

Explained: Korean Pop (Netflix Series)



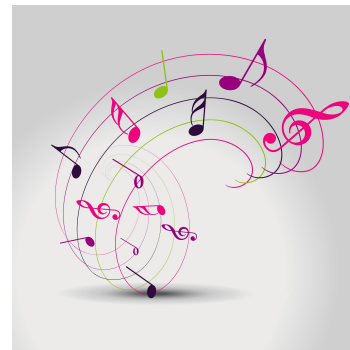
1. What do you think? Read statistics and choose your answers: a, b or c.

I. How much is the Korean K-pop industry worth?

50 million b) 500 million c) 5 billion

II. What year was the first Korean pop song established?

a) 1982 b) 1992 c) 2002

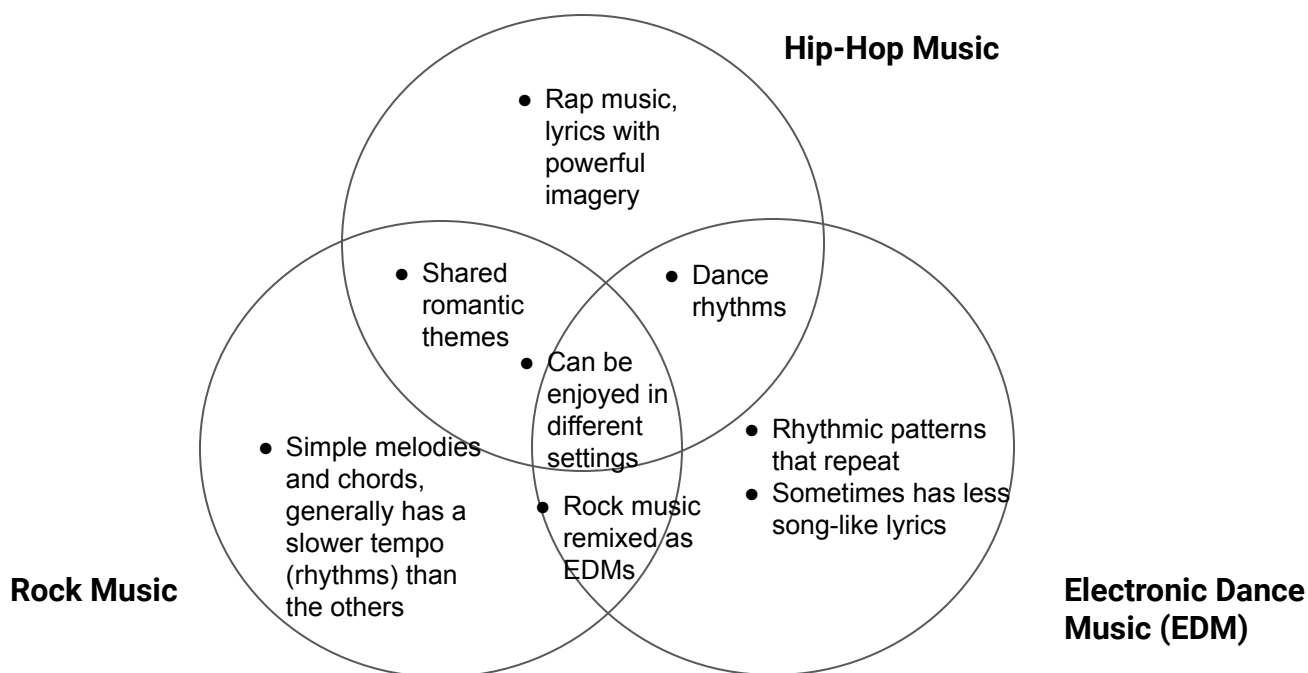


2. Fill in the gaps with the words from the box.

Imposed Cynical Catastrophic Iconic Broadcast Interspersed

- Seo Taiji & Boys' dance on TV was an iconic moment because they introduced American hip-hop culture to South Korea.
- Powerful dictators in Korea imposed strict controls on pop culture through tight regulations.
- As radio stations started to broadcast a broader range of music, the audience started to enjoy new genres.
- In 1997, a catastrophic financial crisis hit Asia and the stock markets tumbled.
- In contrary to the cynical tone found in American music, early Korean pop music expressed optimism.
- Korean pop music utilizes elements from many genres, while colorful visuals are interspersed with beautiful dance moves.

3. Research a few styles of music that are used in Korean pop music. Compare and contrast these genres. Answers may vary.



4. Find out more about these topics from the video:

A. Why was Seo Taiji & Boys' television debut in spring 1992 a defining moment in KPop music? Their television debut symbolized cultural progress in South Korea. They rapped, danced like B-boys, and wore baggy pants - something Korean audiences rarely saw people do on TV. Ultimately, they introduced hip-hop culture to Korea.

