



## THE GLOBAL INFLUENCE OF JAZZ

A lesson plan to celebrate International Jazz Day



### Step 1: Pre-Listening and Pre-Reading Activities

1. Create a poem where each line begins with the letters in **JAZZ**, incorporating words or themes related to jazz music.

- *Example:*
  - **J**oyful rhythms fill the air,
  - **A**ll improvisation, beyond compare,
  - **Z**ealous melodies twist and play,
  - **Z**estful sounds take flight today.

### 2. Discussion Questions (Pair or Group Discussion)

- International Jazz Day is celebrated every year on April 30th. Why do you think a music genre has its own global celebration?
- How do you think jazz has influenced other styles of music? Can you think of any modern artists who incorporate elements of jazz?
- Jazz is often described as a musical conversation. What do you think this means? How might jazz musicians communicate without words?
- If you could attend a live jazz performance anywhere in the world, where would it be and why?



## Step 2: Short Biographies of Two Jazz Legends

### 1. Guess Who!

Who am I?



- They call me the "First Lady of Song,"
- My voice could make any melody strong.
- Scat singing is where I shine,
- With 13 Grammys, this talent is mine!


Who am I?




- With a sax in hand, I redefined sound,
- My solos were deep, spiritual, profound.
- I played with Miles, but found my own way,
- "A Love Supreme" still moves hearts today.

### 2. Complete the text using the words from the box:

knock your socks off - at the top of her game - racked up - scat singing -  
turn any song on its head


 **1. Ella Fitzgerald (1917–1996)** – Dubbed the “First Lady of Song,” she didn’t just sing—she could (a) \_\_\_\_\_ (*completely transform*). With a voice that could (b) \_\_\_\_\_ (*leave audiences speechless*), Ella was (c) \_\_\_\_\_ (*one of the greatest*) when it came to jazz vocals. She made (d) \_\_\_\_\_ (*improvised vocalizing*) her signature style and (e) \_\_\_\_\_ (*earned*) 13 Grammy Awards over her six-decade career.


breathed life into - hit all the right notes - groundbreaking - push the envelope - soul-searching

 **2. John Coltrane (1926–1967)** – A saxophonist who didn’t just play—he (a) \_\_\_\_\_ (*gave new energy to*) every note. Coltrane wasn’t afraid to (b) \_\_\_\_\_ (*take risks*), bringing a deep, almost (c) \_\_\_\_\_ (*introspective*) intensity to his music. His album *A Love Supreme* (d) \_\_\_\_\_ (*resonated with everyone and became popular*) and remains one of the most (e) \_\_\_\_\_ (*influential*) jazz records ever.

### Step 3: Exam-Style Activity – Finding Key Ideas


1. Match the following paraphrased ideas with the corresponding biography or article section. Underline the sentences in the text. Think carefully about how information is reworded in reading exams.

 **Ella Fitzgerald (1917–1996)** – Known as the “First Lady of Song,” Fitzgerald was one of the greatest jazz vocalists of all time. She had an incredible vocal range and was famous for her scat singing—a style of vocal improvisation using wordless syllables. Over her six-decade career, she won 13 Grammy Awards and recorded iconic albums, including *Ella in Berlin*. Her ability to transform any song with her voice made her a timeless legend.

 **John Coltrane (1926–1967)** – A saxophonist and composer, Coltrane pushed the boundaries of jazz with his intense, spiritual approach to music. He played with Miles Davis before leading his own band and pioneering modal jazz. His album *A Love Supreme* is considered a masterpiece, blending technical brilliance with deep emotion. Coltrane’s long, exploratory solos and complex harmonies changed jazz forever.

1. A performer whose ability to reshape melodies became a defining characteristic.
2. A musician who sought to innovate by moving beyond conventional structures.
3. An artist who has had a lasting impact across different generations.
4. The idea that a particular artist’s approach went beyond entertainment



 **Exam Tip:** When answering reading comprehension questions, pay attention to how key words are paraphrased. Look for synonyms, changed sentence structures, or shifts in focus.

## Step 4: C1 Reading and Use of English: Part 8

1. Read the text below and choose the correct answer. Options may be chosen more than once.

### The Essence of Jazz: Freedom, Fusion, and Innovation

A

**J**azz is more than just a genre—it's a philosophy of musical freedom. Emerging in the early 20th century, it defied rigid structures by embracing improvisation, collaboration, and spontaneity. Born in the vibrant streets of New Orleans, jazz was shaped by African rhythms, European harmonies, and the raw emotion of the blues. From its inception, it was a revolutionary force, breaking down social and musical barriers alike.

B

**O**ne of jazz's most remarkable qualities is its ability to reinvent itself. The 1930s and 1940s saw the rise of the Swing Era, where artists like Count Basie and Benny Goodman led big bands that brought jazz to mainstream audiences. But jazz was never meant to stay static. Musicians continuously experimented, leading to the birth of bebop—a radical, fast-paced style that required technical mastery and turned jazz into a more intellectual pursuit.

C

**A**t its core, jazz is about storytelling. Unlike classical compositions, where each note is predetermined, jazz musicians weave narratives in real time. Miles Davis once said, 'It's not the notes you play, it's the notes you don't play.' This philosophy gave rise to cool jazz and modal jazz, where space and silence became as meaningful as the music itself. Albums like *Kind of Blue* redefined how we experience sound, inviting listeners into a world of contemplation and expression.

D

**J**azz is often seen as a conversation—an intuitive exchange between musicians, where ideas are shared, challenged, and expanded upon. This improvisational dialogue is what makes every jazz performance unique. Thelonious Monk's unconventional piano chords or John Coltrane's extended solos are proof that jazz is more than music; it's an ongoing discussion where every voice matters.

