



Music and War

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Music has always played an important part in wartime or in connection with things warlike.

1. Instruments, like bugles and drums were used to pass signals and messages on the battlefield.
2. Songs were written to describe the horrors of war, to try and stop wars and to show the pointlessness of them,
3. Music has been written for films on war.
4. Music has been written for soldiers to march into battle.



During World War II (1938-45), one of the most popular types of music was provided by the "big bands". These big bands were developments from earlier jazz bands, and consisted mostly of trumpets, trombones, clarinets, saxophones and a rhythms section of drums, piano, guitar and bass.

They were called Big Bands because they consisted of a large group of players, often more than twenty, and played music in large dance halls and theatres. These dance halls were very popular with soldiers who were home 'on leave', and went out dancing with their wives and girlfriends for entertainment.

Most of the music played by these bands was called SWING. Swing originated in the United States, but also became very popular in Britain. One of the most famous 'big bands' was the Glen Miller Band and one of his most popular hits was "In the Mood".

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why has music played an important role in wartime?
2. What was the most popular type of music during the second world war?
3. When was the second world war?
4. Name one famous big band and one of their hits.
5. Swing music is often syncopated. What does this mean?

