

QUEEN

Group 1

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Why We Chose Queen

- The body of work the band presents
- The interesting life of Freddie Mercury
- A general fascination with a few of the top hits
- The impact that the band has in the music industry
- The complexity of Bohemian Rhapsody
 - We knew we need to review a song

Smile - The Precursor to Queen

- Founded by Brian May (eventual guitarist for Queen) in 1968
- Only recorded six songs throughout their career
- Consisted of three main members, two of which continued onto Queen - Roger Taylor, Brian May

Queen General Biography

- Formed 1971 in London
- Over 130 million albums sold worldwide
- Released 15 studio albums of original music between 1973 and 1995.

Queen Biography | The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://rockhall.com/inductees/queen/bio/>

- Queen drew from contemporary music, visual media, and pop culture and turned all of these aspects into a multimedia spectacle grounded with rock roots

The Name "Queen"

Freddie Mercury thought of the name and said this about it:

“It’s very regal obviously, and it sounds splendid. It’s a strong name, very universal and immediate. It had a lot of visual potential and was open to all sorts of interpretations. I was certainly aware of the gay connotations, but that was just one facet of it.”

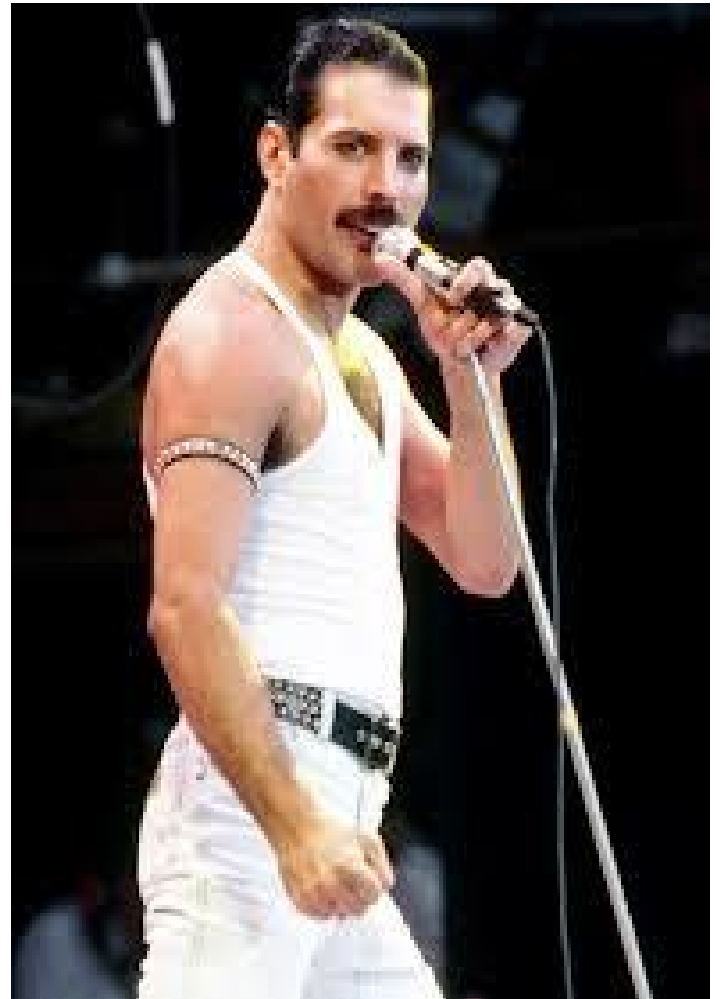
50 things you never knew about the band #6. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nme.com/photos/queen-50-things-you-never-knew-about-the-band/250327/1/1#6>

Freddie Mercury

- Lead singer, real name Farookh Bulsara
- Born 9/12/1946 in Tanzania
- Recruited Brian May and Roger Taylor. Later joined Smile and renamed it Queen
- Designed Queen's Logo
- Died of AIDS related illness 11/24/1991

Freddie Mercury: & QUEEN: PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE IMPRESSIONS.
(n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.raggedblade.com/reviews/000329.html>

- When he was young, he loved listening to rock, and had a huge imagination Freddie Mercury Documentary. (2006, September 5). [Television series episode] ITV1.



