When fire devastated Victoria and floods ravaged Queensland in February 2009, the Sound Relief benefit concert came to symbolise both the pain felt by Australians and their determination to do something to help the victims. The MCG drew the largest paying crowd to attend a music concert in Australian history. Big-name acts including Coldplay, Jet, Wolfmother, Paul Kelly and Kings of Leon donated their time to show their support. The event raised more than $5 million, demonstrating how much can be achieved by people — many of them teenagers — when they are united behind a cause. Modern technology, including social networking and mobile applications, have magnified this effect.

Mass mobilisation of young people hasn’t always been seen as a positive thing. In the early and mid twentieth century, teenagers were expected to begin work to help support their families at an early age. Only teenagers from privileged backgrounds had the opportunity to finish school and attend university. This changed after World War II as Australia, England and the United States experienced a period of relative peace and prosperity. A ‘baby boom’ followed, and families were encouraged to buy a home and
As you work through this chapter, look for information that will help you to answer these questions:

1. How did changes in technology shape the lives, work and culture of Australians during the 1950s and 1960s?
2. How do the major social, cultural and political changes of the 1960s continue to influence our world today?
3. In what ways have society’s changing views been reflected in popular culture?
4. How have teenagers helped to reshape the world between 1945 and the present?

Teenagers of the baby-boom generation would help to end the Vietnam War and fight for civil rights, land rights, women’s rights and gay rights. They were encouraged by a growing awareness of their own power. Teenagers have not looked back since.

**Big questions**

As you work through this chapter, look for information that will help you to answer these questions:

1. How did changes in technology shape the lives, work and culture of Australians during the 1950s and 1960s?
2. How do the major social, cultural and political changes of the 1960s continue to influence our world today?
3. In what ways have society’s changing views been reflected in popular culture?
4. How have teenagers helped to reshape the world between 1945 and the present?

**Starter questions**

1. Who are the most influential young people you know? What makes them so influential?
2. Do you think teenagers in the twenty-first century have the ability to change the world?
3. How can current technology be used to effect cultural, social or political change?
4. Is challenging the values and beliefs of the previous generation a necessary part of growing up?
5. How do we know whether change is a good thing?
5.1 Popular culture

Popular culture refers to the beliefs, attitudes and lifestyle shared by a group of people. These are reflected in their actions and in the products they choose to consume. After World War II, improvements to communications technology created a direct connection between the mass media (newspaper, television and radio) and their target audience, many of whom were teenagers. By analysing popular film, music, television, sport and fashion, we can better understand the sorts of things that have preoccupied, motivated and inspired people during this tumultuous period.

First-hand experiences

The period after World War II was a time of social turmoil in Australia, as people began to challenge the status quo. We can draw on many primary sources produced by people who lived through the events, including photos, songs, film, books, letters, newspaper and magazine articles, and interviews. Because we are considering recent history, many members of our community have lived through and remember this period, making these people a rich source of first-hand information.

Source 1
In the 1960s and 1970s, many teenagers rebelled against their parents’ generation by joining the anti-war movement, while others joined the Mods, Rockers or Sharpies. Each group had its own culture, with members following strict rules regarding the way they behaved, the music they listened to and the clothes they wore. In this interview, former Sharpie Alannah describes the pains she went to in order to get the right ‘look’.

Cuffed pants, roman sandals were the shoes that were ‘in’ then — as well as platforms . . . Cardigans with emblems on either side. Short hair . . . scissor cut and flat over with one side parted — very Mia Farrow. We didn’t go to the hairdressers, we went to the barbers to have our hair cut with the guys. We’d have our hair cut all the same — all on the same Saturday morning. We’d have our hair cut every two weeks because we couldn’t let it grow too long.

Expert opinion

Certain people during this period were considered experts and their opinions on issues, such as politics, sport, art and entertainment, were highly respected. They were often widely broadcast on television or radio, or printed in newspapers and magazines. Whether these opinions would be considered reliable today depends upon many factors, including potential bias.

Satire

Satire is a way of voicing opinions or beliefs that might otherwise be too controversial to discuss publicly. Because of this, it can be a valuable source of information for historians. Satire is often a primary source and can take written, visual or audio forms. Satire needs three ingredients to make it effective: it must be relevant, funny, and poke fun at figures or positions of authority, such as politicians. Since Punch, a famous English magazine, published the first satirical cartoon in 1843, certain publications have become known for using cartoons to satirise the issues of the day. The Sydney Push, a sub-culture made up of some of Sydney’s most well known young intellectuals, produced
Chapter 5: Popular culture (1945–present)

This 1968 cover of *Oz* magazine carries a famous image from the Vietnam War. It shows a Viet Cong prisoner being executed by General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, chief of police of the South Vietnamese regime with whom the United States and Australia had allied themselves.