B. How many members are there in a K-Pop group? What types of "roles" and "positions" are present in each group and why do they exist? K-Pop groups usually have at least 5 members, and each person takes on specific roles and positions. One might be designated the leader, songwriter, rapper, dancer, and maknae (the youngest). There is rarely more than one person in the same role because producers try to balance the talents and personalities in the group.

C. What are the requirements to become a K-Pop idol and what lifestyle restrictions do they have? K-Pop idols must be kind and polite and must never be involved in alcohol, drugs, or scandals. Romance is the most tabooed topic and they are not allowed to talk about their personal lives.

D. What foreign influences shape K-Pop music? In other words, why do you think English words exist in K-Pop songs? KPop songs mediate between the Eastern and Western music genres, using English words to make the music catchy for international audiences. Some K-Pop songs have been created by foreign composers. For example, the hit song "Red Flavor" was composed by Swedish songwriters, Daniel Caesar and Ludwig Lindell.

5. The creation of new Korean idol groups follows a general process. Please explain the people involved, any criteria used to make decisions, and what challenges exist in each stage.

Stages of Creating a New KPop Group	
1. Scouting for talent	Music producers look for potential idols through local contests and competitions.
2. Audition	Idol may have to pass an audition, which is like an interview.
3. Training	Once selected, idols must undergo singing and dance training.
4. Assembling Groups	Music producers assemble idols into KPop groups based on their personalities and talents.

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6. Create a brand new Korean Pop group. The video discusses a lot of strategies on naming, deciding on the number of members, using visuals to create an appeal to an audience. There is no right or wrong answer. We want to see your creativity and how you would justify your decisions.

	<u>Your New K Pop group</u>	<u>Justifications</u>
Name of Your Group	L.O.L.	Use of acronyms to easily identify and promote the group to lots of countries.
Number of Idols	5	Members need to take on different roles in the group
Sub-groups	Yes	Mandarin sub-group to rap and sing to a large Chinese audience.
Debut Song Name and describe what it is about	Haha	The song name "Haha" talks about moments that make you laugh out loud.
Debut song will be released in which country	US and Korea	Largest proven market in Korea, home country and also US, which was seen success in adopting foreign language songs since BTS 2017.
Would you use multiple music videos of the same song?	Funny moments will be customized to the audiences of the two countries the song will be released in.	In different cultures, different things make you laugh, therefore multiple videos will be necessary.
Visual Art	Use emojis to amplify the Haha moments	Bold colors and perfectly time choreography.

Now that you have decided on the characteristics of your Korean pop group, draw your very first album cover for this group.

You may use images, shapes, colors and anything you can think of. Remember to put the Name of the Group on the cover.



7. Provide reasons for or against the following statements. Please explain in 3 - 4 sentences.

1. “Culture could be the country’s next big export industry”
Korean government passed a law devoted to bolstering the arts and vowed to dedicate at least 1% of the state budget to culture. Companies such as SM, JYP, and YG were invested in producing music to be consumed by not just South Koreans, but by the entire world. Lee Soo Man founded SM and JYP and YG was founded by Yang Hyun Suk - a member of Seo Ji and Boys. These notable producers developed a formula to produce hit music that still works today.
2. What was the effect of the song release “Gangnam Style” in 2012?
‘Gangnam Style’ became a worldwide sensation and brought South Korea into the global stage in terms of music and dance. First, the music artist Psy took K-Pop style to the extreme by introducing iconic fashion and dance moves to the world. Gangnam Style became the first video on YouTube to reach 1 billion views.
3. List some criticism of the K-Pop music industry in Korea.
First, music producers have been criticized for controlling every aspect of an idol’s career. For example, they try to restrict the actions of music artists. Sometimes pushing them to sign “slave contracts” which tie them to many years of service with one recording company. The Korea Fair Trade Commission has helped removed terms in restrictive agency contracts.
4. Why is it difficult to penetrate the US market and how has the K-Pop group BTS circumvent the issue?
The United States has historically been averse to non-English music. However the group “BTS” changed everything in 2017. They have been at the top of Billboards in America thanks to their digital social presence which has allowed them to be widely accessible to fans. In specific, BTS converses with a generation of millennials that feel enormous pressure, resonating with young people of today.

8. Essay Discussion Questions

1. Recently, there has been a lot of news about poor mental health and wellbeing among Korean idols. Discuss the challenges and problems associated with the K-Pop industry.
2. How does social media affect how music artists and celebrities shape their image or connect with their community of fans?
3. Discuss the identity of Canadian music and what opportunities and challenges are present today. How do K-pop groups affect the identity of teenagers and kids today?
4. “To be patient, endure, and finally achieve what you want” is greatly valued in Korea. Discuss the importance of cultural values in the K-Pop music industry.