Brian May

- Played guitar for Queen
- An accomplished astronomy student working on his PhD until Queen exploded
- Had a stint in the 90s where he had successful solo career
- The 2012 Olympic games closing ceremony saw May make a solo appearance

BRIAN MAY BIOGRAPHY. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.brianmay.com/brian/biog.html>

Takes pride in making music that he believes speaks to people as a whole.

Interview: Queen and Adam Lambert [Television broadcast]. (2011, November 6). BBC News.

His father thought he was throwing his career away at first, but he still spent hours and hours helping him build his guitar

Queen: Days of Our Lives [Television broadcast]. (2011). Movie.



Roger Taylor

- Drummer for Queen
- In 1981 he was the first member of Queen to create a solo album
- Wrote songs like "Radio Ga Ga" for the group

Roger Taylor. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.queenonline.com/en/the-band/members/roger-taylor/>

- Freddie was a huge fan of Smile, and Roger (with May) accepted him into the band after Smile deformed

Queen's Documentary Interview at BBC Breakfast [Television broadcast]. (2011, May 26). BBC One.



John Deacon

- Played bass guitar for Queen
- Wrote some of the band's top songs, such as "Another One Bites the Dust"
- Since 1997 he has disappeared from the industry completely (no recent photos have been taken)



Rock Stars Who Disappear: John Deacon. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/pictures/13-rock-stars-who-disappeared-20120926/john-deacon-0529544>

- Final performance with Queen was at the Paris National Théâtre de Chailioton in January of 1997 at the Gala premiere of Maurice Béjart's AIDS-inspired Ballet for Life

Queen Crest

- All members represented with zodiac signs
- Two Lions for Leo (Deacon and Taylor)
- Crab for Cancer (Brian May)
- Two fairies for Virgo (Freddie Mercury)



Paul Rodgers

- Joined the group in 2004 and stayed until 2009 as a replacement for Freddie Mercury
- Played his first concert with Queen in South Africa for Nelson Mandela AIDS Awareness
- Quit the band because he stated the collaboration was only temporary
- Rumors circulate of a possible reunion

Musical Style

- Very expansive
- Fit into many subcultures within the Rock n' Roll genre: glam rock, heavy metal, pop rock, and progressive rock
- Pushed some boundaries of what other artists/groups were doing at the time

Musical Influences

- Influenced by other British rock groups of the time
- Also influenced by other genres such as ragtime, gospel, and folk
- Made huge contributions to the hard rock and heavy metal genres, as well as progressive rock.

Musical Style in Rock

- Style was not discriminatory - collected many ideas within the greater genre of Rock n' Roll
- Style was diverse and artistic
- Had musical influence from (and on) other British groups of the 70s and 80s

Other Top Performers Of The Era

Stevie Wonder

Led Zeppelin

Elton John

Pink Floyd

Rolling Stones

Impactful Social and Political Events

- Freddie Mercury Tribute concert for AIDS awareness
- July 13th 1985 Live Aid concert for Ethiopian famine- Estimated 1.9 billion people watched

Musical Analysis

- **Bohemian Rhapsody**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJ9rUzIMcZQ>

- **First appearance on Album, "A Night at The Opera"**
- **Released October 31st 1975**
- **Genre- Rock**
- **Written by- Freddie Mercury**

Intro (0:05-0:54)

- All members are singing together in falsetto harmonizing voices
- A piano is used as an accompaniment
- Texture is Homophonic chordial
- Tempo is moderately slow
- 4/4 time signature

Ballad (0:56-2:40)

- Freddie Mercury is the main singer and establishes the melody
- Mercury is playing the piano, while drums and a bass guitar keep the back beat
- The texture is homophonic again
- The tempo has picked up slightly from the beginning
- 4/4 time signature

Guitar Solo (2:40-3:08)

- Guitar solo takes over the melody and is accompanied by rhythm guitar
- Bass guitar and drums keep the beat
- 4/4 time signature
- Texture-homophonic

Opera (3:08-4:12)

- Piano, guitar, and drums present
- Disjunct
- Falsetto voices used
- Polyphonic where voices respond to each other taking turns with the melody
- Tempo and Rhythm speed up in this part

Hard Rock (4:12-4:59)

- Following the falsetto section a drum build raises the song's energy to allow for a hard rock feel
- The tempo increases
- The meter remains in 4/4
- The section ends with three repetitions of a guitar homophony and a single repetition of a piano homophony.

