



The Ultimate 1950s Themed Event

By Joe Dean

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FIVE, ready to be set up scavenger/treasure hunt puzzles!

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Save time and headache at your 50s themed event - let us do the work for you! All five puzzles for only \$14.95!

Introduction

The purpose of this packet is to provide an overwhelmingly large amount of ideas and activities to plan the ultimate 1950s themed party or event. Through my treasure hunt production company, Quest Experiences, I've hosted hundreds of themed parties and events. This packet is the culmination of the ideas used in those productions. I've made every attempt to group the ideas for easier navigation. Most importantly, however, I've taken special time and energy to ensure that you'll find only 'meat' - workable ideas that are original and creative...no fluff or fillers.

I divided the activities into two major groups, Kids and Adults. However, depending on your guests, you might find both lists useful. I know several older children that would have a great time with some of the games listed under adults and I know even more adult friends who would have a fun time with some of the games listed under the Kids section.

The final section is a special supplement included only in this package. They are fun ideas for helping celebrate someone's 50th birthday or anniversary!

After the party ideas sections you'll find FIVE, ready to print 50s themed party game sheets. Answers to the game sheets are also included there.

I hope you enjoy your reading and that you are inspired to make your next 1950s themed party or event an EXTRAVAGANZA!

Joe Dean
Author

Decorations and Atmosphere

Decorations/Props

Of course, with an unlimited budget, you can always visit your local party prop warehouse and rent all kinds of fun props for your event. However, it has been my experience that these products are often of very poor quality and are very expensive to rent. Garage sales are a lot of help...it just takes quite a few before you find something you can use. The following list is for the rest of us who have to be a little more creative to keep the costs down...

1. Visit your local thrift store and pick up as many cheap records as you can get your hands on, no matter what the label. These look fantastic hanging about as decoration. The hole in the middle makes them easy to hang or attach to walls. For added fun, you can glue your own record labels on each (including either real bands from the 50s or you can create your own using the names of some of your guests.) These records can also be handmade using poster board. However, the real albums from the thrift stores look MUCH better (and are quicker and easier.)
2. For your sock hop, hang actual socks on the walls, or hang them from the ceiling. For the best effect, make sure that you have a wide variety of socks on display (i.e. shiny, dull, dirty, clean, both boys' and girls' socks, colorful and plain, etc.)
3. For a fun beginning, ask around for anyone who might have an antique appliance or two (tons of folks have something sitting in their garage that they have been meaning to fix up one day...) These are great when set up at the entrance to your party or event. In this way, you get to set the mood from the beginning (not needing a ton of these as decorations throughout your party...)
4. Hula hoops look great either hanging on the walls or from the ceiling.
5. Get your hand on as many different TV sets that you can and place them around your party/facility/event. On each of the sets, play a different 50s themed movie (i.e. Grease. Etc.) or TV show (i.e. I Love Lucy, Ozzie and Harriet, Leave it to Beaver, Happy Days, Laverne and Shirley, etc.) The great part about this is that you don't even need to

- have the volume on (in fact, especially for adult parties where the guests will probably more enjoy their conversations more than the movies...)!
6. For centerpieces, why not display a few different toys from the 50's? At dollar stores, you can always find slinkies (preferably the metal ones, not the multicolored plastic ones), jacks, silly putty and roller skates.
 7. Similar to the above, display some icon candy from the decade. For examples, we looked at a vintage candy website and pulled the following examples: Chiclets gum, Big Choice bubble gum cigar, Boston Baked Beans, Candy Buttons, Candy Cigarettes, Candy Necklace, Circus Peanut, Chick-o-stick, Cinnamon toothpicks, Doschers French Chew, Fun Dip, Hot Tamale, Dots, Lemonhead, Licorice pipe, Zagnut, Moon Pie mini, Pixie stix, Pumpkin Seeds, Red Hot, Rock candy swizzle stick, Smith Brothers cough drops, Teaberry gum, Wax lips, Atomic fireball, BB Bat, Bazooka gum, Beemans gum, Bit-o-honey, Black taffy, candy lipstick, Caramel cream, Charleston chew, Dubble Bubble, Candy Flipstick, Flying Saucer, Hot Dog gum, Kit, Long boy coconut, Mary Jane, Necco mini roll, Pez refill, Razzle mini, Rootbeer barrell, Saf-T-Pop, Slo Pokes.
 8. Teacher supply stores are great places to get supplies for homemade party decorations. You can purchase very inexpensively a pack of single colored construction paper. Unless your party colors dictate otherwise, buy a pack of all black construction paper. From used manilla file folders, cut out a few stencils of music notes. For a variety of shapes, check out some sheet music (libraries, friends, online, churches, etc.) for a variety of notes and symbols. Once you have a few, invite some friends over to help trace and cut out a ton of notes to hang just about anywhere (the walls, from the ceiling, etc.) This is also a fun activity that the kids get in on! If you want to get a little more ambitious, get your hands on a skein of black yarn and create a five line music staff on which to put the notes. When spacing the lines, keep in mind the size of your notes so that they are somewhat proportional. Also, remember that the music staff doesn't have to be straight across like on a page of music - you can have it zigzag, flow musically in circles or in whatever direction your creativity takes you! A finishing touch would be to make a large jukebox as a focal point for the musical notes to come from. This can

