

Thinking Lab: Psychedelic Rock

Rock Music History and Appreciation

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Introduction

In this lab, you will listen closely to a psychedelic rock performance and consider:

- what you hear and see
- how the music works
- what the performance might mean
- how it connects to its historical context and style

Guiding Question: How does psychedelic rock represent altered states of consciousness and expanded personal expression?

1) First Listen – Noticing & Identifying (2–3 minutes)

As you listen:

- What stands out to you?
- What do you hear?
- What musical elements do you notice (instruments, vocals, rhythm, production)?
- What visual elements stand out (movement, behavior, stage presence)?

2) Style & Context – Connecting (2–3 minutes)

Based on what you hear:

- How does this performance reflect characteristics of psychedelic rock?
- What is one specific musical or visual detail that supports your answer?
- How does this go beyond earlier rock and roll styles?

3) Meaning & Effect – Interpreting (2 minutes)

I will provide some basic context for the song. Then, answer the following questions.

- What kind of mood, message, or feeling does this create?
- What in the music creates that effect?
- How does the context we just discussed help explain what you hear?
- Does this feel like an “experience” or a “song”? Why?
- How might this reflect an altered state of consciousness?

4) Pair & Share – Short Discussion (1 minute)

With a partner:

- Share one idea from above
- Then decide together:

What is the most important musical feature of this song?

(Be ready to share)

5) Make a Claim (2–3 minutes)

What does this song reveal about rock music in its time?

Complete the sentence:

- This song reflects _____ because _____.

Support your answer with:

- one musical detail (what you hear)
- one connection to style, culture, or historical context

Then consider: Does this song expand emotion, the mind, or sound? Explain.

6) Performance & Expression (2–3 minutes)

- What does Hendrix's performance communicate beyond the music itself?
- What might the act of burning the guitar mean?
- How does this performance push beyond the normal expectations of a musician?

Final Reflection (1–2 minutes)

- How is this similar to or different from other music we've studied?
- How does this performance show music as an *experience* rather than just a song?
- What is one key idea you're taking away from today?