Name _____ Date _____

American Music: Blues, Jazz and Their Roots

Directions: These questions follow the blues and jazz back to the communities where they grew. Styles take shape over many years, so the dates here describe stretches of time, not single years.

1. The blues first took shape in African American communities around the turn of the 20th century. In which part of the United States did that happen?

A. the Great Lakes region
B. the Deep South
C. the Pacific Northwest
D. New England

2. Which American city is known as the birthplace of jazz, around the turn of the 20th century?

A. New York
B. New Orleans
C. Memphis
D. Chicago

3. These terms all come up in the story of the blues and jazz. Match each one to its meaning.

Write the letter of the matching answer on each line.

1. _____ spiritual
2. _____ work song
3. _____ call and response
4. _____ improvisation
5. _____ blue note

Choices for question 3

A. a religious folk song that grew among enslaved African Americans
B. a note sung or played a little lower than in a major scale, often bent
C. a song sung while working, often to keep a group moving together
D. one musician offers a phrase, and others reply to it
E. a long piece for orchestra in four movements
F. a dance in 3/4 time made popular in Vienna
G. creating music as you perform it, without writing it down first

4. The blues grew out of older kinds of African American music. Which list names some of those roots?

A. film scores, video game music and electronic dance music
B. hip-hop, rock and roll and disco
C. Viennese waltzes, Baroque fugues and Gregorian chant
D. spirituals, work songs and African musical traditions

5. Musicians often call a common blues pattern the 12-bar blues. What does the name mean?

A. Each time through, the pattern lasts 12 measures.

B. Each measure has 12 beats.

C. The song uses 12 different instruments.

D. The song lasts 12 minutes.

6. A band plays through a 12-bar blues pattern in 4/4 time 3 times without stopping. How many beats is that?

_____ beats

7. In many 12-bar blues songs, each verse has three lines of words. How are those lines usually arranged?

A. The first line is sung, then sung again, and the third line answers it.

B. The words are spoken over silence instead of sung.

C. All three lines use exactly the same words.

D. Every line is new, and none of them repeat.

8. During a jazz performance, a saxophonist invents a new melody on the spot while the band keeps playing the chords. What is this called?

A. a spiritual B. improvisation C. a work song D. a blue note

9. Louis Armstrong (1901 to 1971) grew up in New Orleans and became famous as a trumpeter and singer. What did he do that changed jazz?

A. He invented the saxophone.

B. He played the harp in a string quartet.

C. He wrote symphonies for European orchestras.

D. He showed how exciting a single improvised solo could be.

10. People sometimes ask who invented jazz. Which answer fits what music historians know?

A. Louis Armstrong, in 1925

B. No single person: it grew from many musicians in New Orleans, building on the blues, ragtime and brass band music.

C. A radio station that held a contest

D. A European composer who visited New Orleans