

*Jazz: A History of America's Music*  
Episode 1: "Gumbo" Video Guide  
Episode 2: "The Gift"

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Please read this guide in its entirety. Enjoy the 8-minute intro to Episode 1 of Ken Burns' documentary then proceed to answer the following questions based on Episodes 1 and 2 of *Jazz*.

1. What is improvisation?
  
2. How did the diverse population of New Orleans help to create jazz? Note the contributions of each group:
  - African slaves
  
  - Slaves from the West Indies
  
  - Slaves from the interior South
  
  - Free people of color / Creoles
  
3. Describe New Orleans' "mania for horns."
  
4. What was minstrel music? What national impact did it have?
  
5. How did the Civil War and Reconstruction impact New Orleans?
  
6. In the 1890s two new styles of music came to New Orleans. Describe and state the significance of ragtime and the blues.
  
7. How did the collapse of Reconstruction impact New Orleans and its music?

## THE BIG NOISE

8. Who was Buddy Bolden? Why is he considered a jazz pioneer?
  
9. Describe the background and jazz contributions of Jelly Roll Morton. Did he invent jazz?
  
10. Why was Sidney Bechet considered a genius? What were his contributions to jazz?

## THE SOUL OF THE NEGRO

11. What were the reasons some Americans rejected and criticized jazz? Why did young Americans love jazz? Who made jazz more respectable?

## THE "CREATORS" OF JAZZ

12. How did Freddie Keppard's refusal to record jazz lead to racial controversy about the origins of jazz?

## THE GIFT (00:00- 22:40 of Episode 2)

13. Note the impact of each of the following on the early life of Louis Armstrong in New Orleans.  
The Karnofsky Family

The Colored Waif's Home

Joe "King" Oliver

Steamboats

**Discussion Questions:**

- Does New Orleans have a legitimate claim as the birthplace of jazz? Explain.
- How did the cultural diversity of New Orleans create a new American music?
- Why do jazz musicians equate improvisation with freedom?
- Does the rejection of jazz by the white and black middle class remind you of culture clashes today?
- What does the early life of Louis Armstrong inform us about our humanity?
- Why is music essential to our lives?

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