

Name _____



Rhythms Of Mardi Gras

Directions: Read the short passage below about the roots of Mardi Gras music, then respond thoughtfully to the reflection prompts that follow. Listen to any jazz or brass band piece while you write, if possible, to inspire your answers.

"The Sound of the Streets"

When you hear the trumpets, drums, and trombones of a Mardi Gras parade, you're hearing more than just music—you're hearing history. The sounds of **New Orleans jazz** grew from African rhythms, blues, gospel, and marching band traditions. Early jazz musicians like Louis Armstrong transformed simple parade tunes into expressive works of art that celebrated freedom and community spirit.

Brass bands became a powerful symbol of identity in New Orleans neighborhoods, turning every street corner into a stage. Their songs tell stories of joy, loss, resistance, and pride. During Mardi Gras, these rhythms connect generations—each beat reminding people of where they come from and what they stand for. The music doesn't just fill the air; it expresses the soul of a city.

Reflection Prompts

1. How did jazz and brass band music become connected to Mardi Gras celebrations?
2. In your own words, explain how music can express cultural identity. Give an example from Mardi Gras or another tradition you know.
3. Choose one instrument mentioned in the passage. Describe the role it plays in creating the sound or feeling of Mardi Gras music.
4. Imagine you're marching in a Mardi Gras parade. How would the music around you make you feel, and why?
5. Write one sentence that captures what "the sound of Mardi Gras" means to you personally.