Source 4 This 1968 cover of *Oz* magazine carries a famous image from the Vietnam War. It shows a Viet Cong prisoner being executed by General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, chief of police of the South Vietnamese regime with whom the United States and Australia had allied themselves.

Advertising

Since the mid 1950s, advertising budgets, and the range of venues in which you will find advertising, have increased dramatically. For advertising to work, it needs to capture the attention of its target audience. Because advertising is aimed at such a specific target market, it can often reveal important values of the time and place in which it was created. By influencing people to purchase products or think a certain way, advertising can also influence popular culture.

Source 3 This advertisement for the Trans-Australian Railway was designed to entice travellers to see Australia from the comfort of a train. Like much advertising of the time, it paints a cheerful and positive picture of post-war Australia, a period in which wartime rationing and hardship were giving way to enjoyment of leisure time.

Source 1 In Source 1, the interviewee, Alannah, says that she and other Sharpie girls were influenced by the actress Mia Farrow. What does this suggest about the connection between subcultures, like the Sharpies, and mass media such as films?

Source 2 is an example of a secondary source. List other types of secondary sources that could be used to examine popular culture in this period. What do these sources have in common?

Source 3 is a 1950s advertisement for the Trans-Australian Railway. Based on the images and words used in this ad, what can this source reveal about:

a. the people of the time
b. their changing interests
c. the importance of technology?

Use evidence from the advertisement to support your responses.

4 In what ways does Source 4 meet the definition of satire? In what ways might it differ from this definition?

5 Which would you expect to give the most accurate depiction of history — first-hand experiences, historical accounts, expert opinion or satire? Explain your response.

Did you know?

*Oz* magazine was the subject of two obscenity trials, one in Australia and the other in England. The latter would become the longest running obscenity case in British legal history.

**Analysis and Use of Sources**

1. In Source 1, the interviewee, Alannah, says that she and other Sharpie girls were influenced by the actress Mia Farrow. What does this suggest about the connection between subcultures, like the Sharpies, and mass media such as films?
2. Source 2 is an example of a secondary source. List other types of secondary sources that could be used to examine popular culture in this period. What do these sources have in common?
3. Source 3 is a 1950s advertisement for the Trans-Australian Railway. Based on the images and words used in this ad, what can this source reveal about:
   - the people of the time
   - their changing interests
   - the importance of technology?
   Use evidence from the advertisement to support your responses.
4. In what ways does Source 4 meet the definition of satire? In what ways might it differ from this definition?
5. Which would you expect to give the most accurate depiction of history — first-hand experiences, historical accounts, expert opinion or satire? Explain your response.
5.2 Post-war Australia

During the 1930s, Australia had suffered a depression that, at its peak, saw 32 per cent of people out of work. Whole neighbourhoods turned into slums. Then war hit, and the country was plunged into a six-year battle that saw the mainland bombed by the Japanese and enemy submarines make it into Sydney Harbour. Australians, who had always felt great solidarity with the English, found themselves relying upon America for protection while England fought to defend itself against attack from Nazi Germany. This was a time of fear for many Australians: fear of poverty, fear of invasion, and fear that they would never be reunited with their loved ones. When the war ended in 1945, Australia rejoiced, but the soldiers returned to a country that still faced years of hardship.

Populate or perish

The Australia to which the soldiers returned could no longer take its security for granted. The government, and many people, believed that the only protection against foreign invaders was to dramatically increase the population, which at the time stood at only 7 million. Pressure was on to increase the population, which would mean taking immigrants at an unprecedented rate. While many Australians recognised the need to populate the country, others feared that this would lead to a flood of undesirable immigrants entering the country. The government of the day reassured the populace that only the most suitable immigrants would be chosen and began recruiting Europeans who had been displaced by the war, such as ‘the beautiful Balts’ (see Source 2). With an influx of immigrants ready to work, the country began building major infrastructure projects such as the Snowy Mountains Scheme. These projects were designed to improve the lives of regular Australians, to supply new suburbs with much-needed power and to make a statement: Australia was on the move.

It’s (still) a man’s world

During the war, many women had found work in industries such as munitions production and nursing, and in the Women’s Land Army. Undertaking this work gave many women a newfound sense of independence and pride. When the men returned from war, however, women were expected to vacate their positions and resume their duties at home. Those who chose to stay were usually given a lower wage than their male counterparts. In 1949–50, the National Council of Women and the Australian Federation of Business and Professional Clubs petitioned for women to receive equal pay, and they were granted 75 per cent of what a man would earn to undertake the same job. It would be the late 1960s before Australian women would be granted equal pay for equal work, and the 1980s before they would be legally protected from harassment in the workplace.

