

# The History of Jazz

## 1700s-1800s



Thousands of men, women and children came from West Africa to work as slaves in cotton fields<sup>1</sup> in America. They had a very hard life. As they worked, the slaves sang spirituals<sup>2</sup>. The words of these songs were from stories in the Bible<sup>3</sup> about hope and freedom.

## 1850-1910



Thousands of Europeans went to the U.S.A. They hoped for a better life. In New Orleans, African-American slaves became free in 1865 and a new kind of music was born – jazz. Jazz was a combination of African and European music. Both the blues and spirituals had an influence<sup>4</sup> on jazz.

## 1920s



African Americans moved to big cities in the north, like Chicago and New York City, looking for a better life. They took their music with them. Young people danced to loud jazz music in clubs. This is sometimes called the "Jazz Age".

## 1930s-1940s



The 1930s were the hard years of the Great Depression<sup>5</sup>. People didn't have any money to go to clubs. They listened to big bands play jazz on the radio. This happy music reminded people of a better time.

## 1960s-1970s



African themes became popular in jazz. African-American musicians began to perform with younger white musicians and created a new musical style. Together, they brought this new style of music to a new audience.

## 1987-Today



In 1987, the U.S. Congress passed a resolution<sup>6</sup> that says jazz is "a rare<sup>7</sup> and valuable national treasure". Today, there are many styles of jazz. There are jazz festivals all over the world, like the Red Sea Jazz Festival in Eilat every summer.

<sup>1</sup>cotton fields / حقول القطن

<sup>4</sup>influence / تأثير

<sup>7</sup>rare / نادر

<sup>2</sup>spirituals / شعائر دתית

<sup>5</sup>Great Depression / أزمة العمالقة

<sup>3</sup>Bible / الكتاب المقدس

<sup>6</sup>resolution / قرار

