

The roots of modern music



READING

15a Read the text and write the names of the cities mentioned on the map.

A MUSICAL JOURNEY AROUND THE USA

The journey can start in the South, in Louisiana and, in particular, in New Orleans. In 1861 the Civil War broke out between the industrial states of the North, which wanted the abolition of slavery, and the agricultural states of the South, which wanted to keep it. People were suffering from the racial division between the whites and the blacks. There was a racially-mixed group living in New Orleans: the Creoles. They were people with mixed blood because they were born from black women married to white men. When Louisiana became a state of the Union in 1861, the Creoles were considered black, lost their social position and had to live in the black areas of New Orleans. The Creole musicians, educated in the classical European tradition, began to play with American blacks and their types of music matched to create a new sound with a fast and exciting tempo: jazz. It was at the beginning of the 1920s when New Orleans gave birth to the Jazz Age.



roots = radici
break out = scoppiare
mixed blood = sangue misto
damnation = dannazione/disperazione

When the Civil War ended in 1865, life for southern blacks didn't get better and many looked for a job in the northern industrial cities. That is

how blues musicians brought their music to Chicago, in Illinois. While Gospel music from the South spread hope and spirituality in the States, the blues was about damnation and its sound became harder with the use of the electric guitar and the drums. Rhythm and Blues was born and young white Americans liked it. The black jazz and blues musicians coming up from the South first met in Memphis, Tennessee. And it was in Memphis in the 1950s that a young man called Elvis Presley opened the age of Rock and Roll, a musical style able to express young people's emotions.

In the 1940s and in the 1950s Country music developed among the poor people of the rural South of the USA. The music they played came from European folk music and their ballads were about the traditional themes of family, God and life's difficulties. Today Nashville, in the North of Tennessee, is considered to be the centre of the Country music industry, which is still very successful.

15b ES Answer the questions.

1. Where and when was Jazz born?
2. Which two different types of music gave origin to Jazz?
3. What was the characteristic of the Jazz sound?
4. What's the difference between Gospel and Blues?
5. How did Blues change into Rhythm and Blues?
6. Who was Elvis Presley?
7. Why was Rock and Roll so popular with young people?
8. Is Country music still successful in the USA?





LISTENING

16 **2.22** **K** Glenda is a girl of your age who loves hard rock music. She is having a conversation with William, a music critic who is a fan of Bruce Springsteen. Listen to their dialogue and choose the correct answers (a, b or c).

1. Bruce was born
 - ☐ a. on 23rd September 1949 in New York.
 - ☐ b. on 23rd September 1939 in New Jersey.
 - ☐ c. on 23rd September 1949 in New Jersey.
2. His father was
 - ☐ a. Irish.
 - ☐ b. Italian.
 - ☐ c. Dutch.
3. His childhood was difficult because
 - ☐ a. his parents were poor.
 - ☐ b. he didn't get on well with his father.
 - ☐ c. his sisters didn't help him with his schoolwork.
4. Bruce
 - ☐ a. taught himself to play the guitar.
 - ☐ b. had lessons with a teacher.
 - ☐ c. was taught to play by his parents.
5. Bruce decided to become a musician when
 - ☐ a. he went to the concerts of Elvis Presley and the Beatles.
 - ☐ b. he saw Elvis Presley and the Beatles on TV.
 - ☐ c. he listened to Elvis Presley and the Beatles on the radio.
6. His parents
 - ☐ a. appreciated his intention to become a musician.
 - ☐ b. rejected his intention to become a musician.
 - ☐ c. were indifferent to his intention to become a musician.
7. After his first two albums critics considered him to be
 - ☐ a. a rock guitarist without future.
 - ☐ b. the future of Rock and Roll.
 - ☐ c. a songwriter who predicted the future.
8. When Bruce was nicknamed "the boss", he was
 - ☐ a. glad.
 - ☐ b. sorry.
 - ☐ c. annoyed.
9. In his songs he tells
 - ☐ a. sad stories of people without hope.
 - ☐ b. about natural and social problems all over the world.
 - ☐ c. about the everyday life of working class people.

SPOKEN INTERACTION

17 With a classmate use the information about Bruce Springsteen to role play an interview. One of you is Bruce Springsteen and the other is a journalist. The journalist prepares at least six questions.

Example: **Journalist** Bruce, when were you born?
Bruce I was born on 23rd September 1949.



WRITING

18 Find information about a famous American/ British singer and write an interview with him/ her. You can refer to the answers and the notes in exercises 16 and 17.