- be made from poster board, a couple boxes stacked on top of each other (covered with butcher paper this looks REALLY great) or just butcher paper. If you have a tall ceiling, you can make a HUGE one from butcher paper (once again, found at teacher supply stores) by hanging several sheets next to each other. With such a single large decoration (with the notes then flowing out of it) you'd need very little else to decorate your party and your guests will be incredibly impressed!
9. Speaking of teacher supply stores, you can get some fantastic cardboard cut-outs of musical notes and instruments. If you don't have a teacher supply near you, Oriental Trading Company has some fun inflatable musical instruments like guitars and saxophones.
 10. If you are going more for a GREASE theme specifically, take a look at some of the scenes in the movie (i.e. the drive-in, the malt shop, the dance, the carnival, etc.) and decorate rooms like different scenes from the movie.
 11. All kinds of photos and pictures can be nabbed from the Internet and made into simple decorations. By printing out photos of old cars, movie star icons (James Dean, Elvis, etc.) and others and glued to black cardstock (the picture being a little smaller to allow for a small black border on the cardstock) these can be hung all throughout the party area as well as hung from the ceiling and made to stand up as centerpiece items. Movies on DVD can also be paused and the image can be copied and printed (great for GREASE!)
 12. Using butcher paper, make giant wrappers to your favorite 50s candy (i.e. Bazooka gum, etc.) For a great list, see idea #7 above.
 13. Do what you can to get your hands on an opay projector (doubt if spelled correctly - they are the kind that you can project images from books - don't need slides or anything transparent.) With one of these you can put butcher paper on the wall and project whatever images you want to on top - tracing for clean decoration images. They can then be outlined with a thick, black marker. These can also be colored in by children as part of an activity. For a quicker approach, use BLACK butcher paper and simply cut out the silhouette. This is perfect for tougher images such as sock hop dancers.
 14. For easy 45" records, take all those AOL and MSN CD's you get in the mail and spray paint them black. These already have a hole in the middle! You can then make your own labels to glue on the center. You

- can either make up your own song titles or use popular ones from the decade. You could also write words about the guest of honor or can utilize many of the guests' names.
15. With the color black being such a predominant color for this theme, you can purchase large sheets of black plastic drop cloth for simple hanging, covering of larger areas and walls, as well as for cutouts for large themed images. It is very inexpensive, comes in a wide variety of sizes and can be found at any hardware store (i.e. Home Depot, etc.) With these, you can make HUGE records (up to 15' in diameter or larger!!!)
 16. For really fun centerpieces, make ice cream sundaes that don't melt!!! With an ice cream scoop, dish out some 'vanilla' scoops of 'ice cream' from a big tub of mashed potatoes (if you look closely at restaurant photos of their ice cream, they often use mashed potatoes because of their likeness and ability to hold up under heat.) With some chocolate syrup, shaving cream (for whipped cream), nuts and a cherry, you'll have an AMAZING sundae that will not melt! These are great for outdoors as well as indoors. The weight of the mashed potatoes (as well as that of the glass dish it is sitting in) will even weight down a bouquet of helium balloons.
 17. Places like Oriental Trading Company have tons of stuff to look through. Check out their inflatable guitars, saxophones and jukeboxes. These are great also to be given out as parting gifts for the children. Oriental Trading Company can be found at www.orientaltrading.com.
 18. If going for the traditional balloons and streamers, make sure to keep to the themed colors of white, black and pink.
 19. From a giant sheet of poster board, create a ROUTE 66 sign.
 20. Budget permitting, you can purchase any number of life-sized, movie star cardboard cutouts. These are fantastic, especially for picture taking. Let your guests get their picture next to Elvis or James Dean. They can be purchased at any movie memorabilia store. A sample site on the Internet includes <http://www.hollywoodmegastore.com> (Quest Experiences does not endorse this website - it is supplied merely as a starting point for finding said products.)
 21. Using standard poster board or butcher paper, you can make simple (but decorative) signs with fun phrases (i.e. Rock till you drop!, 50s Forever, etc.) or the names of songs (i.e. The Twist, Lollypop, etc.)

22. From two large (VERY square) boxes, make a couple of fuzzy dice. You can either simply spray paint them pink and glue on the dots (cut from construction paper) or paint them on (though the latter takes more time because you'll have to wait until the sides dry before you can rotate the dice to paint the bottom side.) These are GREAT hanging overhead at the entrance to the party. They also make great piñatas.
23. Although it can be a bit to clean up afterward (be aware of your facility) you can scatter those small musical note confetti pieces on top of each table. It looks great!
24. It's turned into a very popular hobby for a lot of men to restore old cars. See if you can find someone who would be willing to show theirs off! Have them park in front of your home or party facility. This is a great place to put a sign and couple of greeters dressed up in the 50s garb. Have some music playing from within the car (using a tape recorder if need be) as though the car's radio was on.
25. Depending on what you want to create (especially if it is something large like a 1950s style car, etc.) you might opt to visit your local grocery warehouse (i.e. Sam's Club, Price Club, etc.) They receive their products in on giant pallets with a large sheet of cardboard in between each layer. They typically throw these giant sheets out. If you talk with the receiving manager, they'll probably be able to help and save some for you. These are great for more sturdy decorations and for creating 'stand ups.'

