

J-Pop Vs. K-Pop

“The world’s most famous and popular language is music.”

—Psy, South Korean performing artist

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Which music genres are popular in your group of friends?
2. How is a famous singer or band member similar to an athlete?
3. How do musicians become famous these days? How does this differ from the past?



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match the words on the left with the correct meanings on the right.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| ___ 1. make waves | a) to come up with a new name or word |
| ___ 2. emerge | b) to point out the differences |
| ___ 3. influence | c) to come forward for the first time |
| ___ 4. coin | d) a singer |
| ___ 5. distinguish | e) to search for someone with talent |
| ___ 6. lyrical | f) to appear different from others, to be unique |
| ___ 7. vocalist | g) a prohibition, something that is not allowed |
| ___ 8. ban | h) to feel proud of one’s achievements |
| ___ 9. scout | i) to have a likeable quality |
| ___ 10. hit the billboards | j) to do something different or amazing that causes people to take notice |
| ___ 11. appeal | k) to be included in the top entertainment charts |
| ___ 12. stand out | l) carrying great emotion in the words and music of a song |
| ___ 13. take pride | m) a factor that contributed or inspired |

Reading

1. In Asia, there are two popular music genres known as J-pop and K-pop. The J stands for Japanese and the K stands for Korean. Which of these modern music genres is **making waves** around the world?
2. Japanese pop music **emerged** in Japan in the late '80s. In the beginning, it was a mix between traditional Japanese music and popular '60s music. The Beatles were an important **influence**. In the late '70s, Japanese musicians began experimenting with electronic music. The term J-pop was **coined**.
3. The term J-pop **distinguished** Japan's Western-style music from its traditional **lyrical** music. J-pop artists developed a new pronunciation that sounded a bit English. Many female **vocalists** in Japan became known as *idols*. These young stars didn't always have a lot of musical talent, but they were always very cute. Japan soon became the second-biggest music market in the world.
4. In 1999, South Korea lifted the Japanese culture **ban**. Koreans were inspired by Japanese music and idols. Korean talent **scouts** looked for young entertainers. The singers and dancers were trained like Olympic athletes. Before long, Korean singers and bands began **hitting the billboards** outside of Asia. The popularity of South Korean culture became known as *The Korean Wave*. The term K-pop was born.
5. K-pop record labels and artists are business-oriented. They use social media networks like YouTube to reach an international audience. They also record albums in more than one language. Unlike K-pop artists, the original J-pop artists didn't have access to social media for marketing purposes. Psy is an example of a Korean artist who became an international sensation. In contrast, popular J-pop vocalists like Ayumi Hamasaki enjoy most of their success at home.
6. J-pop and K-pop have both had success with girl and boy bands. J-pop idols and band members are usually cute. This **appeals** to Japanese people. In contrast, K-pop artists work hard to **stand out**. Korean entertainers want to become famous worldwide. To achieve this goal, bands often recruit members from other countries, such as China. They also make covers of their own songs in other languages. In contrast, J-pop musicians **take pride** in their success at home.
7. Some people say K-pop music is too perfect. Others say J-pop is too Japanese. What's your personal taste in music?

Comprehension

A. Quiz Your Partner

Create your own comprehension questions about the reading using the following question words. Try to include the **bold** vocabulary words in your questions. Quiz your partner.

1. Who?

3. Where?

5. Why?

2. Who?

4. When?

6. How?

B. Timeline

Place the following in chronological order (1–8). One of the items is not mentioned in the reading. Place a star beside this item and try to decide where it would belong.

_____ The Beatles became popular in Japan.

_____ The Japanese culture ban was lifted in South Korea.

_____ The term J-pop was coined.

_____ The term K-pop was coined.

_____ YouTube became a popular marketing tool for K-pop artists.

_____ Brass bands were the first sign of a Western-style musical influence on Japan.

_____ Japanese musicians began experimenting with electronic music.

_____ Psy burst onto the international scene.

Compare and Contrast

For each statement on the right, write a second sentence or complete the sentence. Some useful words and phrases are located in the box below.

Useful Words and Phrases

Compare

- likewise
- similarly
- in comparison
- just as/like
- in relation

Contrast

- unlike
- in contrast
- as opposed to
- whereas
- however

1. *Girl and boy bands have had a lot of success in Japan.*
Likewise, girl and boy bands are popular in Korea.
2. _____
In contrast, J-pop bands enjoy most of their fame at home.
3. _____
whereas in Japan, cuteness is more appealing.
4. K-pop artists train very hard to become skilled singers and dancers.

5. The Beatles were a major influence for early J-pop singers.

6. K-pop bands often top billboards around the world,

Speaking Practice

Work with a partner and discuss these topics. What do they have in common? How do they differ?

1. Japan and Korea
2. Hip-hop and rock music
3. Lyrics and poetry
4. YouTube and Facebook
5. Singing and dancing

You Be the Judge

Work with a small group. Choose two music videos to watch that feature two different music genres (e.g., J-pop vs. K-pop or rock 'n' roll vs. heavy metal).

Discuss the similarities and differences between the two types of music. Practice using transitional words and phrases for comparing and contrasting.

Class Survey

MY KIND OF MUSIC

Walk around your class and find out what kind of music your classmates prefer. Write their names in the chart under their answers.

Example Questions:

- Which type of music do you prefer?
- Who is your favorite vocalist?
- Which of these bands is best?
- What is your favorite song?
- How do you discover new music?

GENRE

J-Pop	American Pop	British Pop	K-Pop	Other

BAND

The Beatles	U2	AC/DC	Mr. Children	Shinee	Other

VOCALIST

Katy Perry	Psy	Avril Lavigne	Rain	Michael Jackson	Other

SONG

<i>I Will Always Love You</i>	<i>My Heart Will Go On</i>	<i>Sukiyaki</i>	<i>Thriller</i>	<i>Gangnam Style</i>	Other

MUSIC SOURCE

YouTube	Radio	Friends	Facebook	Other