



Why are we learning this? Reggae music has strong links to Blues and African music and has influenced many popular music styles since it's creation.

What is Reggae music?

- Reggae is a unique form of music which originated in Jamaica in the 1960's. It has its roots in a number of other musical styles including traditional Jamaican, American rock and roll and African traditional music.
- Music has always had a big role in the lives of Jamaican people. The roots of traditional Jamaican music can be traced back to African music due to number of Jamaicans who are descendants of Africans brought to the West Indies to work as slaves on sugar plantations.
- The most famous Reggae musician is **Bob Marley**. He helped spread the music of reggae across the world with his catchy melodies and meaningful lyrics. Famous songs include Don't Worry Be Happy, One Love and Three Little Birds.
- Many reggae artists used their songs to speak out about **socio-political issues** such as racism, where are some are more positive and about happiness and love.

Musical Features - what are the key features of Reggae?

- Time signature of 4/4, with heavy accent placed on the 2nd and 4th beats of the bar (**skank/syncopation**)
- typical rock line up – vocals, backing vocals, electric guitars, bass guitar and drum kit
- prominent **riff** played on bass guitar
- simple chord sequences
- reference to **Rastafarianism**, a religion which emerged in Jamaica in the 1930s
- Lyrics on struggle, race, love and **socio-political issues**.
- Strophic form - a repeated verse and chorus

Keywords

Syncopation



When a rhythm stresses the **off beat** (e.g the 'ands' of 1+2+3+4+).

Skank guitar

A guitar strumming technique on the offbeat that is used mostly in the performance of ska, rocksteady, and reggae music.

Riff

A short repeated phrase in popular music and jazz, typically used as an introduction or refrain in a song.

Toasting

Toasting (an influence of rap) or deejaying is the act of talking or chanting, usually in a monotone melody, over a rhythm or beat by a reggae deejay.

Socio-political

Combining social and political factors (e.g homelessness, discrimination, racism)

Rastafarianism

A religion that developed in Jamaica during the 1930s.

Racism

Unfair treatment of people of a particular race in a society especially to the benefit of people of another race