Sound

1. Of course you HAVE to have music from the decade playing! The public library is a great place to get your hands on free music. This might be a great place to start first. If you have a few bucks to spend, try visiting places like Wal-Mart or specialty music stores and pick yourself up a compilation of songs from the 50s. Remember the GREASE soundtrack, too!
2. Do what you can to put a large jukebox in front of the music source to make it seem like the music itself is coming from your jukebox. See Idea #8 in the Decorations section above.)

Costumes

1. Some costume samples for boys/men might include: White T-shirt (sleeves rolled up - with a soft pack of cigarettes rolled up inside one sleeve), blue denim jeans (with tightly rolled up cuffs), greased back hair (with some of the bangs hanging down if the bangs are long enough), loafers, sunglasses (black, "Billy Joel" style)
2. For the girls/women: Longer skirts (remember, must be long enough to pass the knees unless going for a 'wrong side of the tracks' girl), pearl beaded button down sweater, fitted shirts, lots of pastel colors, black and white shoes (saddle oxfords - these can be made by painting those cheap white tennis shoes), capris, string of pearls, pastel colored hand gloves, individual's name initials stitched over the heart of the blouses/sweaters, small socks with the tops folded gently (and evenly) down. Scarves are great for the hair or around the neck.
3. You could also instruct your guests to come dressed as their favorite 50s characters (i.e. from Happy Days, GREASE, etc.)
4. Offer awards for those whose costumes were noteworthy. Depending on the size and age of the group, you might want to come up with an 'award' for each guest, playing off whatever it was that they wore.

If you are having your guests come in costume, really make sure to take lots of pictures!

Invitations

1. The movie poster for *GREASE* makes a great front cover for your invitations, especially if you plan on using the *GREASE* theme throughout. The graphic for it can be found by visiting a couple movie poster websites and 'nabbing' the image by either right click/cutting and pasting or by right clicking/Save Picture As.
2. Some of the easiest and quickest invitations is to use di-cuts found at your local craft/scrapbooking stores. There are SO many shapes to choose from, such as cars, musical notes, hamburgers and the number 50! You can either write directly on them to be passed out or use them as inserts for the invitations you have either already made or purchased.
3. In the invitations, don't just invite them to a party...invite them to a Sock Hop, a drive in movie tail gate party or even a Rydell High School class reunion!
4. Take CD's (buy blank in bulk) and spray paint black. Glue a circle on the inside simulating the label of an old 45". On this circle put all the party details (who, what, when and where...) You can use both sides if you need to. Using cardstock, you can also create album covers by cutting them the appropriate size (folding them over and taping two sides so that the CD can slide inside.) These covers can also be done with paper with a hole the same size as your party details circle. If you choose to not cut the window out of the cover, you can put images of 50's or the guest of honor. Just be sure to leave the party details on the record label only (so they have to remove the record to see the party info.)
5. A great invitation that the kids can help make (or even make completely on their own) are bowling balls. Using a standard circle stencil (can use the fancy ones or just find a Tupperware bowl about the size you are looking for...) to draw the balls on different colors of construction paper. The three finger holes can be drawn by selecting a coin (dime to quarter, depending on the relative size of the ball you've drawn) and simply filling them in with a dark, black marker. All of the information could then be printed by them (or you, for the younger ones) on the backs.

Food

Drinks

1. The Coca Cola company has done a great job flooding the market with their vintage Coca Cola products. In many places, you can still buy the soda in the Coca Cola bottles. The double great part about using these is that even when the bottle is empty, it still makes a great decoration! Have fun lining them up on the bar or central table where all the guests can see them (and contribute to the line once their bottle is empty) as your party progresses.
2. Budget permitting, sometimes you can find some fun (and not TOO expensive) tall malt/shake glasses. These are great to serve as drink glasses with tall straws.
3. You gotta make root beer floats. This can also be turned into an activity for the kids. They'll have a lot of fun assembling the simple ingredients. Make sure, though, that you have plastic down on the table before you begin. It will be a surprise to all of them how much the soda fizzes with the ice cream!

Cake

1. Probably the simplest (and most fun) is to simply make a bunch of 9", single layer cakes. They are already perfectly round and make fantastic records! Frost accordingly. Using your computer, you can print labels to go in the center (either with actual songs from the decade or words describing the day - i.e. Happy Birthday, etc.) If you get ambitious, take a narrow drinking glass (a shot glass is perfect) and push it face down in the middle of each cake before you frost them. In this way, you'll make a hole in the fashion of the real 45" records. With a fork, you can score the tops of the records to create concentric grooves. This would also work well with cookie cakes.
2. Nab a screen shot from an old 50s movie and glue it to a piece of thick cardstock. Push the picture into the cake upright simulating a Drive-In movie screen. Now use lots of matchbox sized cars in front of it as though they were watching the movie! For added fun, you can put

fake trees, signs (make from cardstock and attaching them to straws or toothpicks.) You can even create a concession stand using legos!

Misc.