E

Far from being a relic of the past, jazz continues to evolve. Today’s artists fuse jazz with hip-hop, electronic music, and world rhythms, pushing the boundaries of the genre. From Esperanza Spalding’s genre-blending compositions to Kamasi Washington’s spiritual jazz explorations, modern jazz refuses to be confined. Festivals in cities like Montreux, Cape Town, and Tokyo prove that jazz is a universal language that continues to inspire and challenge musicians and audiences alike.

F

More than a style, jazz is an attitude—an openness to change, a celebration of individuality, and a testament to human creativity. Whether in the intimate setting of a dimly lit club or the grand stage of an international festival, jazz speaks to the soul. It reminds us that music, like life, is most exciting when it embraces the unexpected.

**In which section of the article are the following mentioned?**


1. The idea that what is left unsaid can shape meaning just as much as what is explicitly stated.
2. How a creative form integrates external influences.
3. A distinction between structure and a more fluid, in-the-moment approach to expression.
4. A perspective on artistic collaboration that highlights adaptation.
5. The belief that innovation is essential to keeping an art relevant.
6. A discussion on how diverse cultural roots came together to form something entirely new.
7. A mindset that values spontaneity and adaptability over predictability and convention.
8. A time when large-scale productions played a major role in shaping public perception.
9. The idea that a particular way of thinking encourages originality and experimentation.
10. A perspective on live shows as unrepeatable moments.


**2. Listen to the jazz song “La Vie en Rose”, performed by Emily Watts and fill in the missing lyrics: [https://youtu.be/LC\\_KmSqlMxg?feature=shared](https://youtu.be/LC_KmSqlMxg?feature=shared)**

Hold me a.)..... and hold me b.).....  
 The magic spell you cast  
 This is la vie en rose  
 When you c.)..... me, heaven sighs  
 And though I close my eyes  
 I see la vie en rose  
 When you d.).....me to your heart  
 I'm in a e.).....apart  
 A world where roses f.).....  
 And when you speak, g.).....sing from above  
 Everyday words seem  
 To h.)..... i.).....love songs  
 Give your heart and soul to me  
 And j.).....will always be  
 La vie en rose

## Step 5: Post-Listening Tasks Ideas

### 1. Pick your fav!

 **Visual Storytelling:** Create a drawing, painting, or digital collage inspired by the song's emotions.

 **Song Rewrite:** Rewrite a stanza of the song using your own words, while maintaining its meaning and mood.

 **Musical Connection:** Find another jazz song with a similar mood and compare lyrical themes.

### 2. Exit ticket.

#### EXIT TICKET

1. One new insight I gained about jazz today is:

.....

2. Something that surprised me about jazz is:

.....

3. One question I still have about jazz is:

.....

4. One way I can apply what I learned about jazz to other areas of study is:

.....

5. If I could describe jazz in three words, they would be:

.....



# ANSWER KEY

## STEP 2:

### 1. Guess Who

Who am I? → Ella Fitzgerald

Who am I? → John Coltrane

### 2. Complete the text. (Ella Fitzgerald)

a. turn any song on its head

b. knock your socks off

c. at the top of her game

d. scat singing

e. racked up

### Complete the text. (John Coltrane)

a. breathed life into

b. push the envelope

c. soul-searching

d. hit all the right notes

e. groundbreaking

## STEP 3: Exam-Style Activity

1. Ella Fitzgerald--*"Her ability to transform any song with her voice..."*
2. John Coltrane--*"Coltrane pushed the boundaries of jazz..."*
3. Ella Fitzgerald--*"Over her six-decade career..."*
4. John Coltrane--*"...his intense, spiritual approach to jazz."*

## STEP 4: C1 Reading and Use of English Part 8

### 1. Answer: C

- **Original sentence:** "Miles Davis once said, 'It's not the notes you play, it's the notes you don't play.' This philosophy gave rise to cool jazz and modal jazz, where space and silence became as meaningful as the music itself."

### 2. Answer: E

- **Original sentence:** "Today's artists fuse jazz with hip-hop, electronic music, and world rhythms, pushing the boundaries of the genre."

### 3. Answer: C

- **Original sentence:** "Unlike classical compositions, where each note is predetermined, jazz musicians weave narratives in real time."

### 4. Answer: D

- **Original sentence:** "Jazz is often seen as a conversation—an intuitive exchange between musicians, where ideas are shared, challenged, and expanded upon."

### 5. Answer: B

- **Original sentence:** "But jazz was never meant to stay static. Musicians continuously experimented, leading to the birth of bebop—a radical, fast-paced style that required technical mastery."

### 6. Answer: A

- **Original sentence:** "Born in the vibrant streets of New Orleans, jazz was shaped by African rhythms, European harmonies, and the raw emotion of the blues."

### 7. Answer: F

- **Original sentence:** "More than a style, jazz is an attitude—an openness to change, a celebration of individuality, and a testament to human creativity."

### 8. Answer: B

- **Original sentence:** "The 1930s and 1940s saw the rise of the Swing Era, where artists like Count Basie and Benny Goodman led big bands that brought jazz to mainstream audiences."

### 9. Answer: F

- **Original sentence:** "Whether in the intimate setting of a dimly lit club or the grand stage of an international festival, jazz speaks to the soul. It reminds us that music, like life, is most exciting when it embraces the unexpected."

### 10. Answer: D

- **Original sentence:** "This improvisational dialogue is what makes every jazz performance unique."

## La Vie en Rose

- a.) close
- b.) fast
- c.) press
- d.) kiss
- e.) world
- f.) bloom
- g.) angels
- h.) turn
- i.) into
- j.) life