



Rock 101

The Surf Ballroom and Early Rock n' Roll

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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This guide contains materials to aid teachers in teaching students about the history of the Surf Ballroom and its ties to the early Rock n' Roll era. The guide will discuss the origins of Rock n' Roll and how the earliest Rock n' Roll performers shaped our music culture today. This guide addresses specific curriculum objectives in language arts, music, and social studies for students 4-12. All curricular connections are based on the National Core Standards and the Iowa Core Standards, and the activities can be used as interdisciplinary teaching tools. Teacher Notes are included in some of the lessons that provide special instructions and suggestions for ways teachers can adapt lessons to their particular class. This guide is meant to be used in tandem with the Rock 101 PowerPoint presentation. A tour of the Surf Ballroom and Museum is available at the conclusion of this lesson.

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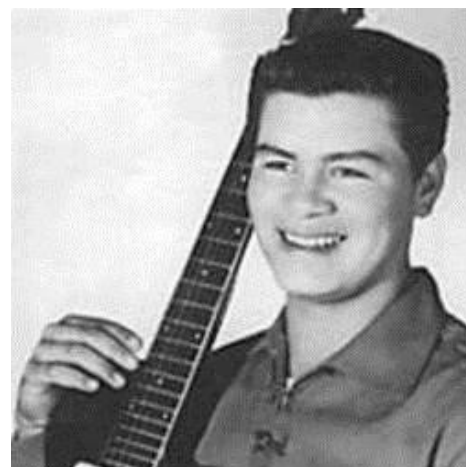
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1 | What Do You Know?

National Core Standards

Language Arts

L.4.3a. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.

L.7.3a Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.

Iowa Core Standards

Social Studies

SS.6.13. Identify what makes up a culture and examine how people acquire their cultural beliefs and value systems.

SS.6.17. Analyze and explain the cultural, physical, and environmental characteristics of places and regions and how this affects the lives of the people who live there.

Objective: Students will create a set of statements they believe about The Surf Ballroom and Early Rock n' Roll, as well as a set of statements determining what they would like to learn about The Surf and Early Rock n' Roll and then evaluate these statements by reflecting on their museum visit and/or the conclusion of this lesson.

Prep Time: None

Materials: Paper, Pencil

1. The following activity creates materials that will be needed for the post-lesson or post-visit activity, What Did You Learn?

Begin by creating a KWL chart with your class. This is a chart with three sections or columns, one for each letter K, W, and L. The K section is what they already KNOW about the Surf and early Rock n' Roll. The list might include: the Surf is where people would go to dance, Elvis Presley was the King of Rock n' Roll, etc. The W section is what they WANT to know. Answers might include: how did rock n' roll start, who were the pioneers of rock music, etc.

The L represents what they LEARNED about the Surf and Early Rock n' Roll music. This section is to be completed after the lesson and/or after a visit to the Surf Ballroom and Museum. Once the chart is created, save it for review and use as the last activity at the end of this teachers kit.

K	W	L

Teacher Note

You may choose to make this an individual activity by asking students to create their own KWL charts. They could also take these charts and fill them in during their visit to the museum.

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2 | The Good Old Days

Iowa Core Standards

Language Arts

SL.6.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly .

Social Studies

SS.6.13. Identify what makes up a culture and examine how people acquire their cultural beliefs and value systems.

SS.6.17. Analyze and explain the cultural, physical, and environmental characteristics of places and regions and how this affects the lives of the people who live there.

Music

MU:Cn11.0.8.a

Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

Objective: Students will explore life in the 40's and 50's as well as learn about the fundamental makeup of early Rock music.

Prep Time: 10 minutes to print off activity worksheet.

Materials: Activity Sheet: 50's Slang (included)

Accompanying Power Point.

Key Vocabulary: Culture

1. Use the following questions for class discussion:

- **What is culture?**

Allow students to share their ideas about this word before giving them the following definition or asking them to look it up in the dictionary

Culture:

The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought typical of a population or community at a given time (Webster's II).

- **What are the things that define a culture?**

Possible answers: food, language, dialect, religion, beliefs

- **Do you think the neighborhood or community where you live has a distinct culture? Explain.**
- **Does the music to which a person listens reflect his or her culture? (Yes) How?**

Music, as other art forms, reflects the lives of people within a particular community, population, or group.

