Rock and Roll and the Record and Broadcasting Industry

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Abstract

This curriculum unit will spur an exploration of the record and broadcasting industry, specifically the rise of rhythm and blues music and its subsequent impact on Rock and Roll. The unit will explore the various artists that shaped Rock and Roll during the early 1950s and show their impact then and in later decades.

The unit will also discuss how soul music and the early Rock and Roll artists were popular in the African American music realm, but it was not until the music was whitened and had a “crossover” that this style of music was accepted more popularly by whites. The role of the recording and broadcasting industry in affecting this shift will be a key issue.

Eighth grade students in the Philadelphia School District are required to take a course in American history. Students learn about music and culture in particular time periods. The broad topic of Rock and Roll will be narrowed to Philadelphia, and the place of American Bandstand and several local artists. This unit will allow students to study Rock and Roll as a genre of music and also appreciate Philadelphia’s role in shaping the music industry for the rest of the country.