



The Power of Music

Student Handout 2

Part 2: Historical and Technical Context

History: How does the world around us affect the music we make? How do you think historical and cultural conditions affected tastes at the time your selected pieces were recorded? Research and make a chart of major events around the time of the two songs you have chosen.

Song 1:	Song 2:
Events:	Events:

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See the [History](#) page on the *Virtual Gramophone* website for help.

Technology: You probably noticed the different sound qualities of the old and new recordings. Find and compare the recording qualities of three songs:

- One from around 1900
- One from around 1925
- One from modern times

Song 1: _____ Year: _____
Playback speed:
Noise (clicks, crackling, hissing):
Other elements:
Song 2: _____ Year: _____
Playback speed:
Noise (clicks, crackling, hissing):
Other elements:
Song 3: _____ Year: _____
Playback speed:
Noise (clicks, crackling, hissing):
Other elements:

Next, visit the [Technical Notes](#) page of the *Virtual Gramophone* website and research or brainstorm reasons for these differences. Consider:

- How the sound might be distorted on an old recording
- How the recording artist's proximity to the recording device might affect the sound quality. (The electrical microphone was not invented until the 1920s so early artists had to stand close to the recording equipment.)

Technical Notes URL:

www.nlc-bnc.ca/gramophone/m2-5001-e.html

Use this information to help you complete a chart about the differences in the sound of the two recordings:

Type of Difference	Possible Causes	Technical Solution