

### Do Now Activity

Write a one sentence definition for:

- TEENAGER
- ROCK & ROLL
- FASHION



### Decade Study – 1950's

Changes and highlights of society in the 1950's  
(looking specifically at Australia)

### Background - 1950's

- Prosperous and vibrant years for Australians.
- Employment was high.
- People were encouraged to spend their money freely.
- Technology advanced rapidly.
- Television provided a link to the rest of the world.
- Cars gave people a new mobility which changed patterns of leisure and living.

### Decade in Context

- Australia's cultural ties with Britain would be challenged by an influx of American culture.
- Women were generally expected to stay at home, raise children and care for their husbands.
- Many European migrants settled in Australia, bringing new cultural influences.
- Melbourne hosted the Olympic Games in 1956.
- Australia lived in the shadow of the Cold War throughout the decade.

## Teenagers in 1950's

Before the 1950's, people were either:  
Adults  
Or  
Children

### Australian Teenagers in 1950's

- Teenagers became a *separate, unique and targeted* market for advertisers.
- US Rock'n'Roll music and films like *Rebel without a Cause* gave teenagers their own *music, language and fashion*.



### Challenges to Society

- Teenagers began to challenge the conservative ideas of society and the traditional values of their parents.
- Bright shirts and tight jeans, riding motorbikes and relaxed morals concerned the older members of society.



### Teenage Economics

- Teenagers had increased buying power.
- Newly affluent parents could afford to give their teenagers generous pocket money.
- Both sexes became much more fashion conscious.



## 1950's Fashion in Australia

What happened?  
How did it change?  
What influenced the changes?

## Fashion

- Teenagers were the driving force behind fashion
- Up until that time, clothing trends had largely been set up by fashion houses that catered to the adult market.
- As cinema, television and rock'n'roll swept the world, the youth market clambered to copy the style of the stars.
- Teenage fashion quickly developed into a huge industry in its own right.

## Men's Fashion

Prior to the 1950's, men took very little interest in fashion.

The strong rebellious men portrayed in the movies of the 50's started fashion trends in young impressionable men.

## Cinema and Men's fashion

American cinema and television brought new fashion ideas to the masses and prompted many young people to copy the fashion of their favourite movie stars.



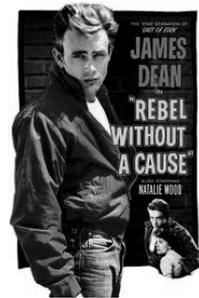
### Marlon Brando & James Dean

- Marlon Brando starred as a misunderstood motorbike punk in the film *The Wild One* (1953), dressed in blue jeans and a leather jacket.
- James Dean was similarly dressed in his film *Rebel without a Cause* (1955)



### The American Movie Star Look

- Together Brando and Dean inspired a generation of young men to emulate their attitude and style.
- Jeans, leather boots with a white t-shirt fast became a symbol of teenage rebellion for boys.



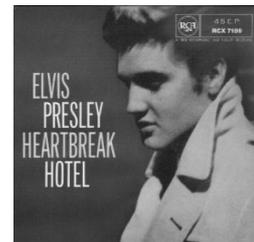
### The British Look

- Many young men adopted the more tailored, British-influenced 'Teddy Boy' style.
- This style consisted of:
  - High waisted, narrow 'drain-pipe' trousers,
  - Long jackets
  - Slim ties, and
  - Large shiny pointed shoes called, 'winklepickers'



### The Rock & Roll Look

- Elvis Presley's style struck a chord with the teen market.
- Youth everywhere began sporting his slicked back 'duck tail' hair style and long sideburns.



### Men's fashion - generally

- Young men began to wear brighter colours and sharp, flashy suits were very trendy
- Loose, unbuttoned shirts with upturned collars also became fashionable.



### Women's Fashion

How did women's fashion change in the 1950's?

Previous decades paraded women in conservative clothing to the colourful, revealing outfits that arrived with the new decade.

### Ladies Fashions

- Women were also influenced by movie and television stars.
- Screen goddesses like Marilyn Munroe and Grace Kelly inspired tiny waistlines, full skirts and busts.



