Unit 1 Study Guide

Genres:

- I can identify major genres by ear, drawing on knowledge of lyrical themes, instrumentation, or knowledge of artists to help make their assessment.
  - Blues
  - Country
  - R&B
  - Soul
  - Rockabilly
  - Doo Wop
  - Folk

Video:

- I can reference visual media from class to develop a sense of the chronology of the history of rock.
- I can reference visual media to discuss the experience of rock history "pioneers"
  - History of Rock Disc 1-3: Rock 'n' Roll Explodes & Good Rockin' Tonight, Sounds of Souls, Plugging In
  - Ray
  - The Buddy Holly Story
  - Walk the Line
  - 10 Days that Unexpectedly Changed America: Elvis on the Ed Sullivan Show & 1950s Culture and Technology

Rock History Identifications:

- I can identify and explain the significance of specific terms, concepts, and broad social/historical trends important in the study of the history of rock.
  - “Chitlin” Circuit
  - “Race” music
  - “The Day the Music Died”
  - Alan Freed (Payola, “Rock and Roll Show”)
  - Atlantic Records (Ahmet Ertegun)
  - Brown vs. Board of Education (1954)
  - Carter Family vs. Jimmy Rodgers (2 Faces of Country)
  - Delta Blues (Robert Johnson)
  - Electric Guitar
  - Ed Sullivan Show
  - Freedom Riders
  - Griot/Tribal Storyteller
  - Leave it to Beaver (Suburbia, conformity, social and political conservatism, Pleasantville)
  - McCarthyism (Red Scare, HUAC)
  - Motown (Hitsville, USA)
  - Rosa Parks (1955, segregation)
  - Sharecropping
  - Slavery
  - Sun Studios/Records (Sam Phillips, Elvis, etc.)
  - Teen Idols (Elvis, Frankie Avalon, etc.)
  - Television
  - The "American Dream" (Suburbia)
  - The Apollo Theater (Harlem, NYC)
  - The Blackboard Jungle (Teen Culture)
  - The Atomic Bomb
  - The Brill Building (Cubicle Music)
  - The Cold War (space race, Blast from the Past)
  - The Cuban Missile Crisis (Oct. 1962)
  - The Feminine Mystique (Betty Friedan)
  - The Grand Ole Opry
  - The Great Depression
  - The Great Migration
  - The Little Rock 9 (1957, desegregation)
  - The Pill (1960)
  - The Tom Petty Theory: “Things [Rockabilly/Rock ‘n’ roll] got too crazy too quickly …” (History of Rock DVD, Disc 1.2)

Discussion/Essay Questions:

1. The person who first recorded Elvis Presley said, prior to their meeting that, "If I could find a white man who had the Negro sound and the Negro feel, I could make a billion dollars." Using this quote as a springboard, explain why Elvis was such a pioneer in rock ‘n’ roll and how he was so unique for his time.

2. Tom Petty’s theory that in the mid to late 1950s that “things just got too crazy too quickly”, is one interpretation of why rock ‘n’ roll didn’t completely take off in America during that time. Using Petty’s theory as the basis of your discussion, discuss the forces that were at work against rock ‘n’ roll in the 1950s. Why was rock ‘n’ roll not very successful at first?

3. The intersection between country and blues was a highly important event and process in the development of rock and popular music in the 20th and 21st century. Using examples from our study of genres, particular artists, songs, movies, videos, etc, choose a few solid examples that illustrate this cross pollination process and explain how each was a significant example of this process at work.

4. Buddy Holly and Ray Charles’ life stories represent two different points of view of artists playing “race” music, each with their own unique challenges but similar struggles. Why was white America so resistant to embracing “race” music, whether it was played by whites or blacks? What specific aspects of blues and black culture, as represented through the music, did whites (and some blacks) find so threatening?

5. Describe how the mainstream culture of the 1950s set up what would take place in the 1960s with the counterculture.