- 1 The most expected choice would be your traditional hamburgers, hot dogs, French fries, onion rings and Coca Cola (this is the brand to get, if you can...) For fun, visit your local restaurant supply store (i.e. Smart & Final, etc.) and pick up some white server hats for fast food joints. If outdoors, put the servers on roller skates (if you can still find them) versus the roller blades that seem to be everywhere now.
- 2 Restaurant supply stores (i.e. Smart & Final, etc.) are great places to pick up accessories for your dinner portion. You can pick up cheap, metal napkin dispensers, restaurant napkins, etc. Have fun perusing the store for the gems to make your meal look perfect! You can also find take-out containers such as French fry baskets, burger containers, mustard and ketchup squirters, etc. You can also find Soda Jerk white hats there. In this way, your guests will TRULY feel like they are at a real 'burger joint.'
- 3 Dollar stores often have very inexpensive small dessert sundae dishes. These are great to use as serving ice cream or other desserts in - but also as candy dishes or dishes for holding just about anything for your party.
- 4 For added fun, those serving can dress up like bubblegum snapping waitresses with little or no sense of humor! For those with the talent (and the hair) you can fashion some beehive hairdos as well (as a special note on this last bit, purchase some small bee craft items and attach them to those with beehive hairdos - very fun!!!)
- 5 Put those that are serving on roller skates (as long as they are able to maneuver around in them proficiently, that is!)
- 6 Offer a sundae bar where your guests can create their own! You can even offer prizes for the most creative or highest!
- 7 Make a sign with the guest of honor's name such as "Lisa's Diner"
- 8 For a diner feel, use red and white checked tablecloths.
- 9 (If continuing with the diner feel) take a giant sheet of poster board or butcher paper and make a large menu to hang on the wall.

Be sure to put cheaper prices! Hamburgers were only a quarter! You can also make it "Al's Diner," "Frosty Palace" like in GREASE or perhaps use the name of the guest of honor.

- 10 For those serving the food at your event, make fun nametags (i.e. Hi, I'm Flo!)
- 11 For some fun snacks, take OREO cookies and turn them into records! Spread a small amount of light colored frosting (about the size of a nickel or quarter) in the center of the cookie. With a little black icing, put a dot in the dead center for the 'hole.' These are great fun to have setting out at your party or as cake decorations! This can also be turned into a fun activity for the children to decorate, then eat!
- 12 If you are providing single sheet menus, laminating sheets can be purchased at most office supply stores. The edges will probably have to be trimmed as they can be kind of difficult to line up perfectly. They look great, though...a fantastic touch!
- 13 Find yourself an 'order up' bell to ding every now and then in the kitchen. It's amazing how that single sound will resonate a 50s feel throughout your entire diner!
- 14 Have your waitresses 'yell out' to the cook in the kitchen things like "Hey! I asked for the dog burnt not swimming on a stick!" Have fun making up your silly restaurant talk.
- 15 Set open boxes of crackerjacks around the party. Your guests will be able to just pop some in their hand as they are enjoying themselves. It not only looks great as decoration, but it saves on clean up (just throw the boxes away when you're done!)
- 16 Attach a fun 50s item to each of the cutlery bundles (see idea #2 in the Miscellaneous section.)
- 17 If you just aren't in the mood to cook, why not just take everyone to Sonic Burger or Rally's? They'll have a blast, especially if they are all in the 50s clothes!
- 18 Check your local mall candy store. You can find a wealth of goodies including chocolate records, mini jukebox candies, etc.
- 19 If you are straying from the greasy fast food menu and going for more of the home cooking meatloaf and mashed potatoes, don't forget to call it the Blue Plate Special!
- 20 For fun treats or convenient cake decorations, make small chocolate mold candies. Visit your local cake decorating store and

see all the different kinds of chocolate molds they have. Pick out some music notes or other 50s themed shapes and designs. White chocolate comes in different colors - purchase the colors as desired. If you have never made chocolate with these molds before, the person at the register will be happy to show you the best way depending on the products you purchased. This also can be a fun activity for the children at the party!

This idea is not included in the total listed (it is not originated by us) - but it is one that I just couldn't leave out. I've never attempted it before but read it somewhere and saved the instructions. We are not responsible for the results, but it seemed like such a neat idea!

Get old albums from that time period, preferably singles. You can get something like a dozen for a couple bucks. Get yourself an oven safe bowl and some wax paper. Turn the bowl over so the opening is face down place wax paper over the top and then place the album on top. Heat oven to 350. Put it all on a cookie sheet and place in oven for approximately 2-5 minutes you'll need to watch it. Then remove and while still warm gently push sides in to make a wavy effect. You now have take home favor bowls to fill with candy.

Kids

Games

1. Have a hula hoop contest. There are a few variations you could do, depending on the skills of your guests. The simplest is just to see who can do it the longest. If you find that you have more than a couple who can really keep it going, try mixing it up by either **ADDING** hula hoops (how many can they hula at once) or by having them rotate the hoop on different parts of their body (i.e. arms, legs, even neck...) You can decide ahead of time if you'd like to have the hoops out in advance for anyone to practice before the contest begins.
2. A game of music freeze - have the children doing the Twist to Chubby Checker's song, then when the music stops, the children must all freeze. Those that don't immediately are out. Start the music again for those still in the game, stopping periodically until all but one child is out. Award him/her as the winner.
3. This is a simple but fun game, especially if you've opted to decorate the party area like a vintage 50s diner. Give each child three straws and have a straw wrapper blowing contest. You could have two different goals: the shot that lands the farthest or the one that is closest to the target that you establish. As a tip, sometimes a hole blows out the end before the paper 'ejects.' If this happens, pull it out a little bit and give the end a tight, but gentle couple of twists make a 'stinger' of sorts. This will seal the hole and allow a good shot. A box of straws can be purchased at your local restaurant supply store.
4. Hold jump rope contests...who can jump the longest! For those real pros, try the Double Dutch (two ropes going at the same time in opposite, alternate directions.)
5. Purchase a few small sundae dishes and line them up about 4-6 feet from the children (depending on the age.) This is a challenging game/activity...but fun never-the-less. From your local craft store, pick up a bag of red marbles (the clear glass kind - these aren't perfectly round, which will keep them from rolling everywhere.) Have the children each take turns tossing 'cherries' into the sundae dish until one makes it in. The challenge lay in trying to get it in without

