

History and Development of Country Music

1920's - Appalachians claimed credit for developing folk and 'hillbilly' music. What is folk music and where are the Appalachians?

1930's & 40's - Honky Tonk style developed using steel guitars and drums as well as the more usual folk instruments. What was prohibition and do you think it would have influenced the development of country music? Western country music became popular as movie theatres played cowboy movies. The style romanticized the life of a cowboy as a heroic drifter. Can you find an old cowboy movie to watch?

1950's - Rockabilly country music combined southern hills music and the blues. It's faster tempo and constant rhythm made it very popular. Performers included The Everly Brothers, Jerry Lee Lewis and Elvis Presley. Is this the only style these artists performed? How did life in America match the faster pace of the music? Country music finds a permanent home in Nashville Tennessee. National radio broadcasts commenced in 1925 in what became known as the Grand Ole Opry. (No, not Oprah Winfrey). It was the beginning of country music as a popular contemporary form of music. Have you heard of Kenny Rogers, Dolly Parton, Garth Brooks and Shania Twain?