Prosperity at last

As the 1950s began, unemployment was down, manufacturing was up, and the economy was growing steadily. Despite the recent influx of migrants, Australia was still a predominantly white, Anglo-Saxon society, in which the majority of people sought...
EXPLANATION AND COMMUNICATION

1. Using a large piece of cardboard or paper, create a popular culture concept map that you will maintain during your study of this chapter. Break your map down into six categories: music, film/television, fashion, food, sport and beliefs/culture. As you read through this and other spreads, add interesting or significant information that you learn. For example, for the beliefs/culture concept, you might write, ‘Late 1960s — Australian women legally granted equal pay for equal work’.

ANALYSIS AND USE OF SOURCES

2. Describe the living conditions for the mother and daughter shown in Source 1. What other kinds of evidence would you need to decide whether or not this photograph is an accurate representation of the living conditions for working class people during the 1940s?

3. Source 2 depicts a group of ‘beautiful Balts’. What did this immigration campaign suggest about the values of Australia’s citizens at the time?

4. Source 3 depicts Australians lining the streets to see the Queen on her first royal visit. What can you tell about Australians at this time from this image alone?

5. Based on the information in this spread, briefly explain what life was like for the following groups of people during the period of post-war Australia:
   a. men
   b. women
   c. children.

HISTORICAL QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH

6. View the Brotherhood of St Lawrence’s documentary Beautiful Melbourne (1947) in your eBookPLUS. The documentary reveals the difficult living conditions for families living in Melbourne suburbs like Fitzroy and Carlton. Then use your school library and the internet to study another suburb in the years 1945–54. It might be a suburb that you live in, or one that you enjoy visiting today. Examine different aspects of the suburb, such as its socioeconomic status, or any significant events that occurred during this time. Then compile your findings as a PowerPoint to share with the class.
By the mid 1960s, Australian wages and living conditions were better than ever. In the suburbs, men went to work, while most women stayed at home and looked after the children. However, as the first of the baby boomers became teenagers, many who had not directly experienced the hardships faced by their parents began to crave independence and new experiences. As they searched for inspiration, many teenagers would gaze outward, at the fads and fashions originating in America and, to a lesser extent, England. Thanks to the invention of television, teenagers often had to look only as far as their own living room.

**Source 1** A modern artist’s impression of an Australian dinner party in the 1960s

**Game on!**

With higher incomes at their disposal, many suburban parents were now able to give their children pocket money. This money was often spent on products developed and marketed by American toy companies. These toys gave children an opportunity not only to have fun, but to act out many of the roles and concerns in the lives of their parents. In a decade dominated politically by the Cold War, boys spent hours playing with America’s popular action figure, G I Joe, or his Australian equivalent, Action Man.

While boys played with action figures, girls were encouraged to ‘play house’, raising realistic baby dolls and cooking using their Easy-Bake Oven. But it was a blond-haired American doll with a ‘womanly’ figure, handsome boyfriend and tailored, interchangeable outfits that would take the world by storm. Launched at the New York Toy Fair on 9 March 1959, Barbie immediately captured the imaginations of young girls, with 351 000 selling in the first year. Barbie would become the biggest selling toy in history.
The baby boomers are growing up

Due to the rising popularity of television and live-music programs aimed at teenagers such as Johnny O’Keefe’s *Six O’clock Rock*, a number of rock ‘n’ roll-inspired dance fads swept the country during the 1960s. In 1960, Australian teenagers adopted the Twist, which had been popularised by a young, black American pop singer named Chubby Checker. Then came the Monster Mash, the Hitchhiker, the Swim and the Mashed Potato. In 1963, about 20,000 teenagers descended on the Sydney Showground to attend The Stomp, a music concert arranged by a local radio station and named after a popular ‘surf dance’.

As Australian teenagers rebelled against what they viewed as the conservative lifestyles and values of their
movement, clothes became a powerful political statement. They deliberately chose clothes that were practical and less feminine than in decades past, wearing pants rather than dresses, and flat, heel-less shoes.

The early 1980s was a time of booming economic prosperity from Wall Street to Main Street. Women had fought hard for their rights in the workplace in previous decades, and their struggle had paid off with the signing of Australia’s Sex Discrimination Act 1984. Throughout the decade, women’s fashions reflected this new-found power, with women choosing strong shoulder pads and conservative business suits in an attempt to compete in what had for a long time been a man’s world. This fashion trend was embodied by the British prime minister Margaret Thatcher and Princess Diana, and by Joan Collins on the hit American television soap opera Dynasty, which had a viewership of 250 million people around the world. ‘Power dressing’ would continue to be a feature of women’s fashion in the early 1990s.

