

**Read the text.**

## A short history of pop

**'Pop' is short for popular music.** There are different styles of pop music, but they all appeal to the general public. But when did 'modern' pop music begin? There were two significant moments. First of all Leo Fender invented the electric guitar in 1950. Then, in 1954, Sony introduced the transistor radio and after that, music was accessible to people in their homes and cars.

**In 1954** Elvis Presley released *That's All Right*. He fused country music with black rhythm and blues to create rock and roll. At that time this was an innovation, and Elvis, who was young, attractive and exciting, became the first teen idol and made pop music a youth culture.



**The 1960s was the decade of *The Beatles*,** who dominated pop music from 1961 to 1970 with a new folk-rock sound. *The Beatles* were the first band to play in a stadium: Shea Stadium in New York in 1965. In June 1969 they had their seventeenth number one hit – two more than Elvis.

**The 60s also saw the first outdoor music festivals** and popular music began to have a social and political message, for example, Bob Dylan. This was also the beginning of Motown and soul music with artists like Ray Charles, *The Supremes* and Marvin Gaye.



**Next came the 1970s** and several new genres of music appeared, like reggae (Bob Marley), glam rock (David Bowie), punk (the *Sex Pistols*) and heavy metal (*Iron Maiden*). When the *Bee Gees* recorded *Saturday Night Fever*, a new global dance phenomenon was born: disco.

**Michael Jackson's *Thriller* video** started the trend for using video as promotion and during the 1980s the influence of MTV meant that the video became as important as the song itself. Madonna exploded onto the scene, and with her ability to adapt to every trend, is now a pop icon.

**The 80s was the era of indie music** from bands like *The Smiths*, *The Cure* and *New Order*. This decade also saw the first 'raves' when disco transformed into high energy dance music.

**From the late 80s**, through the 1990s and into the first part of the 21st century, other musical styles appeared. Grunge (*Nirvana*), RnB (*Beyoncé*), rap and hip hop (*Eminem*, *Ice-T*), new rock (*The White Stripes*) showed that pop music is always evolving. The 90s onwards was also the era of boy bands and girl bands such as *Take That* and *The Spice Girls*.

**Today pop is a global industry.** CDs replaced records a long time ago and nowadays, downloading from websites is marking the end of these traditional music formats. In 2006 Gnarls Barkley with his song *Crazy* became the first artist to reach number 1 in the UK charts based only on download sales.