

# History of the Blues



Fill the spaces using the words in the box. Each word can only be used once and the story must make sense.

Blues music can has been around for \_\_\_\_\_ if not thousands of years, and has influences from all around the \_\_\_\_\_.

It's cultural and spiritual origins are linked with the enslaved Africans brought to \_\_\_\_\_ from the year 1600 onwards.

As the slaves worked in the fields they would sing to pass the time and to take their mind off the hard \_\_\_\_\_ that filled their days... digging the ground by hand, pulling weeds and picking \_\_\_\_\_ or harvesting vegetables, as well as building, and hauling heavy loads.

When the \_\_\_\_\_ sang they worked harder, and sometimes they were encouraged or even ordered to sing. There was usually a leader who made a "call" and the others would "respond".

These work songs were also sung at night to \_\_\_\_\_, often accompanied by instruments. The guitar was the main instrument as it was often \_\_\_\_\_ and portable. But they also used \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. The music was quite simple but the singers sang with deep emotion about their \_\_\_\_\_, both happy and \_\_\_\_\_, about their lives and about their hopes for a brighter future. The music also had a strong rhythmic beat or "groove" that was often quite hypnotic.

The Blues was first referred to as "The Blues" in the early 1900's. As time went by not all blues \_\_\_\_\_ were slaves... many were part time workers in the \_\_\_\_\_ who travelled the countryside playing for food or money in the towns they visited.

As it became more popular the blues was being played on all kinds of \_\_\_\_\_ including pianos, harmonicas... just about anything they could get their hands on to join in.

Many people couldn't afford to \_\_\_\_\_ anything so they improvised with different kinds of "home-made" instruments. They copied the sounds of more expensive instruments, and even developed new sounds using household things such as washboards, ceramic jugs and \_\_\_\_\_. So, the "junk bands" or "jug" bands were born.

By the 1920's the blues was being played in dance halls across the land and had made it's way to the big \_\_\_\_\_. People still played their blues on their own as "solo" performers, but it was the groups of musicians who were able to make a bigger sound that could be \_\_\_\_\_ over a stomping dancing crowd.

The spread of the blues at this time was also helped by the first recordings... city people could listen to the blues in their homes and on \_\_\_\_\_.

As the crowds and the halls became bigger the need to be louder became \_\_\_\_\_. Steel bodied guitars were made and eventually amplification - electric guitars and \_\_\_\_\_.

The music spread, bringing in new people with new musical ideas, and before long there were many different styles of the \_\_\_\_\_. This is the way music evolves.

Much of the music played and heard \_\_\_\_\_ has evolved from or been influenced by blues music in some way. The many forms of blues are alive and well today, as a mix of simple music is played with strong emotion and "groove". It appeals to all sorts of \_\_\_\_\_.



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