

20TH CENTURY LIGHT MUSIC

DEFINITIONS – STYLES OF POPULAR MUSIC

taken from the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary

Ballad	A slow, romantic or sentimental song <i>e.g. White Christmas by Irving Berlin</i>
Gangsta rap	Rap music with lyrics explicitly relating to urban gangs, violence, drug use, and the degradation of women. <i>e.g. Gangstas' Paradise by Coolio</i>
Grunge	Rock music incorporating elements of punk rock and heavy metal <i>e.g. Smells Like Teen Spirit by Nirvana</i>
Heavy Metal	Energetic and highly amplified electronic rock music having a hard beat
Jazz	¹ American music developed especially from ragtime and blues and characterised by propulsive syncopated rhythms, polyphonic ensemble playing, varying degrees of improvisation, and often deliberate distortions of pitch. ² Popular dance music influenced by jazz and played in a loud rhythmic manner. <i>e.g. It Had to be You by Isham Jones</i>
Music Hall / Vaudeville	Stage entertainment consisting of various acts (e.g. dancers or singers). Songs are often comic or satirical. <i>e.g. I Love a Lassie by Harry Lauder</i>
Punk rock	Rock music marked by extreme and often deliberately offensive expressions of alienation and social discontent. <i>e.g. God Save the Queen by the Sex Pistols</i>
Rap	Music consisting of a rhythmic chanting often in unison of usually rhymed couplets to an instrumental accompaniment.
Ragtime	Music with ragtime rhythm characterised by strong syncopation in the melody with a regularly accented accompaniment. <i>e.g. Maple Leaf Rag by Scott Joplin</i>
Reggae	Popular music of Jamaican origin that combines native styles with elements of rock and soul music and is performed at moderate tempos with the accent on the offbeat. <i>e.g. No Woman No Cry by Bob Marley</i>
Rhythm and Blues	Popular music typically including elements of blues and black folk music and marked by a strong beat and simple chord structure.
Rock	Development from rock 'n' roll, usually played on electronically amplified instruments. <i>e.g. Sunday Bloody Sunday by U2</i>
Rock 'n' roll	Popular music having hillbilly and blues elements, characterised by a persistent, heavily accented beat and much repetition of simple phrases. <i>e.g. Rock around the Clock by Bill Haley and his Comets</i>
Soul	Music that originated in black American gospel singing, is closely related to rhythm and blues, and is characterised by intensity of feeling and earthiness.