

## Course Content - Introduction to Rhythm and Blues Music

### Historical facts of Rhythm and Blues

- The term R&B (Rhythm and Blues) was first used by a music journalist named Jerry Wexler. He worked for Billboard Magazine and around 1947 he started using the term Rhythm and Blues to describe music he was hearing in Chicago.
- R&B music evolved out of the blues. The blues was an African-American music that usually expressed tough times and sad feelings.
- Musicians wanted to stay true to their blues roots but they also wanted to express happier times. So, they used faster, up-tempo beats and happier lyrics. Bands also started using horns and the electric guitar. This rhythmic music expressed more joy than sorrow. Artists like Ray Charles and Little Richard were some of the pioneers of R&B along with female vocalists like Aretha Franklin, Mavis Staples, and Etta James.
- R&B was a huge influence on the birth of rock and roll and, in fact, R&B is still a major influence in the world of rock and pop music!
- Billboard magazine started in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1894! Back then, the magazine was all about amusement parks, fairs, circuses, and carnivals. With the invention of the jukebox in 1930's, Billboard started covering music as well. At first there were only three charts; Pop, Country and RHYTHM and BLUES!

**Primary R&B Music Instruments:** Drums, Voice, Saxophone, Electric Guitar, Bass Guitar

### Music in Life Lesson:

The Music in Life lesson is a moment to engage in active listening. The Music in Life lesson song for this course is "Respect" by Aretha Franklin. Students are invited to think about how the music makes them feel, think and move. Music is an individual experience; active listening encourages students to choose their own musical path.

**Highlighted R&B Music Styles:** Jump Blues, Club Blues, Sophisticated Blues, Chicago Blues, Soul, Funk, Pop

**Highlighted R&B Musicians from the Early Years:** Little Anthony and the Imperials, Ruth Brown, Ray Charles, The Temptations, Ella Fitzgerald, Marvin Gaye, Al Green, and Stevie Wonder

**Highlighted Current Day R&B Musicians:** Alisha Keys, Keb' Mo', Joss Stone, Anthony Hamilton, Melanie Fiona, John Legend, India Arie, Usher