Essential Question: When did Rock n' Roll music begin? (40's & 50's)

- What do you think life was like in the 40's and 50's?
- What did people wear during this era?

While Poodle Skirts and Saddle Shoes were all the rage, women wearing pants became more of the norm. At least more so than any other previous era.

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2. Inventions

Can you name something that's been invented in our lifetime?

Be sure to point out what an exciting time it was in the 1950's. Many of the products we use today were invented during this era; M&M's, Barbie, Hula Hoop, colored TV, McDonald's opened, and the very first "computers" appeared during this era. Pictures of these products are featured in the Power Point.



3. Distribute the activity sheet, 1950's Slang. This worksheet can be completed individually or as a class.

Essential Question: Where did Rock n' Roll Begin?

4. Share the following with students.

You will want to reference the map of the United States to point out the cities where rock n' roll started.

Rock n' Roll was invented in the United States in places like Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, New York, and Memphis. It is one of the most well known music genre's in the world.

Discussion: Can you think of anything else that was created in the United States but is recognized world-wide?



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3 | That Rock n' Roll Sound

Iowa Core Standards

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Social Studies

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SS.6.17. Analyze and explain the cultural, physical, and environmental characteristics of places and regions and how this affects the lives of the people who live there.

Music

MU:Cn11.0.8.a Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

Objective: Students will learn about the music that inspired that Rock n' Roll sound as well as what inventions that allowed that sound to be possible.

Prep Time: 10 minutes to print Activity Sheet.

Materials: Access to the Internet, Activity Worksheet: Music That Inspired Rock n' Roll (included), accompanying PowerPoint.

1. Share the following with students.

Rock n' Roll music is unique in that it is comprised of a variety of musical genres. The sounds you are about to listen to are each from a different musical genre, and were the inspiration for the Rock n' roll sound we know and love today.

2. Distribute the Activity Sheet, Music That Inspired Rock n' Roll. This worksheet can be completed individually or as a class. *Music can be found on PowerPoint. Reference the Musical Excerpt sheet for more information.*

3. Share the following with students.

Before Rock n' Roll was all the rage, the music scene was dominated with the sounds of Big Band.

What is the definition of Big Band?

-A large group of musicians playing jazz or dance music.

Dozens of world famous Big Band musicians made regular stops in Clear Lake to the Surf Ballroom. The world famous pianist Duke Ellington was trapped at the Surf during a blizzard and signed our piano.

Play: [Jumpin' Jive Youtube video \(included in PowerPoint\)](#)



Music That Inspired Rock n' Roll

Instructions: Listen to the 4 songs. As you listen make notes. After, compare, discuss, and debate with your group or class.

Task	Song #1 Blues	Song #2 Country	Song #3 Gospel	Song #4 Jazz
What musical qualities do you hear in this song that make it fit with its genre?				
Where might you hear this song?				
Who would like this song?				
Give this song a rating of 1 out of 10. 10 Being the greatest song of all time.				

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4. What was new?

There were three important inventions during this era that shaped the sound of music.

- The Shure Unidyne 55’s Microphone (*known as the “Elvis Mic”*)
- The Electric Bass (invented by Leo Fender)
- The Transistor Radio (*The first hand held radio which made Rock n Roll available to the masses.*)

Discuss: *Can you think of an invention that has shaped the way we listen to music today?*

5. That Rock n’ Roll Sound

Rock n’ Roll consisted of 4-5 main instruments; electric guitar, bass, drums, and sometimes piano or saxophone.

Teacher Note

To delve deeper, hold a classroom discussion about the culture of the 50’s and how it impacted the music scene during that era. Take it a step further and discuss how today’s culture is reflected in popular music.

4 | The Surf Ballroom

Iowa Core Standards

Language Arts

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Ss.6.17. Analyze and explain the cultural, physical, and environmental characteristics of places and regions and how this affects the lives of the people who live there.