### Other Fashion Trends

- Slim pencil-line skirts were also popular.
- Stiletto heeled shoes emerged.
- Shoes could be bought in variety of colours to match any outfit.

(And a love affair was born)



### New Material

Nylon  
Acrylic Polyester  
Vinyl

Easy to wash, dried quickly, didn't crease or require ironing!

New materials were used to make items such as....



### Do Now Activity

Write 4 – 5 dot points on what indicates this is an advertisement from 1950's.



### 1950's Entertainment in Australia

With a renewed economic optimism and willingness to spend, Australians in the 1950s could afford more entertainment products than ever before.

Women were freed from time-consuming household tasks with the advent of many labour-saving home appliances and increased car ownership meant less travel time and more leisure time.

## Entertainment & Leisure

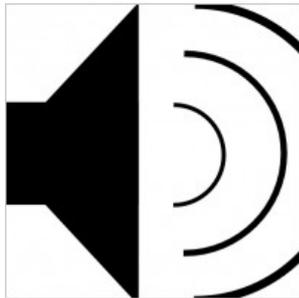
- Thanks to a buoyant economy, Australians in the 1950's were more willing to spend money on entertainment than in previous decades.
- Time-Saving technological developments provided people with more leisure time, and increased demand for different types of entertainment.
- Television dominated as the most popular entertainment form.
- American programs were the most popular.

## Radio in Australia

First public broadcast in 1923.

On 23 November 1923, 2SB began the much anticipated first radio broadcast in Australia.

## First Radio Broadcast, 1923



## Radio

- Prior to the introduction of television, radio was the most popular form of entertainment.
- Families gathered together in the evenings and listened to music shows, drama serials, light entertainment and quiz programs.



## Texas Rangers Radio Show



## Radio & Television

- Radio successfully weathered the staunch competition of television.
- By the end of the 1950's, new, convenient, portable, transistor radios made it possible for people to take their radios outdoors.
- Some cars even had radios installed.



## Cinema

The arrival of television spelt the end of regular movie-going around the world.

Where Australians had gone to the cinema once or even twice a week, in the 1950s and 1960s cinema attendance plummeted, almost killing off the local film industry.

## Cinema (Movie Theatres)

• Instead of going to the movies, many families stayed at home to watch television.

• In an attempt to win back lost audiences, cinemas offered:

- Technicolour
- Wide Screens
- Stereo Sounds
- 3D movies





### Cinema & Television

Cinema remained the leisure activity of choice for people spending a night out.

### Rebel without a Cause



### Drive-in Theatres

On February 18 1954, an advertisement appeared in the Melbourne Sun; "Opening tonight at 6:30 Australia's first drive-in theater".

*The Skyline in Burwood, a Melbourne suburb, became the first of more than 330 drive-ins that were built across Australia and changed the way Australians saw movies forever.*



### Drive in Popularity

Drive-in's became a popular way of watching movies.

Popularity was due to car ownership and young families who found drive-in's more convenient.

### 1950 Drive-In Movie



### Television

### Television

- First introduced Sept 1956
- 1959, estimated 50% families in Sydney owned a television set.
- Originally screened grainy black and white.
- Broadcasts limited to a few hours a night.
- Viewing “special event”, not powerful sway over every day life.



### Television Programs

- Large proportion of television programs were imported from overseas.
- Australian's exposed to foreign cultures.
- *Perry Mason* and *I love Lucy* were favourites in Australia.



1950's Music in Australia

Listening to Music

- Release of the vinyl LP (long playing) record.
- This allowed people to listen to music for longer periods of time.



Style of Music

- Rock 'n' Roll
- 1955, Billy Haley's hit *Rock Around the Clock*.
- Originating from America, this new style fused;
  - Black American rhythm
  - Blues
  - Country and Western



Rock and Roll

- Fast
- Rhythmic
- Exciting
- Dances – jitterbug and boogie-woogie



## King of Rock & Roll

- Elvis Presley tapped into the young market and thrilled audiences.
- Original style music.
- 'Bad Boy' image



## Australian Rock & Roll Icons

- By the end of the 1950's, Rock and Roll dominated Australian airwaves.
- Australian artists included
  - Johnny O'Keefe
  - Col Joyce



## Next lesson....

We look at the changes in technology during the 1950's