One area of fashion that has been dominated by political activism is the fur trade. Every year, millions of animals are killed for their pelts to supply the world’s fashion designers with fur. Those who object to this practice have found a voice in the organisation People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), which was founded in 1980. PETA has conducted many demonstrations against designers who use fur and has gained a lot of media attention. The organisation also has a large celebrity following and uses celebrities in many of its advertisements. In a video she narrated for PETA Asia–Pacific, Australian actress and singer Natalie Imbruglia says, ‘Anyone who wears any fur shares the blame for the torture and gruesome deaths of millions of animals each year.’

Parents, their clothes and hair changed to replicate the looks of their favourite stars of stage and screen. For girls, this marked a move away from the sensible dresses of the 1950s towards the risqué miniskirt, a symbol of sexuality and new-found independence. Boys entered 1960 emulating the clean-cut boy bands of the 1950s, but the Beatles quickly changed that: hair grew longer, ties grew thinner and pants grew tighter, in a look that came to be known as the Mod, the most popular look of the day.

Throughout the 1960s, young people challenged traditional distinctions in the colour and style of clothing, and blue denim jeans became a staple of every teenage wardrobe. By the end of the decade, to the horror of many of their parents, both sexes could be seen wearing flares, sandals and tie-dyed T-shirts.

**Fashion meets politics**

Fashion has always been connected to politics. This connection was made clear from the 1970s onwards in fashion generally, and women’s fashion in particular. In the 1970s, for women who supported the women’s liberation
Chapter 5: Popular culture (1945–present)

Joan Collins (right) became a 1980s fashion icon when she played Alexis Carrington in the hit American soap opera Dynasty, a role for which she received six Golden Globe nominations between 1982 and 1987.

Natalie Imbruglia is one of many celebrities to have stood up for animals as part of PETA’s worldwide anti-fur campaign.

EXPLANATION AND COMMUNICATION
1. Why might G I Joe have been renamed Action Man for the Australian market?
2. Make a list of possible sources of conflict between teenagers and their parents in the 1960s.

ANALYSIS AND USE OF SOURCES
3. Look at Source 1 and answer the following:
   a. Why might dinner parties have become so popular during the 1960s?
   b. How did men’s and women’s roles at these parties differ?
   c. Dinner parties often had themes that related to different cultural traditions from around the world. Do you think this represented real understanding of these places and cultures? Explain your answer.
   d. What was the role of children at these dinner parties?
   e. Identify one of the popular dances being performed by the teenagers. Justify your response.

4. Look at Source 3. What impression does this photo give you of the model Jean Shrimpton? How do you think the other people in the photo might have felt about her? What evidence can you find to support your claims?

5. In what ways was fashion a part of the demonstration depicted in Source 4?

6. Look at Source 5. Based on this photo, what aspects of Joan Collins might have made her a popular culture icon in the 1980s?

PERSPECTIVES AND INTERPRETATIONS
7. Some people have seen Barbie (see Source 2) as harmless, while others believe that her representation sends girls unrealistic messages about what it means to be a young woman. Use the internet to research the various models of Barbie over the decades and consider the toy’s importance in popular culture. Decide whether you think Barbie would have had a positive or negative impact on a child’s wellbeing in the 1960s and 1970s.
   b. Find at least three sources (such as articles, interviews and websites) to support your opinion.
   c. Develop your argument into a 300-word written piece.
   d. If possible, team up with other class members with the same perspective as you and consolidate your arguments, then debate an opposing team within your class. Each participant should speak for no more than five minutes, and a winner should be decided by your teacher.
   e. Finally, write 150 words outlining which of the arguments you actually believe and why.

Cold War: the state of political hostility and military tension between the Western (capitalist) and Eastern (communist) power blocs
5.4 Sport and society

Sport has long been recognised as an important element of national identity. In the second half of the nineteenth century, free settlers newly arrived to Australia built rugby fields, cricket pitches and racetracks in an effort to re-create their English ‘homeland’. Sport was equally as important in rural Australia as it was in the city, providing a sense of community, identity and social interaction for communities often spread across vast distances. In the post-war era, many sports teams promoted inclusiveness, while others practised social exclusion and even racism.

Surf’s up!

With most white Australians living in cities near the water, aquatic sports have always been popular. After World War II, Australian teenagers discovered they had access to the three ingredients necessary to establish a surfing culture: the beach, surfboards and leisure time. As they attempted to outmanoeuvre one another on their boards, always...
Dawn Fraser was banned from competitive swimming by the Australian Swimming Union after wearing the wrong swimsuit (and angering sponsors) during the opening ceremony of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, before allegedly stealing an Olympic flag from Emperor Hirohito’s palace.

searching for the perfect wave, surfies came to represent a culture of pleasure and youthful rebellion.

