

## ESSAY TYPE: EXPOSITORY (More description, some discussion)

**Question:** Discuss some of the changing styles of Rock and Roll Music in the last 50 years.<sup>1</sup>

There is no stopping rock and roll. Since its birth in the fifties, rock and roll has become the most lively force in popular culture. It was born as a child of jazz, blues and country music. More recently, it has been influenced by movies, television, sex, drugs, art, literature and electronics. Since its birth, rock and roll has grouped and regrouped into an explosion of styles: folk rock, soul, Motown, hard rock, jazz rock, country rock, heavy metal, punk rock, reggae, new wave, rap and so on. Each type has its own style, themes and stars. Three of the more successful styles are rap, heavy metal and reggae.

**One of the newer styles of rock and roll is rap.** Rap is a form of dance music in which the singers – rappers – speak in rhythm and rhyme rather than sing. Early rap songs were mainly about dancing, partying and the romantic adventures of the rappers, but politics became an important theme in the late eighties and nineties. Although rap is primarily the music of young black males, the first white rappers appeared in 1980 and a woman rapper, Queen Latifah, began her career in 1989.

**Another style of rock and roll music is heavy metal.** Quite different from rap, heavy metal is a style of rock and roll that uses highly amplified electric guitars for its sound. It was born in the early sixties when American and British guitarists started putting distortion into their music. Almost as important as the guitarists are the singers, who have great theatrical ability, vocal range and sex appeal. Popular heavy metal bands include Led Zeppelin, Motley Crue, Poison, Guns N' Roses and Metallica.

**A third style of rock and roll is reggae, which was born on the Caribbean island of Jamaica in the sixties and spread throughout the world in the seventies.** It developed from a kind of Afro-Caribbean music called *mento*, which was sung and played on guitars and drums. Reggae's special sound comes from reversing the roles of the instruments: the guitar plays the rhythm and the bass plays the melody. An important influence on reggae music was the Rastafarian cult. The Rastafarians added unusual sound mixes, extra-slow tempos, strange lyrics and mystical-political themes. The bestknown reggae musician in the United States is the late Bob Marley.

Rock and roll music is constantly changing. New styles are born, grow, change and produce offshoots, which in turn grow, change and produce offshoots. Some styles enjoy lasting popularity, but others disappear rather quickly. **However, all contribute to the power and excitement of rock and roll music in our time.**

<sup>1</sup> Original essay from Oshima & Hogue (1997). *Introduction to Academic Writing* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Addison Wesley Longman. p.145-146.

**Commented [AB1]:** Introduction: Background to topic

**Commented [AB2]:** Introduction: Thesis of essay

**Commented [AB3]:** Introduction: Preview focus points

**Commented [AB4]:** Body point 1: Topic sentence with appropriate transition "one of"

**Commented [AB5]:** Body point 2: Topic sentence with appropriate transition "another style"

**Commented [AB6]:** Body point 3: Topic sentence with appropriate transition "a third style"

**Commented [AB7]:** Conclusion: Summary; restatement of thesis

**Commented [AB8]:** Conclusions: End statement. Final evaluation or opinion.