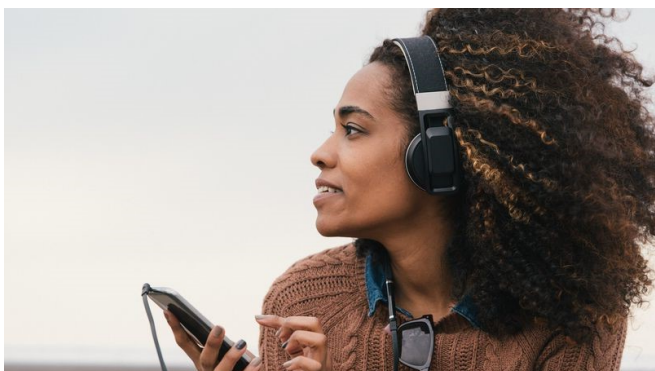
Music

MU:Cn11.0.8.a Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

Objective: Students will learn about the history of the Surf Ballroom and its direct ties with the early Rock n’ Roll era.

Prep Time: 10 min to print out Activity Sheet.

Materials: Accompanying PowerPoint



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Teacher Note

Photographs of the old Surf Ballroom can be found in the accompanying PowerPoint via slideshow.

1. Share the following with students.

The Original Surf Ballroom was built in 1933 on Witkes Beach, which is directly across the street from where the Surf stands today. The building featured a roof-top garden and was built in an art deco style that was popular in Clear Lake at the time.

Art Deco:

The predominant decorative art style of the 1920s and 1930s, characterized by precise and boldly delineated geometric shapes and strong colors, and used most notably in household objects and in architecture.

The Ballroom burned down in 1947 and after some debate, it was decided that the “New” Surf would be built across the street in what was at the time, the over-flow parking lot. A year later, in 1948, The Surf Ballroom reopened in its current location.

Both Ballrooms were built by a man named Carl Fox. Fox got his start building Roller Rinks and later switched to building and operating Ballrooms. Fox wanted a unique theme for his “Surf” Ballroom and wanted it to feel like a Florida Beach Club. The pineapple stenciling can be seen immediately upon entry of the ballroom. Various murals surround the dance floor that depict islands and beaches, and palm trees stand on either side of the stage.

Teacher Note

Fun Fact! Pineapples are an international sign of welcome!

The Surf featured “old style” music on Sunday-Wednesday nights and “new style” music on Thursday-Saturday.

Old Style– Big Band

New Style– Early Rock n’ Roll

Watch: 50’s Dance Video on Slide Show

5 | The Winter Dance Party Tour

1. Share the following with students.

The Winter Dance Party Tour took place in January and February and consisted of Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, The Big Bopper, and Dion and the Belmont's. (*show students the Original WDP poster*)

2. Meet the Artists

• Buddy Holly Facts

1) Last Name is actually spelled Holley. *When*

Buddy was first getting started, a record label misspelled his last name. Rather than correct them, he went with it.

2) First Instrument Buddy learned to play was the piano.

Buddy, like many families during the time of his childhood, had a piano in his living room. It was on this household instrument that Buddy learned to play and fall in love with music.

3) Buddy Opened for Elvis Presley.

Buddy Holly opened for Elvis when he was a High school Senior in 1955.

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4) Played non-traditional instruments. Example:
A cardboard box drum.

Buddy was always experimenting with sounds. One way he did that was by using non-traditional materials as instruments on stage.

Play: [Buddy Holly YouTube video \(Included in Power Point\)](#)

3. Tell your students the following:

Buddy Holly was one of the most influential musicians of all time inspiring major groups like the Beatles and the Rolling Stones.

Ask the students to write a paragraph about what modern day musician will inspire generations of musicians to come.

4. Encourage students to share their work with the class.

• Ritchie Valens Facts

1) Last Name is actually Valenzuela.

Early in his career, a music executive thought that Valens would be easier for the general public to

2) Left-handed but played Right-handed.

Even though Valens was left-handed, he was so eager to learn the guitar that he learned to play on a right-handed guitar. This probably felt a lot like writing with your non-dominant hand.



3) Song, Donna, was about his High School Girlfriend.

Valens' hit song, Donna, was about his High School Girlfriend. They met in 1957 at a party and it was love at first sight.

4) One of the first Latino-Rock Stars.

Ritchie was of Latino descent and one of the first to bring Latino heritage to the forefront of Rock n' Roll Music. Songs like La Bamba popularized Latino culture through the Spanish language.