Nobody embodied the surf ethos more fully than Michael Peterson, or MP. In 1971, a chance encounter with filmmaker Alby Falzon led to MP’s inclusion in Morning of the Earth, in which he performed a move famously known as ‘the cutback’. This was the beginning of MP’s fame. In the years that followed, he would win numerous events, including the inaugural 2SM/ Coca-Cola Surfabout (1974) and the Bells Beach Easter event, which he won three years in a row. He would also open his own surfboard business in 1974. Ed Sinnott, who travelled with him during that time, wrote, ‘To me and thousands of other young Australian surfers MP was a surfing buccanneer, a rebel insurgent against normality and the king of all the pirates who defied convention and lived life beyond the boundaries of everyday society.’

Go for gold

The Australian government believes that the Olympic Games are an ‘opportunity for nations to come together in peace and friendship’ and has committed people to the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Greece and Australia are the only nations to have participated in every Summer Olympics. Australia has hosted two Summer Olympics, in 1956 (Melbourne) and 2000 (Sydney). IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch described the Sydney Games as ‘the best ever’.

Within the Olympics, Australia has a history of success in a range of sports. Mainstream Australian athletes perform well in swimming, cycling, shooting, archery, equestrian events, rowing and field hockey, while our Paralympians have finished within the top 15 on every occasion they have competed. Many Australians are proud of our Olympic achievements, and join with the government in viewing the Games as an opportunity to draw admiration, respect and positive attention to the country. One of the nation’s greatest sportspersons, and an Olympic star, is Dawn Fraser, who won gold for the 100 metre freestyle at three successive Olympics and was the first woman to swim the event in less than one minute. Dawn was named Australian of the Year in 1964.

Source 3 From humble beginnings mending broken surfboards with his brother, Australian Michael Peterson would go on to become one of the greatest surfers of his generation.

Source 4 Dawn Fraser swims to victory in the 100 metre freestyle at the Tokyo Olympics, 1964.

Source 5 One of the most memorable Olympic moments for many Australians was when Cathy Freeman won gold in the 400 metre sprint at the Sydney Games. After her win, she lapped the ground with the Australian and Indigenous flags raised.
East Germany (1–0), West Germany (1–0) and Chile (2–1), playing at one of the biggest sporting events in the world was a major achievement and reignited interest in establishing an Australian league.

The National Soccer League was established in 1977. For most of its history, it would remain fairly segregated, with players and supporters divided along ethnic lines. Of the 14 teams that competed in the 1991 season, 11 were ‘ethnic’: three were Italian, four Greek, two Croatian, one Macedonian and one Maltese. The 1991 final was played between South Melbourne Hellas and Preston Makedonia, replicating the tensions felt in the Greek and Macedonian communities over the disputed Macedonian territory. Throughout the match, fans from both sides taunted each other with racial slurs, leading one member of the crowd to describe the match as a ‘proxy war’.

In a society that claimed to be embracing multiculturalism, this sort of ethnic intolerance was a cause for major concern. In 1992, the Australian Soccer Federation

Immigration, soccer and national identity

Between 1947 and 1964, more than two million migrants entered Australia under schemes designed to expand industry, or as displaced persons following World War II. Often, they found themselves unwelcome in established sporting clubs and sought refuge in soccer. The high number of migrants participating in soccer led to it being labelled ‘Wogball’ by some white Australians.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, soccer remained popular with migrant communities in all states. Clubs were run by immigrants and often represented a single ethnicity. The petroleum company Ampol sponsored these competitions and sponsored a national Ampol Cup. In 1974, just one year after the official end of the White Australia policy, Australia qualified for the FIFA World Cup. Although they were beaten by

After a few relatively disappointing performances throughout the 1960s and 1970s, in which smaller numbers of Australian athletes competed, the government established the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) in 1981. The AIS is dedicated to building excellence in a range of sports. As a result, Australia was able to field a team of 632 athletes at the 2000 Games, and collected 58 medals. At the Beijing Games in 2008, Australia finished sixth overall, taking home 14 gold medals, 15 silver and 17 bronze.
began a process of ‘Australianising’ soccer clubs, which included banning any club that carried the name of a foreign country, state, or place, or any name with ‘political implications’. This was an attempt to stop the xenophobia and racism that had sometimes accompanied the sport, as well as being a business decision designed to attract corporate sponsorship.

The National Soccer League was succeeded by the A-League, which had its inaugural season in 2005–06. Run by the Football Federation Australia (FFA), it is the top professional soccer league in Australia. The A-League is associated with the National Youth League, and the W-League for women. One year after the establishment of the A-League, Australian soccer — or football, as it is referred to by many of its fans — had its greatest victory in decades. The Socceroos, Australia’s national team, defeated Uruguay to qualify for the World Cup for the first time since 1974. The team would go on to make it into the Round of 16 for the first time. They continued this success in the 2011 AFC Asia Cup, making the final, where they were defeated by Japan 1–0.