- having it bounce out! For REAL fun, though, put some ice cream in it. The marbles won't bounce out - they'll stick to the ice cream. This can get a little messy, especially if it's warm and the ice cream makes a splash. The kids LOVE it when it plops in the ice cream!
6. Hold car races! At the wave of a scarf, each child must move their small toy car from one end of the track to the other (you can make a simple track by applying masking tape to a sidewalk or smooth driveway) These can also be held on long tables (for indoor games.) There are different ways, though, that the cars can 'move.'
 - a. The standard push (each child can give their car one push by applying a single finger to the top of their car, then giving a single push.)
 - b. Using their nose to push the car the whole way. They must crawl forward (if on the ground) as the car moves to keep up with it and to give it another push until it crosses the finish line.
 - c. Use straws to blow through to propel the cars forward. With this one, you'll want to make sure that the surface the cars are riding on is smooth enough. You'll want to test this one first.
 7. Keeping with a more vintage theme, you can organize some vintage games such as Pin the Tale on the Donkey (you can make variations of this such as Pin the Sunglasses on the Greaser, but it's not necessary. Back then they used the Donkey!), potato sack races and three legged races.
 8. Set up different roller skating obstacle courses. This game could also be held without roller skates (if the children don't all have some to use) Have the children be waiters/waitresses, carrying a tray of items down a winding path. There are a couple of different ways to go with this.
 - a. Set a single course and time each child going through it - time deducted for each item dropped (this is a good time to mention to make sure that they are using plastic cups and plates, etc. on their trays.)
 - b. You could also set up a relay race where children must go through, come back and tag the next person on the team. Add some fun by giving the lead child a fast food hat and apron to wear so that they must transfer the 'uniform' to the next person before that player can go through.

- c. To add to the fun, set up some tables along the way where the children must place certain food items at each table. Maybe they have to pick up the tip money (play money/Monopoly money) that is left on each table before they leave it!

Activities

1. Teach the children to do the Hand Jive. If your hand jive is a little rusty, borrow the movie GREASE from a friend or your local library. They do it at the dance. Kids LOVE doing this over and over!
2. Take the kids bowling afterwards! Make sure that they stay in their 50s costumes! Give prizes for the best score, as well as the lowest! (However, don't tell about the latter until after the bowling is over...)
3. Let the children make their own boutonnieres and corsages for the big high school dance! Cut colored tissue paper into 5" X 5" squares (or buy them in packages pre-cut, which is what I do.) Take six sheets and stack them evenly on top of each other. Fan-fold the stack in $\frac{3}{4}$ " folds. When finished, use a twist-tie to secure the center of the tissue paper. Now, pull up each piece of tissue paper ONE AT A TIME, ALTERNATING SIDES. Soon, a flower will appear. Keep to pastel colors, pink being ideal. If couples come (and these are for adults that you make ahead of time) create matching flower colors for each.
4. At balloon stores (also at Oriental Trading Company) you can purchase those long, twisty balloons that clowns use. Most clown books (check your local library) show you how to twist these balloons into different animal shapes. The shape of the poodle is probably the easiest and is nearly ALWAYS shown. The children can each make one and take them home with them. These also make nice party decorations with the other balloons you have.
5. Take the kids to a drive-in movie. Not all areas/states still have them - but they are definitely a lot of fun...if you can't find one, then make one of your own!
 - a. LCD projectors and screens can be rented at your local stage light and sound center.
 - b. Purchase the red and white popcorn bags at your local restaurant supply store. You can also rent a popcorn machine for the day, if you anticipate several guests. This is especially great because of how wonderful those popcorn machines sound

and smell when the corns are popping! Of course you could also opt to make a whole concessions stand (candy, soda, nachos, the works!) If this event is a fundraiser, this is a great way to make some peripheral income.

- c. Make a large sign out of cardboard with the name of your drive-in "Smith Drive-in", etc. For a special touch, decorate the sign and surrounding entrance with Christmas lights!
- d. Using resources described in the Decorations sections above, decorate the entrance with old movie posters and cardboard, life-sized actor cutouts.
- e. Of course make sure that you are playing an appropriate movie such as *GREASE* or *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*.
- f. Make a sign saying MEN/WOMEN over the restroom door.
- g. Do your best to get the best sound system/stereo you can. It can get pretty noisy with all the chatter, not to mention the horrible acoustics being outdoors.
- h. Mark off parking spaces using masking tape and applying it to the floor (assuming it isn't on grass or other non-hard/smooth surface.)
- i. Be sure to play a cartoon beforehand. By visiting a larger video store you can often find some older, vintage cartoons such as Woody Woodpecker, Popeye and Bugs Bunny - definitely Drive-In movie favorites!
- j. If children will be sitting in tables, watching the movie while they eat, you can decorate the tables like different cars (putting wheels on the sides and fun license plates on the backs of each of the chairs.)