Play: [Ritchie Valens YouTube video \(included in Power Point\)](#)

• JP "The Big Bopper" Richardson

1) First Name was Jiles.

The J in JP stands for Jiles!

2) Nickname was Jape.

The J may have stood for Jiles, but all of his friends called him Jape. The Big Bopper, Jiles, Jape....this guy sure had a lot of nicknames!

3) Lineman for his High School Football Team.

Before The Big Bopper became so involved in music, he was into sports, particularly football. He was a lineman for Beaumont High School in Texas.

4) His hit song, Chantilly Lace, was featured in the movie Happy Feet.

The Big Bopper had several well-known hits that are used in Movies and TV today. The song Chantilly Lace was featured in the kids movie, Happy Feet in 2006.

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4) First to coin the term “Music Video”

In the 1950's, The Big Bopper was hard at work creating “Music Videos.” In fact he was the first to coin the term during an interview in 1958.

Play: the Big Bopper YouTube video (included in Power Point)

3) Distribute the Activity Sheet, Winter Dance Party Poster. This worksheet can be completed individually or as a class.

Submit your poster mock-ups for a chance to have it created into a life-size poster! One poster will be selected per group submission and made into a life size poster. The Poster will then be returned to you to hang up and enjoy!



4. Share the following with students.

Clear lake was not originally a stop for the tour. Last minute, the tour manager booked the guys at the Surf Ballroom after their show in Green Bay.

Teacher Note

Be sure and point out how messy the tour map is on the Power Point. The tour zig-zagged all over the place!

The Tour was traveling on a drafty bus that had a broken heater. It was so cold that Carl Bunch (Buddy's drummer for the tour) had to be hospitalized for frost bite. Despite the set back the tour continued on, with Buddy, Dion, and Ritchie stepping up to play drums for one another. The Tour carried on until Clear Lake, where Buddy decided he was going to book a flight to their next destination; Moorehead, MN. He reached out to the Mason City Airport and a pilot by the name of Roger Peterson was hired to fly Buddy and his bandmates, Waylon Jennings and Tommy Allsup. The Big Bopper had come down with a cold and took Waylon's seat on the flight. A pleading Ritchie Valens (who had never flown before) flipped a coin with Tommy Allsup for his seat. The plane never made it to the next destination and crashed in a snow covered field about 8 miles North of the Surf Ballroom.

Discuss: Why do you think they call this major cultural event, “The Day the Music Died?”



Winter Dance Party Poster

Poster Mock-Up - A layout of printed matter or digital content.

Design your own Winter Dance Party Poster for a chance to have it made into a real poster!



Rock 101—The Surf Ballroom and Early Rock n’ Roll

6 | What’s a Rock n’ Roll “Icon”?

Iowa Core Standards

Language Arts

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Social Studies

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Ss.6.17. Analyze and explain the cultural, physical and environmental characteristics of places and regions and how this affects the lives of the people who live there.

Music

MU:Cn11.0.8.a Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

Objective: Students will explore the term “icon” by examining Buddy, Ritchie, and the Big Bopper’s role in early Rock n’ Roll.

Prep Time: None

Materials: Paper, pencil

Key Vocab: Icon, cultural icon

1. Ask students what the word “icon” means.

You may choose to have them share what they know about the word before looking it up in a dictionary. Many students will associate “icon” with a computer screen. Use this to discuss how the icons on a computer screen are really symbols for other things such as various computer programs or functions.

2. Share the following with students.

While there are multiple meanings for the word “icon”, here are two that are relevant to our discussion today.

Icon

- 1) An important and enduring symbol.
- 2) One who is the object of great attention and devotion; an idol.

3) Ask students to list ten icons (that are not people), such as the Statue of Liberty, Mickey Mouse, or the Washington Monument.

Discuss each icon on the list and what it represents.

4. Share the following with students:

When people are considered icons, it is different from just being famous. An icon is an enduring symbol, meaning that it has stood the test of time. Just like items we consider icons that are not people—such as monuments, characters, and buildings—these people represent something else, such as an achievement or way of life. Their accomplishments, reputations, and legacies become a part of American life. Hence, they become “icons”.

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5. As a class, list twenty famous people, and decide whether each name is someone who is an icon or just famous.