**EXPLANATION AND COMMUNICATION**

1. Sport has always been an important part of Australian culture. What do you think are the main reasons for this?
2. How has the role of sport changed in Australia since the mid-1800s?
3. Sport can be a powerful force in uniting or dividing a community. Draw a table with ‘unite’ at the top of one column and ‘divide’ at the top of the other. Then find examples from the spread that fit into each category.

**ANALYSIS AND USE OF SOURCES**

4. What does Source 1 suggest about the feeling between England and Australia at the end of the nineteenth century? Why do you think that this rivalry is still so strong today?
5. Do you think that the surfers in Sources 2 and 3 were engaging in a positive form of self-expression, or a self-indulgent pastime? Explain your view. Do you think your view would be different if you were a teenager in the 1970s?
6. Source 4 depicts Dawn Fraser’s gold medal-winning swim in the 100 metre freestyle. For many young women at the time, Dawn Fraser represented a new and exciting role model. What characteristics would have made her most admirable? Are these the same characteristics that made Cathy Freeman (Source 5) such an inspiration?
7. Referring to Sources 6–8, describe the way that soccer has brought migrant Australian communities together and also divided them.

**PERSPECTIVES AND INTERPRETATIONS**

8. Do you think that sport today is more or less a part of the Australian identity than it was in the post-war period? Explain.
9. In what ways could the Olympics be said to contribute to Australians’ sense of identity? Discuss with a partner.
10. Choose a popular Australian sport that is played predominantly by one ethnic group or gender. How could the sport, or the conditions surrounding it, be changed to make it more inclusive? Would making the sport more inclusive be a positive thing or not? Explain your point of view.

**HISTORICAL QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH**

11. Use your library and the internet to further research one of the following topics during the period 1945 to the present:
   a. The rising popularity of soccer
   b. Australia’s achievements at one Olympic or Commonwealth Games.
Australian popular music of the 1940s and 1950s consisted of jazz, country and big band music, and reflected the mostly conservative tastes of its listeners. Major stars of the day included the crooners Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra. Radio stations in this era did not specialise in styles, but played a range of popular songs, usually as part of programs that focused on a particular musical genre. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, teenagers were looking for a sound that was riskier and more ‘authentic’ than the music their parents were listening to. They found it in rock’n’roll, which was broadcast on radio and television, and promoted through live rock’n’roll shows featuring the best artists from overseas.

The origins of rock’n’roll

Rock’n’roll began in America and blended country and western music with the beat of rhythm and blues and the vocal power of African American gospel music. Another influence on rock’n’roll was rockabilly, white music with a fast, spare style. Rockabilly Carl Perkins’ ‘Blue suede shoes’ (1955) was the first song from Sun Records to sell one million copies and would later become a huge hit for Elvis Presley.

Australian rock’n’roll — the first wave

In Australia, rock’n’roll found fans in disc jockeys such as Bob Rogers. Previously, Rogers had achieved some fame by discovering the song ‘Pub with no beer’ by Australian country and western artist Slim Dusty. Now Rogers would present the first top 40 show in Australia, bringing Australian teenagers the new sounds coming out of America on his weekly radio show.

Australian teenagers had been enthralled with rock’n’roll since the movie Blackboard Jungle hit theatres in 1955; its soundtrack featured ‘Rock around the clock’ by Bill Haley. Before this, most music hits would sell around 50 000 copies in Australia. ‘Rock around the clock’ sold three times as many copies. For Australian teenagers, rock’n’roll represented new-found freedom and an opportunity to break away from what they saw as the old-fashioned values of their parents. This realignment of values meant more than choosing one music style over another. In the post-war era, England was still repairing cities bombed by Nazi Germany, while America had emerged from World War II triumphant and wealthy. For many young people, England represented the past and America the future.

Source 1:
Elvis Presley, the undisputed King of Rock in the late 1950s, was influenced by a wide range of musical traditions and styles including country and western, blues, gospel and rockabilly.

Source 2:
Australian singer Lonnie Lee, who would go on to have a string of number 1 hits of his own, recalls the effect that Blackboard Jungle had on him when he watched it for the first time.

I can remember walking down George Street with a couple of my friends to go and see it and it was really exciting. I was — I think I was about 16 or 17 and we went into the movie and the music came on and oh, mercy, I swear you could not put it into words the incredible effect that that music had on young people knowing myself how I felt and my friends felt. And the people were thumping on the floor with their feet to the beat of the thing and clapping and yelling, it was like a live performance.

Rock’n’roll was featured across Australia in live shows organised by promoters such as Lee Gordon. Through his ‘Big Show’ concerts, Gordon brought a number of major rock’n’roll acts to Australia, including Bill Haley and the Comets, Little Richard, and Buddy Holly and the Crickets, and allowed Australian acts to open for them, thereby promoting the local music scene. It was on one of these tours that audiences were introduced to an Australian singer named Johnny O’Keefe (known as ‘The Wild One’).

