Swamp Pop
Elementary

Historic Homes • Gardens • Artifacts • Costumed Crafts People
Boat Tours • Gift Shop • Restaurant
Standards

Standards as developed by the Louisiana Department of Education. Available online at http://www.vermilionville.org/vermilionville/educate/lesson-plans.

Grade 3
Social Studies

- **GLE #49:** Identify ways different cultures record their histories (e.g., oral, visual, written) (H-1A-E3)
- **GLE #50:** Describe family life at a given time in history and compare it with present-day family life (H-1B-E1)
- **GLE #51:** Describe changes in community life, comparing a given time in history to the present (H-1B-E2)
- **GLE #52:** Identify and describe early settlers in Louisiana (H-1C-E1)
- **GLE #53:** Identify people and their influence in the early development in Louisiana (H-1C-E1)

Objectives

1. The student will define swamp pop and the role it plays in Louisiana culture.
2. The student will engage in a timeline activity uncovering milestones in the history of swamp pop.
3. The student will design a swamp pop vinyl record and album cover based on information that they learned throughout the lesson.

Additional Information

Materials needed: Timeline (see below), Computer with speakers, Internet access, Markers/crayons/pencils, Scissors, Document #1, Document #2

Pre-Visit Activity

Teachers. We have made two introduction documents available to you on our website – a word document as well as a PowerPoint with pictures depicting the cultures that we represent. Please take some time to review these two documents with your class prior to your visit here. You can access them here, by clicking on

- Introduction to Vermilionville and
- Vermilionville PowerPoint

Show students part 1 of That Swamp Pop Sound: Rod Bernard & Cajun Rock’n’ Roll on YouTube (9:46) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDoXtbWnYMU.

Play samples of swamp pop music for your students. Some suggestions are Cookie and the Cupcakes – Mathilda & Rod Bernard – This Should Go On Forever.
A brief history of swamp pop: Swamp pop is a musical genre indigenous to the Acadiana region of south Louisiana and an adjoining section of southeast Texas. Created in the 1950s and early 1960s by teenaged Cajuns and Creoles, it combines New Orleans-style rhythm and blues, country and western, and traditional French Louisiana music influences. Although a fairly obscure genre, swamp pop maintains a large audience in its south Louisiana and southeast Texas homeland and it has acquired a small but passionate cult following in the United Kingdom, northern Europe, and Japan.

What's in a name? Most young swamp pop musicians began playing traditional Cajun and Creole music along with popular country and western music. The rock and roll and rhythm and blues movement that swept America inspired these same musicians to incorporate the new sound with their roots music. As these musicians gained popularity and began making a name for themselves, some eventually did just that: made a name for themselves. It was very common for south Louisiana swamp pop musicians to adopt more Anglo-American sounding names to appeal to the rest of the country. For example, John Allen Guillot became Johnnie Allen, Robert Charles Guidry became Bobby Charles, and Elwood Dugas became Bobby Page.

Anchor Lesson

While at Vermilionville, visit the one-room schoolhouse or L’École. Everyday a Cajun or Creole musician can be found here demonstrating their music. Ask the musician about his/her music style and how it is unique to Louisiana.

Post-Visit Activity

Swamp pop timeline: After visiting Vermilionville, have students assist in creating a timeline of important events and recordings in swamp pop history. Here are some notable dates to begin with:

1950s – Swamp pop was created by the Cajuns and Creoles. It is a mix of different styles of music.
1953 – Guitar Slim records “The Things That I Used To Do”.
1956 – Fats Domino records the song “Blueberry Hill”.
1959 – Johnny Preston’s “Running Bear” achieves number 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart.
1962 – Rod Bernard records a bilingual version of “Colinda” that becomes a hit in Acadiana and Quebec.
1998 – The 1st annual Swamp Pop Music Festival is held in Gonzales, LA.

Evaluation

Create your own record! Have students create their own swamp pop record using the templates (Document #1 & Document #2). Have them recall unique elements from their swamp pop lesson to make their album authentic including a stage name, where the album was recorded, and displaying Louisiana imagery on their album cover.
Differentiation of Instruction

Kinesthetic learners will benefit from the artistic aspect of this lesson plan along with listening to song examples.

Visual learners will benefit from watching the short film, engaging in the creation of a timeline, and the album creation project.

Auditory learners will benefit from hearing the different examples of swamp pop and also the narration of the short film.