

Name \_\_\_\_\_ This assignment is due \_\_\_\_\_

### UNIT 3 • EARLY JAZZ: DIXIELAND (1917-1920s)



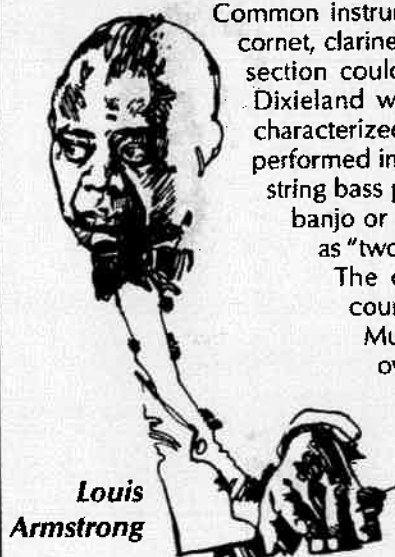
**Shade in the area on the timeline in which Dixieland was popular.**

- ◆ World War I raged in Europe (1914–1918).
- ◆ Prohibition (the illegalization of alcohol) began (1920).

#### THE MUSIC

Blues and ragtime, along with a rich local brass band tradition and many other influences, came together in the late teens to early 1920s in New Orleans, Louisiana to create a new type of music called Dixieland jazz. Dixieland is also known as traditional jazz or New Orleans jazz. As jazz gained in popularity, it spread north from New Orleans to Chicago, New York, Kansas City, and across the Midwest to California.

The name "Dixieland" was most likely derived from the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, a New Orleans group who made the first publicly available recording of this style of music in 1917. The recording was very popular and the band gained international prominence as a result.



**Louis Armstrong**

Common instruments in a Dixieland jazz-style group included trumpet/cornet, clarinet, trombone, and occasionally the saxophone. The rhythm section could include the banjo, piano, drums, string bass, or tuba. Dixieland was usually performed without a vocalist. The music is characterized by a steady, often upbeat, tempo, 4/4 meter, and rhythms performed in an exaggerated triplet swing style. Frequently the tuba or string bass plays on the first and third beats of each measure, with the banjo or piano playing chords on beats two and four. This is known as "two-beat" style, and gives the music a sound similar to ragtime. The other instruments of the ensemble play melodies and countermelodies simultaneously and take turns playing solos. Musicians often play familiar melodies by memory, adding their own bluesy inflections throughout the song.

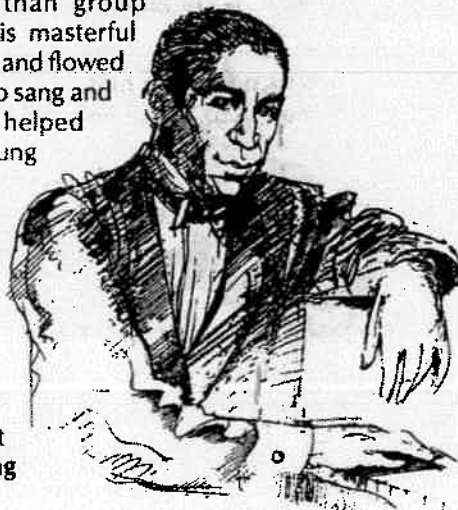
#### THE MUSICIANS

Trumpeter **Louis Armstrong** (1901-1971) was a great contributor to early jazz, especially as a solo improviser. He performed with many different bands during his career, and his virtuosic solo ability influenced everyone who came after him, since jazz moved

increasingly toward solo improvisation rather than group improvisation. He is especially remembered for his masterful rhythmic sense and phrasing ability. His solos breathed and flowed naturally and communicated a message. Armstrong also sang and was known for his distinctive, gravelly voice that helped popularize "scat." Scat singing uses nonsense syllables sung to an improvised melody.

**Jelly Roll Morton** (1890-1941), pianist, composer, and bandleader, spanned the gap between ragtime and early jazz piano. He loosened the more rigid rhythmic feel of ragtime by swinging eighth notes. A number of his compositions became popular and were arranged and performed by other bands.

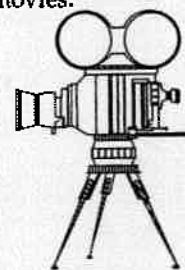
Other early jazz greats included trumpeter **Bix Beiderbecke**, trombonist **Edward "Kid" Ory**, clarinetist **Sidney Bechet**, and bandleader and trumpeter **King Oliver**.



**Jelly Roll Morton**

#### DID YOU KNOW

- Trumpeter Louis Armstrong appeared in nearly 50 Hollywood movies.



- Jelly Roll Morton was a rich and successful bandleader during the 1920s, but declined in popularity during the 1930s; he had to sell his most prized possession to make ends meet: a diamond set between his two front teeth.

- For a listening example of Dixieland jazz, refer to **Willie L. Hill, Jr.'s** *The Instrumental History of Jazz*, a two-compact-disc set (Disc 1, tracks 2 & 3).

## UNIT 3 QUIZ

### EARLY JAZZ: DIXIELAND

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument \_\_\_\_\_

◆ Fill in the blanks.

1. Another term for Early Jazz is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The name "Dixieland" was most likely derived from a very popular New Orleans band named:  
\_\_\_\_\_.
3. These four American cities were important in the development of early jazz. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Early jazz was developing at about the time of World War \_\_\_\_\_.

◆ List three important facts about early jazz music.

5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. List one important fact about Jelly Roll Morton.  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Louis Armstrong popularized the use of "scat" singing. What is "scat"?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

◆ Louis Armstrong was one of the most important contributors to the development of jazz. List three facts about this jazz great.

10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_

#### BONUS QUESTION

- ◆ Using Willie L. Hill, Jr.'s *The Instrumental History of Jazz*, play an example of Dixieland jazz, *Dixie Jazz Band One Step*, by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band (Disc 1, track 3).
- ◆ What is your favorite solo instrument in *Dixie Jazz Band One Step*? Why?