Adult Activities/Games

1. Have contests for lip-syncing to different GREASE songs. They can either be done solo or as a group. Award prizes for funniest, best overall and most creative. Of course, this contest could also be opened up to other well-known 50s songs.
2. Instead of lip-syncing, set up a Karaoke machine with a list of 50's songs to sing. There are some great hits from this decade to choose from!
3. Set up games tables (yes, for the adults, too) with games from the 50s (Parcheesi, checkers, Mr. Potato Head). Near the tables you can also set up the famous game of TWISTER!
4. Hold a twist contest. Play The Peppermint Twist, or Chubby Checker's traditional.
5. Talk to some friends who play instruments (or better yet, who might teach a musical instrument) and ask if you can borrow some of their sheet music from the era. Lots of sheet music can also be found on the Internet, with some searching. The trick is to photocopy key parts of each song (ones that would be recognizable without giving the song away too much...definitely not a part containing the title.) CUT OUT parts to the songs (one musical line to a half sheet.) The fun for your guests will be to try and figure out which popular 50s song is shown by only seeing a portion of the lyrics and musical notes. You can either post these snippets around the party on walls or you can make multiple copies (fitting a few on a page) and pass them out to your guests to enjoy trying to figure them out throughout the evening.
6. This is a great game that can passively last throughout the entire party. As described in a couple examples in the Decorations section (or simply draw them on paper), create several records to post throughout the party area. However, do not place all of them in easily found locations. Some of them can be in plain view (so that everyone can find a few) but most hide a bit out of site. On each of the records, write a famous 50s decade song along with its corresponding musical artist. Provide for each of your guests to have a copy of a list of all the songs to find. Next to each of the songs, they are to write the artist who wrote the song. Now, many of your guests might be able to write in several of the answers without having to find the

- records, which is fine. The goal is to be the first to fill out all the artists' names by either knowing them outright, finding the record or combinations thereof. You can also instruct them that all completed sheets can be turned in to you by a certain time, then a raffle can be held among all that are turned in for a prize. A third variation would be to offer a raffle ticket for each correct answer (the more they answer, the better chance they'll have to win a prize at the raffle.)
7. Hold a bubble gum blowing contest. Prizes can be given for the largest (making sure that everyone gets the same amount of gum in their mouths...watch for the sneaky ones...) or for the first person to be able to blow a bubble (give everyone a wrapped piece of gum and then say GO!) Prizes/awards can also be given for the most creative and for bubble tricks (how many bubbles someone can make with one piece of gum at a time, i.e. several bubbles right next to each other, etc.) Special recognition can also be given to those that can blow a bubble INSIDE another bubble. Be sure to use Bazooka bubble gum!
 8. Allowing for the space, hold a dance competition! A real Sock Hop! Remember, all entries must be PARTNERS. There are a variety of ways to hold one. You could have everyone dancing at once (less risky for the participants where you'll probably get the most participation) with a judge(s) either silently selecting the winners or eliminating the losers one by one until a single couple remained. If you choose the latter, make sure that you give everyone a change to dance for at least one song to 'get in the groove' sort to speak and feel like they at least lasted a song! For a bolder crowd, you could have each couple dance alone for all to see (choosing a single judge or judging panel, or having the crowd vote.) For added fun, give each couple a piece of paper to pin on their backs with their number! If sticking close to a GREASE theme, put up signs saying that National Bandstand will be sponsoring it. You could even have an outgoing friend/volunteer/family member who walks around as the flashy host of the show from the movie. This person could also be videotaping the competition (offering these tapes as thank you gifts for those that attended the party.) If this was held as a fundraiser, these tapes could also be sold along with other footage from the event.
 9. This idea was a true toss-up to see if I was going to put it under Children or Adults! It's amazing what adults will do to have fun...so I put it here! Depending on the guest list, divide the party into large

- groups. Give the assignment for each team to lip-sync one song from the movie *GREASE*. You'll need to have prepared several copies of the soundtrack (get a friend to burn the CDs) ahead of time as well as gather all the CD players you can - enough for each group to have a CD and something to play it on. Allow each group 15 minutes to pull it together (although, depending on your group, you can decide exactly how long to give them.) Just remember, it is going to take some time to watch them all! Give awards for originality and creativity among other categories. If only two groups, then just allow each group to see each other's skit. You can either let them choose any song from the movie or let them draw it from a hat (showing them in the order of the movie.) You could also assign the songs to different groups if you feel this would go over easier (although, when it comes to getting a song they don't want to do, it's much easier to swallow when you've drawn it from a hat than when the host/hostess of the decided it for you...) You could also divide the guests into men and women, giving the women Sandra Dee and the men *Grease* Lightening. For REAL daring guests, switch that and allow the guests to play opposites!
10. Limbo! Get your hands on some great limb music like the Limbo Rock. At first, you can have fun allowing guests to 'cheat' - however, once the group whittles down, make sure you keep to the rules - head completely back, no tilting, also known as 'limbo cheating.' Also, make sure that those holding the poles are impartial and keep the pole steady (that is, if you do not have a limbo pole set...) For poles you can use PVC pipes painted to look like bamboo, actual bamboo or wooden doweling. These can also be decorated with streamers. For those advanced 'limboers,' instruct them that they must go BACKWARDS!

