for extension activities: sits, talks, and/or vegetates. Schedule a conference with me.