

Rock and Roll is Here to Stay!

Although the United States has been called a “melting pot” because of numerous ethnic influences from its wide range and history of immigration, one aspect of American culture that originated in the United States is that of rock and roll music. The worldwide exposure of this native American music style is a classic example of cultural diffusion. Simply defined, diffusion is the spreading of ideas and objects by whatever means. Diffusion can occur through direct observation, word of mouth, the written word, or recorded sights and sounds. Human geographers are primarily interested in the spatial aspects of diffusion. Some of the key questions that geographers ask about diffusion of some cultural phenomenon are listed below. You will research each of these questions using the Web sites listed below, using rock and roll music as the subject in this study of diffusion. (helpful hints at the bottom)

- Visit the **Rock and Roll Hall of Fame** in Cleveland, Ohio
<http://rockhall.com/>
- Travel back half a century to **The Fifties** for information from the rock and roll's early years.
<http://www.fiftiesweb.com/tune5055.htm>
<http://historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?op=viewarticle&artid=738>
- To focus on rock and roll's original artists, see the Web site **Biddeford**.
<http://home.gwi.net/~bigkid/RandR.htm>
- To see how the media (mostly radios and later t) impacted this musical style, visit this site: You can also look at some of the other links on this page if you have time.
<http://www.history-of-rock.com/indx.html> (begin reading at the 13th break)

Short Answer Questions:

1. Where and when did the idea or item originate?

2. How far did this idea or item spread?

3. How long did it take this idea or item to spread?

4. By what means did it spread?

5. Did anyone or anything slow or prevent its movement?

6. Was this a contiguous or non-contiguous movement?

7. Was the concept or idea altered as it diffused?

8. Which segments of the population accepted this concept or idea?

9. Which type of diffusion did the concept or idea spread by? Fully explain your reasoning!

Cultural Diffusion Helpful Hints - refer to the following information if you need help answering the questions above.

- 1) Culture Hearths - sources of civilization from which an idea, innovation, or ideology originates (e.g. Mesopotamia, Nile Valley), viewed in the context of time as well as space
- 2) Cultural diffusion - spread of an innovation, or ideology from its source area to another culture
 - a) Expansion diffusion - an innovation, or ideology develops in a source area and remains strong there while also spreading outward
 - 1) Contagious diffusion - nearly all adjacent individuals are affected (e.g. spread of Islam, disease)
 - 2) Hierarchical diffusion - the main channel of diffusion some segment of those who are susceptible to (or adopting) what is being diffused (e.g. spread of AIDS, use of fax machines)
 - 3) Stimulus diffusion - spread of an underlying principle (e.g. idea of industrialization)
 - b) Relocation diffusion - spread of an innovation, or ideology through physical movement of individuals
 - 1) Migrant diffusion - when an innovation originates somewhere and enjoys strong-but brief-adoption, loses strength at origin by the time it reaches another area (e.g. mild pandemics)
 - 2) Acculturation - when a culture is substantially changed through interaction with another culture
 - 3) Transculturation - a near equal exchange between culture complexes
 - c) Forces that work against diffusion:
 - 1) Time-distance decay - the longer and farther it has to go, the less likely it will get there
 - 2) Cultural barriers - prevailing attitudes or taboos