Finale (4:59-5:58)

- Tempo slows down greatly
- Freddie Mercury takes over the melody again
- Background singers singing same note create harmonizing chord
- Piano and guitar used as accompaniment
- 4/4 time signature
- Vocals get really soft and fade out as song ends

Greatest hits

Queen had numerous popular songs. These are just a few of their hits.

- We Will Rock You
- Bohemian Rhapsody
- We Are The Champions
- Another One Bites The Dust
- Under Pressure
- Fat Bottomed Girls
- Killer Queen

Queen's Musical "We Will Rock You"

- Written by Ben Elton and Queen
- Opened in May of 2002 in London, England
- An estimated 13 million people worldwide have seen the musical
- It has only been performed in the US once - Las Vegas, Nevada in September of 2004
- Over 4,200 performances in the UK - all have received standing ovations



WE WILL ROCK YOU | Show - Facts & Figures. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.wewillrockyou.co.uk/show/facts-and-figures/>

Interesting Facts

- **Brian May's guitar is (in a way) 200 years old. He built it with his dad from a 200 year-old mantelpiece.** *50 things you never knew about the band #6.* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nme.com/photos/queen-50-things-you-never-knew-about-the-band/250327/1/1#6>
- **They released 'Keep Yourself Alive' as a single twice, in both 1973 and 1975 - it did not make the Top 40 either time.** *50 things you never knew about the band #8.* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nme.com/photos/queen-50-things-you-never-knew-about-the-band/250327/1/1#8>
- **'Bohemian Rhapsody' is the third best-selling British single of all time.** *50 things you never knew about the band #11.* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nme.com/photos/queen-50-things-you-never-knew-about-the-band/250327/1/1#11>
- **Queen only released 'Another One Bites the Dust' as a single because Michael Jackson suggested it.** *50 things you never knew about the band #22.* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nme.com/photos/queen-50-things-you-never-knew-about-the-band/250327/1/1#22>
- **They received the 2,207th star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 2002.** *50 things you never knew about the band #24.* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nme.com/photos/queen-50-things-you-never-knew-about-the-band/250327/1/1#24>

Interesting facts cont.

- **There were 250,000 people at their Rock In Rio Festival in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil in January 1985.** *50 things you never knew about the band #36.* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nme.com/photos/queen-50-things-you-never-knew-about-the-band/250327/1/1#36>
- **John Deacon was also a trained electronics engineer, and he sometimes built equipment for the band to use.** *50 things you never knew about the band #46.* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nme.com/photos/queen-50-things-you-never-knew-about-the-band/250327/1/1#46>
- **Brian May used a sixpence coin to pluck his guitar instead of a pick.** *50 things you never knew about the band #47.* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nme.com/photos/queen-50-things-you-never-knew-about-the-band/250327/1/1#47>
- **Freddie Mercury didn't think he was a very good pianist and feared playing 'Bohemian Rhapsody' live.** *50 things you never knew about the band #50.* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nme.com/photos/queen-50-things-you-never-knew-about-the-band/250327/1/1#50>

A Lasting Legacy

- 18 albums
- Queen is in *The Guinness Book of World Records* for spending a total of 1,322 weeks on the United Kingdom album charts. That's over 25 years.
- Bohemian Rhapsody is still voted one of the best songs of all time
- 1985 Wembley Stadium 2 day concert in front of 72,000 people - Queen considered it their best concert

Freddie Mercury Documentary. (2009). [Television series episode] In *The Beast*. A&Etv.

- There are numerous cover bands devoted exclusively to playing Queen songs

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Queen with Adam Lambert on BBC's post conference from MTV awards

<http://www.raggedblade.com/reviews/000329.html>

Rhapsody youtube URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJ9rUzIMcZQ>

A&E Freddie Mercury Documentary

Freddie Mercury Documentary. (2009). [Television series episode] In *The Beast*. A&Etv.