Title
1950s and the Rise of Pop Culture

Estimated Time for Completion of Lesson
2 days

Concept/Main Idea of Lesson
In this lesson students will gain a deeper understanding of the 1950s, the pop culture of the 1950s, and how pop culture influences society.

Intended Grade Levels
Grades 6-12

Infusion/Subject Areas
Visual Arts
Social Studies

Curriculum Standards
Next Generation Sunshine State Standards
- Visual Arts:
High School
VA.68.C.3.3: Use analytical skills to understand meaning and explain connections with other contexts.
Middle School
VA.912.C.3.3: Examine relationships among social, historical, literary, and/or other references to explain how they are assimilated into artworks.

- Social Studies:
High School
SS.912.A.7.1: Identify causes for Post-World War II prosperity and its effects on American society.
SS.912.S.6.2: Examine various social influences that can lead to immediate and long-term changes.

Middle School
SS.8.A.1.7:View historic events through the eyes of those who were there as shown in their art, writings, music, and artifacts.

National Standards for Arts Education
Grade 5-8 Visual Arts Standard 4
Grade 9-12 Visual Arts Standard 4

National Council for the Social Studies
Theme 1-Culture

Instructional Objective

The student will:

- Discuss various key aspects of the 1950s through whole class conversation;
- Analyze a photograph from the 1950s using the Visual Thinking Strategy;
- Discuss the ways pop culture influences society by engaging in cooperative learning activities;
- Create a product (e.g., slideshow, video, song, artwork) that highlights the ways one aspect of 1950s pop culture has evolved and influenced society over time.

Learning Activities Sequence

Attention-Getter (1950s Video): Advance to slide 2. Ask students, "What comes to mind when you think about the 1950s?" Allow students a couple of minutes to jot down their thoughts in their student notebooks. Have students watch the video and take note of how many of their thoughts are depicted in the video. [Note: Video is linked in the PPT or can be found at http://www.history.com/topics/1950s/videos/1950s.]

Learning Activity 1 (Whole Class Discussion): Advance to slide 3. Using the notes on slide 3, go through the timeline and discuss a few events/inventions that occurred each year. [Note: Timeline is linked in the PPT or can be found at https://www.thoughtco.com/1950s-timeline-1779952.]

Advance to slide 4. Engage students in a discussion of pop culture. Ask questions such as:

- What is pop culture?
- How would you define pop culture?
- Can you give an example of pop culture?

Then show the class a video on 1950s pop culture. [Note: The video is linked in the PPT or can be found at https://www.youtube.com/v/YSzX5PgQc80.]

Learning Activity 2 (Visual Thinking Strategy): Advance to slide 5. Ask students to examine the photograph of the screen. Using the VTS approach, ask:

- What's going on in this picture?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- What more can we find?

Tell students that the photograph is Alfred Wertheimer's 1956 portrait of a young man named Elvis Presley. For many, Elvis is the image that comes to mind when one thinks of 1950s pop culture.

Next, show the 11:13 minute video of Claerbout's 3D work *KING, a representation of Alfred Wertheimer's 1956 portrait of a young man named Elvis Presley*, found online at: https://vimeo.com/129779229. While video is playing read background and description found online at: http://davidclaerbout.com/KING-after-Alfred-Wertheimer-s-1956-picture-of-a-young-man-named

Learning Activity 2 (Read Aloud & Slideshow): Advance to slide 6. Pass out copies of the *Times* article titled, "Elvis in the Beginning: Photographs by Alfred Wertheimer" to students. Times article located online at: http://time.com/3797423/elvis-in-the-beginning-

photographs-by-alfred-wertheimer/. Have volunteers take turns reading the article aloud. After the article is read, have volunteers read the captions to a few of the 26 images of Elvis taken by Wertheimer. The slideshow is linked in the PPT or can be found at http://time.com/3797423/elvis-in-the-beginning-photographs-by-alfred-wertheimer/

Learning Activity 3 (Video): Advance to slide 7. Have students watch a video of Elvis performing Heartbreak Hotel, his 1956 hit. Video is linked in the PPT or can be found at: https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-Lkry-SF01&hsimp=yhs-SF01&hspart=Lkry&p=elvis+performing+heartbreak+hotel#id=2&vid=c27ad68f5c743a8942e1282bd282beb2&action=click

Learning Activity 4 (Think-Pair-Share): Advance to slide 8. Engage students in a conversation on pop culture from the 1950s to today through a Think-Pair-Share activity (preview video on think-pair-share if unfamiliar with this strategy located at: https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/think-pair-share-lesson-idea) based on the following questions:
  - In what ways do you think pop culture of the 1950s, primarily Elvis Presley, influenced society in the 1950s?
  - In what ways do you think pop culture of the 1950s has influenced society today?
  - What do you think music would be like today if there was never the 1950s rise in pop culture or Elvis Presley?

Closure: Remain on slide 8. For a closing activity, have students engage in a Commit and Toss (preview video on commit and toss if unfamiliar with this strategy located at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvpsBy4A0Zk) based on the following question:
  - Who is today's pop culture icon "Elvis Presley" and what influence has this person had on society?

Evaluation
Advance to slide 9. Individually, have students determine what s/he believes best represents pop culture of the 1950s. Have students research this aspect of pop culture and trace its influence on society from the 1950s to today. The final product is to create a product (differentiation of product; final product could be a slideshow, video, song, piece of artwork) that highlights the ways the aspect of pop culture the student has selected has evolved and influenced society over time.

Optional Extension Activities
Engage students in a discussion revolving around the following question, "Does pop culture need to be popular?" Start by asking this question and having students take a stance. Next, have students watch the video, "Does Pop Culture Need to be Popular?" The video is located at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EoovlwC4N4A After the video, ask students:
  - What is pop culture?
  - Does everything have the chance to turn into pop culture?
  - Does pop culture need to be popular?

Materials and Resources
- Computer with MS PowerPoint and Internet connection
- Projection screen and projector
- External speakers
- Paper & pencil/pen
- Student notebook (or paper)

Internet Links
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EoovlwC4N4A
- http://time.com/3797423/elvis-in-the-beginning-photographs-by-alfred-wertheimer/
- http://time.com/3797423/elvis-in-the-beginning-photographs-by-alfred-wertheimer/.
- http://davidclaerbout.com/KING-after-Alfred-Wertheimer-s-1956-picture-of-a-young-man-named
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- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvpsBy4A0Zk
- https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/think-pair-share-lesson-idea