Ask your class if Buddy, Ritchie, or the Bopper fit the definition of an icon, and ask them to explain their answer.

6. Share the following with students:

American Singer-Songwriter Buddy Holly was without a doubt, one of the most influential musicians of Rock n' Roll history; inspiring groups like the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, and Don Mclean. His wayfarer style glasses even made him a "style icon" making other musicians such as John Lennon feel that it was ok to be a rock star and wear glasses.

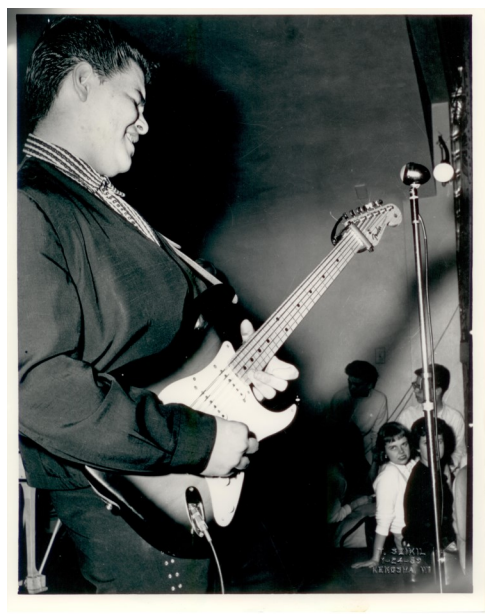
7. Use the following questions for discussion:

- When you think of early Rock n' Roll, what comes to mind?
- We learned that Buddy Holly not only changed the sound of music during his time, but impacted the lives of some of the biggest musicians of all time. Can you tell me how Buddy Holly has impacted your community?
- How has Valens and The Big Bopper influenced music of today?

- Do you think Holly, Ritchie, and The Bopper were musical icons?
- Would you want to be an icon? Why or why not?

8. Ask students to write a paragraph about their favorite icon, addressing why the person or thing is an icon and what they represent.

9. Encourage students to share their work with the class.



Rock 101—The Surf Ballroom and Early Rock n' Roll

7 | Post-Visit Reflection

National Core Standards

Language Arts

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Iowa Core Standards

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Objective: Students will reflect on their museum visit by discussing how early Rock n' Roll History ties into the Surf Ballroom as well as draw a representation of or write about their own personal style.

Prep Time: None

Materials: Paper, Pencil

1. Share the following with students.

Now that we have seen The Surf Ballroom & Museum, let's discuss the role the venue and its performers played in the early days of Rock n' Roll.

2. Use the following questions for discussion or ask students to write a paragraph addressing one or more of them:

- What do you remember about the Surf Ballroom facility?
- Did you have a favorite room?
- Why do you think The Surf Ballroom is considered an iconic music venue?
- Why do you think some of the top musical artists today want to play at our venue?

3. Share the following with students.

The Surf Ballroom is home to some iconic artifacts of musicians from all eras. From guitars of modern day country superstars to hand-written notes from Buddy Holly, everywhere you looked you saw a piece of musical history. Not to mention the hundreds of pictures of artists who have performed there that line the walls .

4. Ask students to write a paragraph about or draw a picture of an artifact that stood out to them during their tour.

5. Encourage students to share their work with the class explaining why that artifact was impactful to them.

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8 | What Did You Learn?

National Core Standards

Language Arts

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Iowa Core Standards

Social Studies

SS.6.13. Identify what makes up a culture and examine how people acquire their cultural beliefs and value systems.

Ss.6.17. Analyze and explain the cultural, physical, and environmental characteristics of places and regions and how this affects the lives of the people who live there.

Objective: Students will create a set of statements they believe about The Surf Ballroom and Early Rock n’ Roll, as well as a set of statements determining what they would like to learn about The Surf and Early Rock and then evaluate these statements by reflecting on their museum visit and/or the conclusion of this lesson.

Prep Time: None

Materials: Paper, Pencil

1. After visiting the Surf Ballroom, review the KWL charts created by your students before their visit and use the following questions for discussion.

