

80s Music Quiz

Synths, big hair, and MTV. Twenty questions about the artists, albums, and moments that defined t...

Name / Team:

Score:

- 1 What music television channel launched on August 1, 1981, changing the music industry forever?
 - A. BET
 - B. VHI
 - C. MTV
 - D. CMT
- 2 Which Michael Jackson album became the best-selling album of all time?
 - A. Bad
 - B. Off the Wall
 - C. Thriller
 - D. Dangerous
- 3 What was the name of Prince's breakthrough 1984 album and accompanying film?
 - A. 1999
 - B. Sign o' the Times
 - C. Purple Rain
 - D. Lovesexy
- 4 Which band released the album 'The Joshua Tree' in 1987?
 - A. R.E.M.
 - B. The Police
 - C. U2
 - D. Depeche Mode
- 5 What was Madonna's first number-one hit on the Billboard Hot 100?
 - A. Material Girl
 - B. Like a Virgin
 - C. Papa Don't Preach
 - D. Into the Groove
- 6 Which 1985 charity single brought together dozens of artists to raise money for famine relief in Africa?
 - A. Do They Know It's Christmas
 - B. We Are the World
 - C. That's What Friends Are For
 - D. Hands Across America
- 7 Which British band is known for the 1981 hit that was the first music video to air on MTV?
 - A. Duran Duran
 - B. The Buggles
 - C. A-ha
 - D. Tears for Fears
- 8 What legendary guitarist was known for playing with his teeth and behind his back before his death in 1970, and was a major influence on 80s guitar players?
 - A. Eric Clapton
 - B. Jimi Hendrix
 - C. Eddie Van Halen
 - D. Jimmy Page
- 9 Which 80s band was known for its innovative use of synthesizers and released the hit album 'Songs from the Big Chair'?
 - A. A-ha
 - B. Depeche Mode
 - C. Tears for Fears
 - D. OMD
- 10 What was the name of the all-day concert held at Wembley Stadium in 1985 to raise money for Ethiopian famine relief?
 - A. Woodstock '85
 - B. Live Aid
 - C. Farm Aid
 - D. Band Aid
- 11 Which female artist released the album 'Control' in 1986, establishing herself as a solo superstar?
 - A. Whitney Houston
 - B. Cyndi Lauper
 - C. Janet Jackson
 - D. Tina Turner

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(continued)

- 12** What band released 'Back in Black' in 1980, which became one of the best-selling albums of all time?
- A. Metallica
 - B. Def Leppard
 - C. AC/DC
 - D. Guns N' Roses
- 13** Which artist won the first Grammy Award for Best Female Rock Vocal Performance in 1986?
- A. Pat Benatar
 - B. Tina Turner
 - C. Joan Jett
 - D. Stevie Nicks
- 14** What British synth-pop duo released the hit album 'Actually' and was known for their deadpan performances?
- A. Erasure
 - B. Soft Cell
 - C. Pet Shop Boys
 - D. Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark
- 15** Which 1987 debut album by Guns N' Roses is one of the best-selling debut albums of all time?
- A. Use Your Illusion I
 - B. Lies
 - C. Appetite for Destruction
 - D. The Spaghetti Incident?
- 16** What music format replaced vinyl records as the dominant way to buy music in the 1980s?
- A. Cassette tapes
 - B. Compact discs (CDs)
 - C. 8-track tapes
 - D. Minidiscs
- 17** Which female artist had hits with 'I Wanna Dance with Somebody' and 'Greatest Love of All' in the 80s?
- A. Mariah Carey
 - B. Madonna
 - C. Whitney Houston
 - D. Aretha Franklin
- 18** What guitarist was famous for his 'tapping' technique and led the band Van Halen?
- A. Slash
 - B. Angus Young
 - C. Eddie Van Halen
 - D. Randy Rhoads
- 19** Which Run-DMC and Aerosmith collaboration helped bring rap music to mainstream rock audiences in 1986?
- A. It's Tricky
 - B. My Adidas
 - C. Walk This Way
 - D. King of Rock
- 20** What 1982 Michael Jackson music video was the first to be treated as a short film, running over 13 minutes?
- A. Beat It
 - B. Bad
 - C. Thriller
 - D. Billie Jean
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80s Music Quiz — Answer Key

1. C MTV

MTV (Music Television) launched with the words 'Ladies and gentlemen, rock and roll' and played music videos 24 hours a day, making visual presentation as important as the music itself.

2. C Thriller

Thriller, released in 1982, has sold over 66 million copies worldwide. It produced seven Top 10 singles and its music video for the title track revolutionized the medium.

3. C Purple Rain

Purple Rain was both a film and a soundtrack album. The album spent 24 consecutive weeks at number one and made Prince one of the biggest stars in the world.

4. C U2

The Joshua Tree catapulted U2 from arena act to stadium phenomenon. It won the Grammy for Album of the Year and included hit singles known worldwide.

5. B Like a Virgin

Like a Virgin reached number one in December 1984 and stayed there for six weeks. Madonna went on to become the best-selling female artist of the 1980s.

6. B We Are the World

We Are the World was written by Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie and performed by a supergroup called USA for Africa. It raised over \$63 million for famine relief.

7. B The Buggles

The Buggles' 'Video Killed the Radio Star' was the very first music video played on MTV when the channel launched at 12:01 AM on August 1, 1981.

8. B Jimi Hendrix

Jimi Hendrix died in 1970 but his influence dominated 80s guitar rock. Eddie Van Halen, one of the biggest 80s guitarists, credited Hendrix as his primary inspiration.

9. C Tears for Fears

Tears for Fears' Songs from the Big Chair (1985) produced massive hits and showcased the band's blend of electronic and rock sounds that defined the decade.

10. B Live Aid

Live Aid was organized by Bob Geldof and held simultaneously in London and Philadelphia on July 13, 1985. Queen's performance at Wembley is often considered one of the

11. C Janet Jackson

Janet Jackson's Control, produced with Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, was a declaration of independence from her famous family. It produced five Top 5 singles.

12. C AC/DC

AC/DC's Back in Black was a tribute to their late singer Bon Scott, replaced by Brian Johnson. It has sold over 50 million copies worldwide.

13. B Tina Turner

Tina Turner staged one of the greatest comebacks in music history with her 1984 album Private Dancer after years away from the spotlight.

14. C Pet Shop Boys

The Pet Shop Boys became one of the most successful duos in UK music history. Their cool, ironic style stood in contrast to the era's more flamboyant performers.

15. C Appetite for Destruction

Appetite for Destruction has sold over 30 million copies worldwide. It brought raw, dangerous rock back to the mainstream in an era dominated by polished pop.

16. B Compact discs (CDs)

CDs were introduced commercially in 1982 and outsold vinyl records by the late 1980s. Their digital clarity and durability made them the preferred format.

17. C Whitney Houston

Whitney Houston's self-titled debut album (1985) and 'Whitney' (1987) produced seven consecutive number-one singles, an unprecedented feat at the time.

18. C Eddie Van Halen

Eddie Van Halen's two-handed tapping technique revolutionized rock guitar. His solo on 'Eruption' is considered one of the greatest guitar performances ever recorded.

19. C Walk This Way

The 'Walk This Way' collaboration between Run-DMC and Aerosmith was one of the first rap-rock crossover hits. It broke racial barriers on MTV and revived Aerosmith's career.

20. C Thriller

The Thriller music video, directed by John Landis, was 13 minutes long and featured elaborate zombie choreography. It is widely considered the greatest music video ever made.