



Student handout for power of music

Summary

You will choose two songs from the early 1900s using sound recordings from Library and Archives Canada's Virtual Gramophone website. You will research and make a chart of major events around the time of the two songs.

History

How does the world around us affect the music we make? How do you think historical and cultural conditions affected tastes at the time your selected pieces were recorded? Research and make a chart of major events around the time of the two songs you have chosen.

| Title of song 1 | Title of song 2 |
|---|---|
| Events occurring in the year song 1 was written | Events occurring in the year song 2 was written |

See the [History](#) page on the *Virtual Gramophone* website for help.



Technology

You probably noticed the different sound qualities between older and newer recordings. Find and compare the recording qualities of three songs:

- Song 1 from around 1900
- Song 2 from around 1925
- Song 3 from modern times

| |
|--|
| Title of song 1: _____ Year: _____ |
| Playback speed: |
| Noise (clicks, crackling, hissing): |
| Other elements: |
| Title of song 2: _____ Year: _____ |
| Playback speed: |
| Noise (clicks, crackling, hissing): |
| Other elements: |
| Title of song 3: _____ Year: _____ |
| Playback speed: |
| Noise (clicks, crackling, hissing): |
| Other elements: |



Next, visit the [Technical notes](#) page of the Virtual Gramophone website and research or brainstorm reasons for these differences. Consider:

- How the sound might be distorted on an old recording
- How the recording artist's proximity to the recording device might affect the sound quality. (The electrical microphone was not invented until the 1920s so early artists had to stand close to the recording equipment.)

Use this information to help you complete a chart about the differences in the sound of the two recordings.

| Type of difference | Possible causes | Technical solution |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| | | |