

Name

Instructor

Course

### Music That Moves You

Michael Jackson is known for introducing an era of multiculturalism, as he not only introduced a different kind of music in Hollywood but also helped in the desegregation of music. His music helped challenge racial boundaries and revolutionized the music industry. He is also known as the king of pop because he changed the way music was produced before, and his creativity helped us see music from different perspectives. He ruled the era of the late 90s and early 2000s. His songs charted top on billboards, and he was one of a kind musician who had an immense impact on the audience. In 1993, he attracted the biggest TV audience at his Super Bowl halftime show. He had a successful music career as he achieved several accolades, and also, and his music made a long-lasting impact on American society as he used it to break stereotypes and racial boundaries. He paved the way for other African Americans and introduced a perspective on how an African American should behave or be seen in public (Wilburn). Before that, albums by African Americans were only marketed to black audiences, but he changed this as his music was marketed to everyone. People around the world loved him for who he was and adored his music.

Michael Jackson's music career was full of controversies as he faced several ups and downs; that is given when someone is a public figure as things are bound to go haywire. People criticized him for his surgeries that altered his appearance and his inclination towards stereotypical acts such as "flapping feet," which embodies slavery as slaves used to have flapping feet because of the injuries. He has several controversies to his name; with all that, he is still considered a great artist and King of Pop to date (Mayer). Nevertheless, when it comes to his

music, the song that changed my way of thinking about race is "They don't care about us." This song represents the societal issues that were prevalent in the 90s and even today. His song truly explains what it feels like to be a Black American, a Jew, or a victim of police brutality, and it is about everyone who was wrongfully accused of things that they never did. Jackson, in this song, highlights the negligence, ignorance, and apathy of the white majority, "what has become of my rights? Am I invisible 'cause you ignore me?" This song was released in 1994 and truly reflects on racism, discrimination, and prejudice and how it impacted the people of color (*"Michael Jackson On The Meaning Of The Track 'They Don't Care About Us'"*). Hence, his song is a lesson for those who refuse to look past their privilege and do not acknowledge the underlying problem of racial prejudice.

Music is a form of therapy that soothes the heart and souls of those whose minds are raging. For me, music is something that always brings me peace whenever I am anxious. Music is made for every mood, from having a depressed mood to when I want to reflect on something. Heid, in his article for *Time Magazine*, writes about music and how it lifts moods and "fends off depression" (Heid). I agree with him because I remember when my friend was subjected to racial prejudice in childhood, I felt bad, but I could not understand what it was. All I understood was that it was not right. I came back from school and asked my mother; she made me listen to Michael Jackson's "They don't care about us" and explained in detail how it affects us and the people around us but especially the victims. From that time onwards, I always relied on Michael Jackson whenever I was down. This song speaks to those who want to understand the underlying problem of racism, which does not seem to end for some reason.

Michael Jackson inspired me to do better for this society and to stand up for my fellow beings who were, and still are, the victims of racial prejudice. When I have mood swings, music is what keeps me in check. It helps calm my nerves, and as Heid says, “Music is a way to bypass our rational side and to get in touch with the emotional life we often keep hidden” (Heid). I found it exciting how music evokes our powerful emotional responses. In her article ‘The Power of Music,’ Mannes throws light on music and its effects on the human brain; she says, “music also has the potential to help people with neurological deficits.” She explains in detail the melodic intonation therapy that uses music to coax parts of the brain into taking over for those that have stopped working or are damaged (Mannes). Her article was mind-blowing and presented information that I did not know before.

Furthermore, music also has some benefits, such as reducing heart rate, lowering blood pressure, and increasing serotonin and endorphin levels, and that explains why I always turn on music whenever I am sad, excited, or depressed (Mannes). Most importantly, it helps me concentrate whenever I am doing my schoolwork. Music is indeed a blessing, and without it, I would never have understood what it feels like to be a person of color in the white majority. I am grateful that Michael Jackson existed, and rather than focusing entirely on his career, he also raised some important issues through his music. Both his songs and his personality inspire me to stand up for others and to acknowledge the problem that exists in our society.

## Works Cited

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