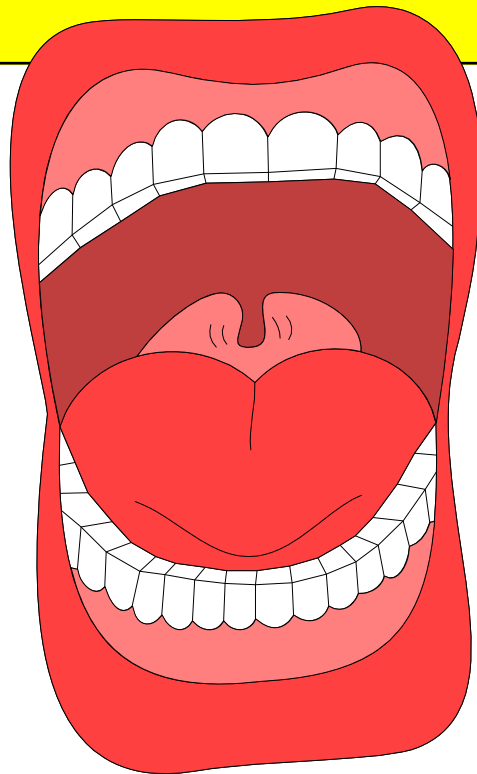


GET YOUR TEETH
INTO
ROCK HISTORY



The Blues

Blues



What is the 'Blues' and where did they come from?

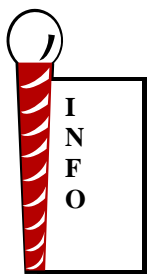
The blues refers to a style of music originating in the cotton fields of America.



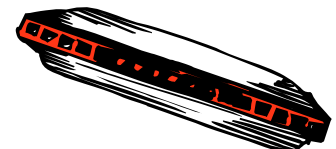
The blues originated in the cotton fields during the days of African Slave trading. Early songs were played using home made guitars. The guitars were made from things that were found around the cotton plantations. The blues was developed from the 'field holler' and the spiritual. They are a mixture of European and African music.



Blues music ...



Is commonly a 12 bar pattern.
Usually uses three chords: 1, 4 and 5 (e.g. C, F and G or A, D and E).
Is sung using 'bent' notes. The blues scale was developed to try and let the instrumentalists imitate what the singer was doing.



The blues harp (or harmonica)

Some interesting info about the Blues



The blues originated in the days of the African slave trading.



They were born in the North Mississippi delta.

The blues have influenced almost every type of music, including rock, jazz, folk and country.

The music was popularised around 1911 by a black composer called W. C. Handy.

The first instrumental blues songs were recorded in 1913.

During the 1920s, the blues became very popular.

The first vocal blues song was recorded by Mamie Smith in 1920. It was called 'Crazy Blues'.

Some famous early blues artists are Muddy Waters, Willie Dixon, John Lee Hooker and Howlin' Wolf.

In 1930, the blues musician, Leadbelly, was convicted and jailed for attempted murder. His sentences were commuted because of his musicianship.

B.B. King invented the concept of lead guitar in the 1940s. It is now an important part of rock music.

Lyrically, verses of early blues songs usually consisted of a single line of four-bars repeated twice, with a third rhyming line, such as:

*Woke up this morning with the blues all in my bed
Yes, I woke up this morning with the blues all in my bed
Fixed my breakfast, the blues all in my bread*

Some early blues musicians, such as 'Blind Lemon Jefferson', were actually blind. Later artists, like 'Blind Willie Dunn', simply liked the history associated with the word.

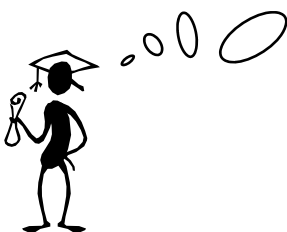
The real name of 'Howlin' Wolf' is Chester Arthur Burnett. He was given his nickname because of his powerful voice.

In the 1960's, bands such as the Rolling Stones, the Yardbirds and Fleetwood Mac 'discovered' the blues and made it widely popular.

More recent blues musicians are Stevie Ray Vaughan and Robert Cray.



It used to be said that if you were an aspiring bluesman and you stood at the crossroads on a moonless night, you could sell your soul and become a great blues guitar player.



Some background info on a few of the musicians of the time.....



