

Pre-Modern Pop Music



Before Beyonce, before Elvis, and yes, even before Frank, tunes filled the air. Test your knowledge of early American pop music by answering the following questions.

1. The first financially successful African American songwriter in America:
 - Scott Joplin, composer of "Maple Leaf Rag" and "The Entertainer."
 - W. C. Handy, composer of "Memphis Blues" and "St. Louis Blues."
 - James A. Bland, composer of "Carry Me Back to Old Virginy" and "O Dem Golden Slippers."
2. Elvis Presley's hit "Love Me Tender" was sung to a melody first made popular under what title?
 - "How Fair the Morning Star," by Joseph Willig.
 - "The Maiden's Plaintive Prayer," by Charles Everest.
 - "Aura Lee; or the Maid with the Golden Hair," by W. W. Fosdick and George Poulton.
3. The first American popular songwriter to support himself with his composing:
 - Irving Berlin.
 - Stephen Foster.
 - George M. Cohan.
4. The first singing group to make ballads serve the purpose of political protest:
 - The Mass Choir of the International Workers of the World (I.W.W.).
 - The Hutchinson Family Singers.
 - The Weavers.
5. The original title of the song "Turkey in the Straw":
 - "Old Zip Coon," by George W. Dixon.
 - "Steamboat Bill," by Ub Iwerks.
 - "High Tuckahoe," by an unknown composer



6. The first American to compose secular songs for voice and keyboard:

- Benjamin Franklin, patriot, inventor, and publisher of *Poor Richard's Almanac*.
- Jane Merwin, wife of the owner of the New Vauxhall Gardens in pre-Revolutionary New York City.
- Francis Hopkinson, New Jersey delegate to the Continental Congress and signer of the Declaration of Independence.

7. The first song to sell a million copies of sheet music in America:

- "Oh! Susanna," by Stephen Foster.
- "'Tis the Last Rose of Summer," by Thomas Moore.
- "Alexander's Ragtime Band," by George M. Cohan.

8. The most popular song in America during the nineteenth century:

- "Home, Sweet Home" by Henry Bishop and John Howard Payne.
- "In Dixie's Land," that is, "Dixie," by Daniel Decatur Emmett.
- "Flow Gently, Sweet Afton," by Robert Burns and J. E. Spilman.

<http://teachinghistory.org/history-content/quiz>