O’Keefe, who had modelled himself on Elvis Presley and Little Richard, became the first Australian rock’n’roll...
For three years beginning in 1959, the ABC broadcast Six O’clock Rock, using Australia’s first rock’n’roll star Johnny O’Keefe to promote the music and dance of a new generation. This is a photograph of Australian singer Lonnie Lee performing on the show.

performer to tour the United States and to break into the United States top 40. Television would also play a major role in popularising early rock’n’roll, as television shows such as Six O’clock Rock, hosted by O’Keefe, presented rock’n’roll to a predominantly teenage audience.

As the 1950s drew to a close, the American rock’n’roll performers were about to face a challenge from British rock’n’roll bands including the Rolling Stones, the Animals, and, of course, the Beatles. Together, these bands would come to be known as ‘The British Invasion’.

The rise of the Beatles

The working-class English city of Liverpool was a grim place to grow up in the post-war years. Local teenagers were looking for a creative outlet. Many found it in music. Four of the best were John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr, the Beatles. After being turned down by all the major record labels in London, the Beatles were finally signed to Parlophone Records, which had previously published classical, jazz and comedy albums. Their first single, ‘Love me do’, was released in October 1962 and peaked at number 17 on the British charts. In March the following year they made it to number 1 with a song they wrote themselves, ‘Please please me’. This would be the first of many hits in the singles and album charts.

Beatlemania touches down in Australia

Following a meteoric rise to fame in England and a string of number one hits in the United States, the Beatles set off on a tour of Australia known as Beatlemania. When their plane touched down at Sydney’s Mascot International Airport on 11 June 1964, the Fab Four (as the Beatles

Did you know?

When the Beatles toured Australia, the DJs hosting the events failed to stop the fans from screaming through the performance, making it almost impossible to hear the music.
were known) were greeted by around 2000 screaming fans. They would make 15 appearances at venues around the country, but nowhere would they receive a reception like they did in Adelaide. Large crowds of screaming teenage fans had been expected; what wasn’t expected was the turnout estimated at between 250 000–350 000 people — more than a quarter of the city’s population.

After they left Australia, the Beatles were more popular than ever, holding the top six spots on the top 40. Taking advantage of the Fab Four’s popularity, numerous Australian bands sprung up with a Beatles-like sound, including the Twilights (see Source 5), Billy Thorpe and The Aztecs, Ray Browne and the Whispers, and the Easybeats, who had an international smash with ‘Friday on my mind’ (1966).

Australian rock’n’roll would increase in popularity throughout the 1970s and 1980s, while it developed its own distinctive sound, thanks to bands as diverse as Sherbet, The Skyhooks and Cold Chisel. This rise in popularity was due, in part, to the continuing influence of TV music shows, particularly the ABC’s Countdown, which ran from 1974 to 1987. Hosted by respected musical personality Ian ‘Molly’ Meldrum, this enormously popular show promoted Australian musical acts to a local audience.

**Australian rock goes worldwide**

Since the mid 1950s, Australian artists had occasionally managed to break into the US and UK charts, but the nation’s musicians could not be said to have had a major impact on the international rock’n’roll scene. By the 1970s, that was about to change.

In 1975, the Easybeats’ Harry Vanda and George Young produced the first album from Young’s brothers Angus and Malcolm. Fronted by Bon Scott (who was replaced by
Brian Johnson in 1980), AC/DC would become mainstays on ABC’s Countdown, endearing them to Australian audiences before they embarked upon their international career. After signing with Atlantic Records, AC/DC gained a succession of international hits, becoming one of the world’s most popular and enduring rock bands over the following decades. By 2010, they had sold more than 200 million albums worldwide. Along with other popular Australian bands, AC/DC would help to redefine the rock’n’roll genre and would pave the way for contemporary Australian rock’n’roll acts.

EXPLANATION AND COMMUNICATION
1. What music styles were major influences on early rock’n’roll?
2. The arrival of British groups in the United States is commonly referred to as an invasion. Who do you think felt most threatened by their arrival? Who stood to gain from it?
3. Identify one Australian band that influenced the international rock’n’roll scene.

