

# **History of Rock, Pt. 1: Early 20th Century - 1965**

**Music is shaped by culture. It reflects the changing times, movements, and major events of the day. To understand how we got modern metal, indie rock, and pop punk, let's go all the way back!**

## **R&B**

**The 1950s were the launching point for rock & roll's mainstream success. Little Richard, Ike Turner, Elvis Presley, Ray Charles, and The Beach Boys were some popular names on the scene. Rhythm & Blues sprouted from the American youth post-WWII. As African Americans began to migrate north, so did the music, being covered by newer artists.**

## **Roots**

**Willie Mae "Big Mama" Thornton was an American rhythm and blues singer and songwriter. She was the first to record the hit song "Hound Dog" in 1952. Elvis Presley's cover of the song soared the music charts upon release. Little Richard was initially known for songs like his 1956 hit "Tutti Frutti." In later interviews, he praised the artists that inspired him down in Mississippi and Tennessee.**

**In the 1950s, Chicago had a booming and successful black community. Teens hooked onto this new rock and roll sound and began rejecting the jazz of yesteryear.**

## **Evolution**

**The 1960s solidified the division between jazz and rock & roll. In 1964, American band The Animals released hit folk song "House of the Rising Sun." The song was a cover of Tom Clarence Ashley's 1933 bluegrass version. The song was recorded by multiple artists between 1940 and 1960, but The Animals take the credit for popularizing the song as we know it today.**

**Rock music eventually spread overseas and got its foothold in England. In the 1960s, the favor was returned with the British Invasion! They were heavily inspired by the voices of Elvis, Buddy Holly, and Little Richard. The Beatles ushered in a wave of other successful groups; The Zombies, The Who, and The Rolling Stones.**

- 1) What Rock songs do you know from before 1965?**
- 2) What do you like most about this period in rock music?**
- 3) What fact surprised you most?**

***Comment down below what you think!***