- Are all the items on your “what we KNOW” list correct?
- If not, what changes do we need to make to the incorrect items?
- What did we LEARN about The Surf Ballroom and early Rock n’ Roll music on our visit that we can put in our “L” section?
- Did we learn everything that was on our “what we WANT to learn” list?
- If not, how could we find the information we still do not have?
- What was your favorite part of the Surf Ballroom Tour and why?

Teacher Note

If you choose to have each student create their own KWL Chart, you may wish to make this an individual activity also by asking students to write their own responses to the discussion questions before sharing their thoughts with the class.

2. Ask students to write a letter to Buddy, Ritchie, or the Bopper telling them what they learned about them and what they did not know before visiting the Museum.

Name: _____

The Surf Ballroom and Museum

Tour Worksheet

I. Look closely at the pictures of the Winter Dance Party tour on the East wall in the Lobby.

- A. With Carl Bunch in the hospital with Frost Bite the tour members had to take turns drumming for one another. Who can you spot drumming in the photos?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

II. Every picture in the “Big Band” Hallway is a musician who has played in the Ballroom.

- A. Can you find any musicians that you recognize? How do you know them?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

III. Find the display cases that contain the records of Buddy, Ritchie, and the Big Bopper. Look carefully at the pictures and artifacts in each display case.

- A. How does each display case represent the musical artist?

- B. What does each say about their personalities?

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Rock 101 Teacher's Lesson Kit Music Excerpts

1. Blues Example

BB King 3 O'Clock Blues original 1950

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPeTtg3fTB8>

2. Country Example

Patsy Cline-Walkin' After Midnight

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bsRNCvHXHHU>

3. Gospel Example

JUBALAIRES—GOSPEL NOAH

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CLFwW85O20>

4. Jazz Example

Ella Fitzgerald - Once Too Often

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMreASMG0pQ>

5. Big Band

Cab Calloway—Jumpin Jive

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_8yGGtVKrD8

6. 1950's Dance

Real 1950s Rock & Roll, Rockabilly dance from lindy hop

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rf55gHK48VQ>

Note: All videos are included in the accompanying Power Point.

7. Buddy Holly

Buddy Holly - Peggy Sue Live

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bfu_gfBPWc

8. Ritchie Valens

Ritchie Valens - Ooh My Head

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImP7QsuaOCU>

9. Big Bopper

Big Bopper— Chantilly Lace

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YbNV-bXannM&t=3s>

The staff of the Surf Ballroom & Museum thanks the following local teachers and community members who gave their time and valuable input during the development of this resource:

Molly Harris	Jefferson Elementary School
Betsy Kirby	Jefferson Elementary School
Jason Heitland	Garner High School
Matt Good	Kingland
Libbey Patton	Clear Lake Chamber

Please submit student writings, questions, posters, and Teacher Guide Evaluations to:

Education Coordinator

Surf Ballroom

460 North Shore Drive

Clear Lake, Ia50428

Surf Ballroom & Museum

Teacher's Guide to the Museum

Teacher's Evaluation

Thank you for taking a few minutes to provide feedback and suggestions. We appreciate your help in making our programs and resources as meaningful as possible.

Date of Your Visit:

Name of School:

Subject You Teach:

Grade(s) You Teach:

Did you use any activities in the Teacher's Guide to Rock 101? Yes No

If yes, what activities did you use?

Please rate the Teacher's Guide To Rock 101 on the following:

Not Valuable	1	2	3	4	5	Valuable
Not Enjoyable	1	2	3	4	5	Enjoyable
Not Interactive	1	2	3	4	5	Interactive
Not Informative	1	2	3	4	5	Informative
Unorganized	1	2	3	4	5	Organized

Please use this space for any comments or suggestions you may have relating to the Teacher's Guide to Rock 101.

Which lessons did you find most useful?

Which Lessons did your students enjoy?

Were there any lessons you would like to see changed? Explain.



-THE MUSIC LIVES ON-

SURF BALLROOM & MUSEUM

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The North Iowa Cultural Center and Museum is organized to preserve, maintain and manage the historic Surf Ballroom property as a center utilized to enhance the quality of life in the North Iowa area by providing cultural, educational, and entertainment opportunities.

The North Iowa Cultural Center & Museum (dba Surf Ballroom & Museum) was formed October 1, 2007 and formally awarded 501(c)(3) exemption through the Internal Revenue Service August of 2008.