

Name _____

Elvis Presley: The King of Rock 'n' Roll

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Elvis Presley's early exposure to gospel, blues, and country music in the South influenced his musical style by incorporating elements of these genres into his rock 'n' roll music. The soulful and emotional aspects of gospel and blues, combined with the storytelling and rhythms of country music, created a unique sound that resonated with audiences. For example, his gospel-influenced vocals added depth and emotion to songs like "Heartbreak Hotel," making them stand out in the rock 'n' roll landscape.
2. Elvis's appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show" in 1956 was a pivotal moment in his career. The show introduced him to a national television audience, giving him exposure to millions of viewers. It marked the beginning of his mainstream success, as he became a household name and a cultural phenomenon. Elvis's charismatic performances on the show, coupled with his distinctive style and energy, left an indelible mark on popular culture.
3. After returning from military service, Elvis Presley successfully regained his popularity by adapting to the changing musical landscape. He embraced a variety of musical styles, including pop and ballads, in addition to his signature rock 'n' roll. Hit songs like "It's Now or Never" showcased his versatility and resonated with audiences. This adaptability and willingness to explore different genres played a crucial role in his post-military comeback.
4. Elvis's live performances, such as the 1968 "Comeback Special" and his Las Vegas residency, had a profound impact on his career. These shows allowed him to connect directly with his audience, showcasing his talent and charisma up close. Fans were treated to electrifying performances and witnessed his evolution as an artist. The intimate nature of these live shows solidified his status as a legendary performer and cemented his place in music history.