B. B. King

- His real name is Riley B. King, He was born on September 16, 1925 in Itta Bena, Mississippi, USA.
- Since the 1950s, B. B. King has named all his guitars 'Lucille'.
- In 1943, King moved to Indianola, Mississippi.
- He first broadcast live on Memphis radio station WDIA, a station that had recently started playing only black music. This was extremely rare at the time.
- B.B. King started with the name 'The Pepticon Boy'. This later became the 'Beale Street Blues Boy', which was then shortened to 'Blues Boy' and finally 'B.B.'.
- In 1949, King began recording songs under contract with Los Angeles based RPM Records.
- In the 1950s, he had a string of rhythm and blues hits including 'You Know I Love You', 'Woke Up This Morning' and 'Please Love Me'.
- In 1962, B.B. King signed to ABC-Paramount Records.
- From 1951 to 1985, he appeared in Billboard's R & B charts with 74 different tracks.
- In 1988, he released the single 'When Love Comes To Town', which he recorded with the Irish band U2.
- In 2000, King teamed up with guitarist Eric Clapton to record 'Riding With the King'.

T-Bone Walker

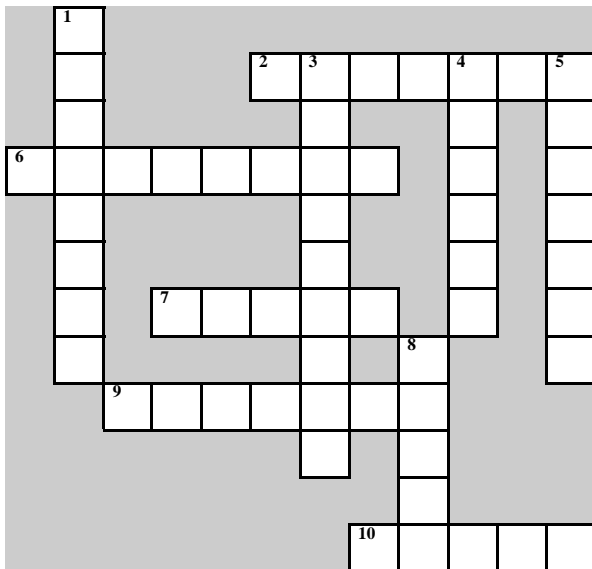
- T-Bone Walker's real name was Aaron Thibeaux Walker.
- He was born in Linden, Texas, on May 28, 1910 and died on March 16, 1975. He was of African American and Cherokee descent.
- T-Bone Walker is considered one of the most influential musicians of the early 20th century.
- He learned the blues from Blind Lemon Jefferson, another legendary blues musician.
- His first record was 'Wichita Falls Blues' / 'Trinity River Blues', recorded for Columbia Records in 1929.
- T-Bone Walker developed his distinctive sound in 1942, when he recorded 'Mean Old World' for Capitol Records.
- Throughout his career, T-bone worked with a number of top quality musicians.



Leadbelly

- Leadbelly was born on January 29, 1885 and died on December 6, 1949.
- His real name is Huddie William Ledbetter and he was born in Mooringsport, Louisiana.
- Leadbelly was 'discovered' by John and Alan Lomax while in prison. They recorded songs with portable recording equipment.
- It is claimed by Alan Lomax that Leadbelly was pardoned by the state governor, O.K. Allen, after he heard the recordings. One song supposedly included an appeal directed at Allen.
- Leadbelly subsequently toured extensively but ended up back in prison in 1939, convicted of assault. (He served four separate prison terms for his violent behaviour.)
- Leadbelly played a twelve string guitar and had a high clear voice.
- A number of songs that Leadbelly introduced provided material for numerous folk, country, pop and rock acts, such as Johnny Cash, Gene Autry, The Beach Boys and Creedence Clearwater Revival.
- One of Leadbelly's songs was covered by Nirvana in November 1993. The original was called 'In the Pines' although it was retitled 'Where Did You Sleep Last Night'.

Complete the crossword



Across

2. B.B. King recorded the song 'When Love Comes To Town' with Eric who?
6. The blues is a mix of African and what other type of music?
7. How many chords are generally used in blues music?
9. The name of all of B. B. Kings guitars.
10. The first name of the singer who recorded the first vocal blues.

Down

1. T-Bone Walker's first recordings were for which record company?
3. This blues musician's real name is Huddie William Ledbetter.
4. The number of strings on Leadbelly's guitar.
5. This group recorded a cover of a song written by Leadbelly.
8. The blues were born in the North Mississippi ...?

