

WW2 Swing Dance (Physical Education)

How Did Types of Dances Evolve and Affect People on the Home and War Front During World War Two?

When World War II came along, many different dances were formed. These dances also were affecting people that were depressed on the war and home front. They danced to bring positivity and happiness through the difficult times during the war.

Jive, Jitterbug and Swing

The Jive, Jitterbug and the swing are all different types of dances that came about during the time of World War II. Jitter is short from Jitterbug and all of these types of dances are fast and upbeat. "The Swing Era had begun in the 1930s, when Americans were trying to forget the Great Depression. Dancing to upbeat music seemed to help." The jive, jitter and swing were fast upbeat music that people danced to, to try and forget their depression. These dances were danced on the war front, home front and basically anywhere that Americans wanted to feel relief.

"The evolution of music brought about new sounds such as jazz and swing music. These sounds translated to new dances. Jitterbug dancing grew in popularity." The new music coming along was fast and upbeat which caused people to dance fast and have fun times. As shown this is a new evolution of music which proves how the jitterbug, jive, swing and many other dances were brought up during the time of World War II.

"Swing became more popular as the decade went on, and after the repeal of prohibition, crowds began to outgrow the speakeasies where the dancing had started" The people would get together to drink and dance and listen to music which helped them forget about their problems. Overall, all of these dances mentioned were fast and upbeat and had many effects on people everywhere from America and into Europe.

Origin

The jive, jitterbug and all the other dances are fast and upbeat but how did they come about in WWII? "Lindy Hop developed as a partner dance from the Charleston and the Breakaway in the late 1920s and had its heyday during the 1930s and 40s when it was danced by black dancers, particularly in the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem, USA. As its popularity grew then white people started to dance it as well." The lindy hop was another dance very similar to jive and jitter. It became very popular and then evolved into all of the other dances during World War 2. It was the main dance that was started during World War II, and that is how all of the other fast dances originated.

"Essentially, Jive was born through American Army GIs interpretation of Lindy Hop (a dance that has its roots in African-American society). A Jitterbug may also refer to a Swing Dancer." The jive came from America because while the men were out fighting in the war, people are trying to have a good time by dancing. You now know where these dances came from and how they were made.

"Government agencies pushed music producers to record more patriotic and uplifting songs. The Office of War Information especially pushed for this following the bombing of Pearl Harbor in the United States." So not only did the citizens of America create the jitterbug and jive, but the government also came into play. The government helped forming the dances too because they really wanted everyone to listen to fast and happy music. Listening to this happy music helped it change into fast and upbeat dances such as jitter, jive, swing and much more. All in all, the origin of these dances was from America and by the sadness of Americans because they wanted to be joyful and dance.

How it Affects the Soldiers and People at Home

Many people (including soldiers) were affected by the war and they were feeling depressed. All the people back home and on the warfront wanted to feel was happiness with their lives. This is when dancing comes into play, dance was a very important impact on everyone's lives everywhere. "America found itself at war. Jazz went to war, too, and overseas, swing — still America's most popular music — would serve to remind the men and women of the armed forces of home." Jazz was another type of dance not created during this time but still very helpful for everyone back home and fighting in the war. They describe how it served the men and women and remembrance of home so they could be happy. Jazz was brought everywhere because it was always needed for those mourning the loss of family members or just feeling bad about your country being at war.

"At its height in the years before World War II, Swing jazz was America's most pervasive and popular musical genre. If Ken Burns' documentary series Jazz, is correct in its interpretation of the story of Swing as a music that helped America remake the world during and after World War II, then the history of Swing must also be seen as preparing the way for the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s. " Swing Jazz not only helped throughout WW2 but leading out of WW2 it helped African Americans in the civil rights movement to protest and have equality. Jazz was not invented during World War II but it did have its many affects during, before and after it occurred. It helped the African Americans speak and have America listen to them to help gain their rights. Jazz was always a good source of happiness for everyone.

TASKS

1. Have a look at these video examples of swing dancing to see how they really move when they are swing dancing:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=wE31EC3NoLs>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9zHYkKoL4A>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YibBVIYwQWs>
2. Watch the video of Mrs. Pears to learn these popular dance movements (ROCK STEP TRIPLE STEP, GRAPEVINE, BOOGIE BACK, FROG JUMP, KICK BALL CHANGE) and choose done of the following tasks:
 - Try to complete each of the movements and record yourself to send back to your class teacher via Dojo.
 - Put them into a routine using a count of 8 for each movement, record yourself and send it back to your class teacher.

Mrs Pears' Video: <https://www.loom.com/share/c9b789a793e247129fa4d17f2488cfa5>