ANALYSIS AND USE OF SOURCES
4. Source 1 depicts a performance by one of the biggest rock’n’roll artists of all time, Elvis Presley. Based on body language and dress, what can you tell about Elvis at this point in his career? Why do you think he was so popular?
5. Source 2 describes Australian teenagers’ response to Blackboard Jungle. According to this quote, what was it about the soundtrack that made it so popular?
6. Source 3 is a still taken from Six O’clock Rock, one of the most popular television shows of the 1950s in Australia. If the show was revived today, what would it have to look like to appeal to a teenage audience?
7. Based upon Source 4, who do you think the Beatles were trying to appeal to? What makes you say this?
8. Based upon Source 5, as well as other information in this spread, do you think that the Beatles’ 1964 tour promoted or stifled creativity in the Australian rock’n’roll scene? Use evidence to support your opinion.
9. Source 6 depicts a performance from one of Australia’s most successful rock’n’roll bands, AC/DC, who are well-known for staging exhilarating and theatrical performances. What similarities and differences do you see between AC/DC and the earlier rock acts depicted in this spread?

PERSPECTIVES AND INTERPRETATIONS
10. Why were Australian audiences and musicians so open to influence from American musicians in the late 1950s and early 1960s? How did this change after the Beatlemania tour of 1964?

HISTORICAL QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH
11. Using the internet, find a video of an Australian group that was directly influenced by the Beatles and compare it to a video of an Australian rock group of the 1970s such as AC/DC. In a table, create two columns and compare the bands using the following prompts as a basis:
   a. How many group members are there?
   b. What are they singing about?
   c. What do their costumes and hair suggest about the sort of ‘characters’ they’re playing?
   d. What type of teenager might they have appealed to, and why?

12. Find someone who lived in Australia at the time of the Beatlemania tour. Ask them what they remember about this period, including any details of the tour and their response to it at the time. Write a brief summary of what they have told you and share it with the class.

disc jockey also known as a DJ, a disc jockey announces and plays music on the radio
5.6 Protest music

The 1960s was a time of political and social upheaval. The country went to war in Vietnam. Battles sprung up at home against Australia’s participation in the war and in the name of civil rights, and in support of Indigenous land rights and women’s liberation. Around the world, many people took to the streets in protest, while others were inspired to create music that expressed their concerns. This music became known as ‘protest music’.

Australia enters the Vietnam War

In 1964, Prime Minister Robert Menzies announced that the government would begin selective conscription of 20-year-old Australian men. While all young men of eligible age were required to register, only those whose birth dates were selected by lottery would be required for National Service. The following year, Menzies announced that Australia would send troops to assist the South Vietnamese government in combating the threat posed by the communists. The new conscripts could now be sent to Vietnam.

Source 1 The main contrasting views of the Australian public were reflected in Parliament by the leaders of the government and the Opposition. This is a quote from Prime Minister Robert Menzies, 29 April 1965.

Our men will be fighting the largely indigenous Viet Cong in their own home territory. They will be fighting in the midst of a largely indifferent, if not resentful, and frightened population. They will be fighting at the request of, and in support, and, presumably, under the direction of an unstable, inefficient, partially corrupt military regime which lacks even the semblance of being, or becoming, democratically based.

Source 2 This is a quote from Arthur Calwell, leader of the Opposition, 4 May 1965, who took a different stance on the war.

The takeover of South Vietnam would be a direct military threat to Australia and all the countries of South-East Asia. It must be seen as part of a thrust by Communist China between the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

Source 3 On 28 August 1963, Bob Dylan, widely recognised as the pioneer of the folk rock music style, and singer-activist Joan Baez, played in front of an estimated 250 000 people who had gathered in America’s capital in support of economic and civil rights for African Americans.

The power of song

While many people who disagreed with Australia’s presence in Vietnam took to the streets in protest, others — inspired by members of America’s Folk Revival movement — put pen to paper to create protest music. Written by Johnny Young and sung by Ronnie Burns in 1969, ‘Smiley’ was inspired by the experiences of Normie Rowe, an Australian pop singer who was highly disturbed by the experience of fighting in Vietnam. The lyrics tell a story: ‘Smiley / You’re off to the Asian War / And we won’t see you smile no more’. The Vietnam War and the horrors experienced by its young soldiers would continue to inspire musicians for decades. In 1983, Australian folk group Redgum released ‘I was only nineteen’, in which they wrote, ‘Frankie kicked a mine the day that mankind kicked the moon. God help me, he was going home in June’.

Another major issue to preoccupy protest singers of the 1960s was civil rights. During this era, the protest against Vietnam and for civil rights went hand-in-hand. Many Australians supported Indigenous Australians’ right to own their traditional lands (also known as ‘land rights’).

The hippie movement

The hippie subculture emerged out of the beat generation of the 1950s in America, Australia, England and elsewhere. Rather than protesting as stridently as those who had come before them, hippies aimed to challenge the conventional values of regular, mainstream society by embracing a less materialistic, more communal lifestyle, and promoting a peaceful, compassionate and sustainable way of life. It could be said that they were attempting to create a utopia.

America’s hippies and other like-minded people came together at Woodstock, a three-day, free music festival...