Miscellaneous

The following are ideas that don't nicely fit into any of the above categories, but ones that I wanted to make sure were kept in.

- 1 For a fun 'sock hop' feel, instruct all your guests to come wearing only socks on their feet - shoes can be collected at the door, just make sure that the women bring a pair of socks. A contest can be held for different categories of socks (i.e. funniest, grossest, etc.)
- 2 If you really want to go all out with the high school theme or GREASE, try some of these
 - a. Have a school picture section (like they do at the beginning of the school year)
 - b. Give everyone class schedules
 - c. Get some photos of some of the parents (if a children's party) and put them on a single page for teachers of the school.
 - d. Ask those who would be willing (adults) to bring in some of their high school pictures from the 50s and 60s - these are a hoot and look great on a big sheet of poster board. Your guests will have a great time matching the photos to the people in the room.
 - e. Hang a big sign saying CAFETERIA over the food area.
 - f. Hang a big sign saying that there is going to be a big pep rally right after school (you can even make pep rally posters like "Crush the Bears!")
 - g. If you have arranged seating, set each table up like different classes (i.e. Home Ec, Woodshop, English, Pre-Algebra, etc.)
- 3 Some possible gift bag insertion ideas: music CDs of 50s music or the GREASE soundtrack (the least expensive way to do this is to find a friend with a CD burner so that you can burn your own copies for your guests), scarves, silly putty, any of the candy listed in Idea #7 in Decorations, black combs (for boys), comic books, lone ranger masks, yo-yos, silly putty, paddleballs, pinwheels, fuzzy dice, sunglasses, pearl necklaces (for girls), car

key chains, boxes of crackerjacks, jump ropes, jacks, anything Mr. Potato Head, bubbles, and finger traps (Don't forget that you can use the gift bags as part of your decorations!)

- 4 If you chose to go with more of the Drive-In Movie theme, give the party gifts/goodies in popcorn bags!
- 5 For some fun prizes for any game you can find amazing vintage stuff on e-bay. Look around for those that are up for bidding, but ones that aren't selling very well. Chances are you can win the auction and not spend very much at all. What's great about this is that these can be initially purchased as decorations, then given out as the party progresses.
- 6 When taking photos, try purchasing some black and white film. And, for all you scrap bookers out there, create a 'yearbook' of the event, chronicling all the events and showing who came to have a great time. You can either make up the name of the high school, or use one relevant to your guests. Be sure to include a year somewhere in the 50's decade. There are a couple of things you can then do with it. You could either present it to the guest of honor once completed...or...you could assemble it and make photocopies, one for each guest. Copy places have very inexpensive ways to bind small books and pamphlets. Have them bound and give one to each of the guests. THE BEST PART, though, is allowing each of the guests SIGN each others' yearbooks, reminding everyone of the great time they had at the party!
- 7 Teach everyone the Bunny Hop, Mashed Potato, the Twist, the Stroll, the Train, the Bop, the Chicken Dance (for those that don't know it...) and kids love SHOUT! In larger cities you can find dancers for hire who will come to your party and teach these dances in case you might be a little 'rusty.'
- 8 If you want to get ambitious with the music, coordinate the songs to change by decade. For example, only play the songs from 1950 for the first 20 minutes. Then, switch to songs from 1951 and so on. Over the music source (i.e. Jukebox, stereo, etc.) put up a giant poster telling everyone what year is currently playing. You can either do the footwork yourself by collecting the music and burning your own CDs...or you can

purchase the Billboard collections. Each CD is for a different decade!

- 9 For your Dance/Sock Hop, add a balloon net hung from your ceiling. They are designed so that when you pull the string, the net opens and drops all the balloons on the guests dancing! They can be purchased at most party supply stores.
- 10 Have different 'Elvis Spottings!' At different times during the party, have someone appear in different places dressed as Elvis. At the end of the evening, let your guests see how many spottings they were able to make. This can also be done with multiple images of Elvis hidden throughout the party area. At the conclusion of the evening, post a list of all the locations and award the winner of who found the most Elvis pictures.
- 11 For a real high school feel, set it up like a Prom in the 1950s. Have a voting for Prom King and Queen (vote on a couple) and crown them with paper (or nicer...) crowns purchased at a local party store. You could also award the King and Queen to the couple who scores the highest points, etc. during your games and activities you've planned. They could also be chosen from the winners of the dance contest. Allow them a solo dance to an old 50s love song for all to see.
- 12 This is a very fun idea and can be used in a lot of different ways. If you were able to borrow someone's fixed up 50s car, try something like this. Get your hands on different keys (other parents car keys that are there - making sure that they would know their own car key if they saw it so that you make sure they get it back ☺) At the end of the party, each participant or winners of different games gets to pick one of the car keys you provide in a bowl (one of them being the key to the old car.) You could have it so that the more games they win, the more chances they'll have to pick keys. Once everyone has their appropriate keys, each one gets to test to see if their key opens the car. The one who chose the right key wins a grand prize! (Make sure to NOT give the keys out to the children except at the end during this game...kids have the slipperiest fingers...)

