



Rock'n'roll

History and
Development

Key Facts

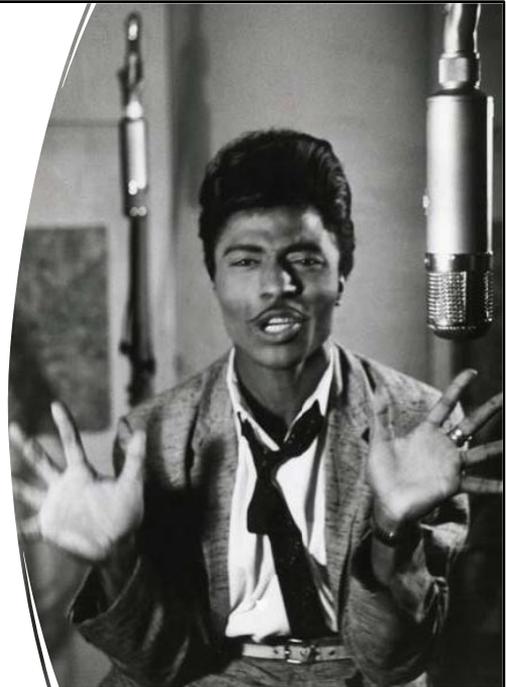
- Influenced by **Country, Blues, R&B** and **Gospel** music
- Developed in the **urban, southern** states of the US
- Birthed the notion of the **pop star**



- Pictured: Chuck Berry
- Predominantly black in origin but was adopted by white performers
 - Help to increase its popularity and also displayed the increase in acceptance of black people in American society
- The genre had widespread success commercially in the US and UK
- Music would have been promoted on the radio and TV which played a part in defining youth culture at the time
 - Lyrics also reflected an association of teenage life
- Elvis Presley is regarded as the first pop superstar and the 'King of rock'n'roll'

Instrumentation

- Vocals
- Electric Guitar
- Double/Electric Bass
- Drum kit
- Piano



- Pictured: Little Richard
- Vocals would be predominantly male and would commonly be accompanied with backing vocals
- Tracks would occasionally use acoustic guitar, harmonica and horn sections
- The ensembles would be small

Main Artists

- Bill Haley and His Comets (*'Rock Around The Clock' 1954*)
- Little Richard
- Chuck Berry (*'Johnny B. Goode' 1958*)
- Elvis Presley
- Jerry Lee Lewis
- Bo Diddley
- Cliff Richard (*'Move It' 1958*)



- Pictured: Elvis Presley
- 'Move It- was largely considered to be the first UK rock'n'roll recording

Technology and Production

- **Live** recordings **direct to tape**
- Quality of capture would be **limited**
- **Louder** instruments would lead to an altered sound on tape
- Vocals would sometimes be **overdubbed** to increase clarity
- **Slapback delay** and **echo chambers** would be used
- **Valve amplifiers** would be used on the guitars



- Pictured: Bill Haley and His Comets
- Would have been mixed 'on the fly'
 - Mixing 'on the fly' meant that the recorded levels could not be changed after the fact and that they were all summed together to create a single electrical signal
- The positioning of the microphones and the lack of close miking lead to spill and poor frequency reproduction
 - No multi-mic setups for drum kits, just an overhead
- Instruments like electric guitars and drums would come in louder on the desk, resulting in pre-amps being driven harder and causing tape saturation
- Vocal overdubs would be achieved by either using three-track tape recorders or using a two-track recorder with already-recorded instrumentals
- Slapback delay – delay with a single repeat
 - Used to thicken the sound of vocals and guitars

- Echo chambers were very reverberant rooms used to produce reverberation
 - The recording would be played back in the chamber with a microphone to capture the reverb
- Over-driven valve amps would create distortion – hinting at the full-blown sound of the rock guitar that would soon become popular