What Year Was That Anyway?

Can you put the following musical hit songs in the order they were released?
Each one came out in a different year during the 1950s (1950-1959).
Remember, 'Rock and Roll' as we know it didn't really begin until around 1955!

- _____ **Whole Lot of Shakin' Going On / Jerry Lee Lewis**
- _____ **Unforgettable / Nat King Cole**
- _____ **Mr. Sandman / Chordettes**
- _____ **Why Do Fools Fall In Love? / Diamonds**
- _____ **Bewitched / Doris Day**
- _____ **Rock Around The Clock / Bill Haley and the Comets**
- _____ **Charlie Brown / Coasters**
- _____ **The Doggie in the Window / Patti Page**
- _____ **Johnny B. Goode / Chuck Berry**
- _____ **Two Tickets to Broadway / Dinah Shore**



What Year Was That Anyway?

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- | | |
|------|---|
| 1957 | Whole Lot of Shakin' Going On / Jerry Lee Lewis |
| 1952 | Unforgettable / Nat King Cole |
| 1954 | Mr. Sandman / Chordettes |
| 1956 | Why Do Fools Fall In Love? / Diamonds |
| 1950 | Bewitched / Doris Day |
| 1955 | Rock Around The Clock / Bill Haley and the Comets |
| 1959 | Charlie Brown / Coasters |
| 1953 | The Doggie in the Window / Patti Page |
| 1958 | Johnny B. Goode / Chuck Berry |
| 1951 | Two Tickets to Broadway / Dinah Shore |



50th Birthday and Anniversary Ideas

The following is a list of ideas to help celebrate someone's 50th...anything!

- Have the person/couple receive a postcard from all 50 states! This is an amazing idea - takes some time, but the payoff is amazing! Using your computer or other 'mass producing' way, create 50 postcards - each one with a message from a different state (i.e. "Alabama wishes Carol Green a Happy Birthday" or "The State of Ohio wants to congratulate Bill and Linda on their 50 years of marriage!" etc.) On each of these postcards, put the recipients address on BOTH the to and from sections. Place a standard postcard stamp on each of these state postcards. At the US Post Office website (USPS.org), get an address for one post office in each of the 50 states. Write each of these addresses on a separate, regular sized envelope (that will hold a standard 8 ½ " x 11" tri-folded paper) in the TO section. In the upper left of these envelopes (the FROM portion) write YOUR address. Now, insert each state postcard into its respective state envelope. BEFORE YOU SEAL THEM...you'll need to insert a small note (you can do these on the computer and make multiple copies) telling the post office that you'd like them to postmark the enclosed stamped postcard at their office. Once each state envelope has inside of it the note and corresponding state postcard (WITH postage), you can seal the envelope. Put on the appropriate postage (37 cents) and mail it out. These 50 letters will be mailed to 50 different post offices across the country. Each post office will open your large envelope, read your instructions, remove the stamped postcard you've inserted and mail it to your loved one(s) from that post office. THE RESULT - The person/couple will receive, over several weeks, different postcards from all over the country. They will look SOOO forward to going to get the mail each day to see what states have arrived. For best results, do not tell them who sent them...let them be surprised and wonder!
- Anyone who has been around long enough to celebrate a 50th ANYTHING has been able to have a large impact a great many people

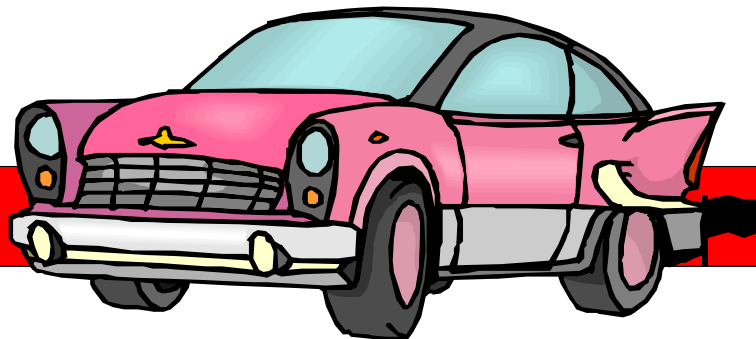
around them. Purchase a blank book at your local bookstore and let the loved ones surrounding them come up with 50 ways that person/couple has had an impact on their lives. Ideally, it would be great to have 50 people sign the book, each taking up a single page (or two pages...as long as everyone has the same.) However, if this 50 figure would be too challenging to hit, then let those that you DO have express 50 things BETWEEN them all.

- Use the number 50 in gift giving (i.e. 50 pieces of their favorite candy, 50 pennies/nickels/dimes/quarters, etc.)
- For a cake - bake 50 cupcakes! Arrange them on the table such that they spell out a giant 50!
- If you are choosing to do a collage of pictures for the person/couple, break it up into decades (1970s, 80s, etc.) In this respect, you can also insert items and images of what was going on in the news at that time (i.e. world news/leaders, sports, movies, etc.) These look great on different sheets of poster board or foam core board. You might consider also NOT placing these all next to each other...spread them around a bit so that your guests will enjoy finding them in different places.
- Let the person/couple choose the music for the party. If it's a wedding anniversary, chances are that you will not have any idea as to much of the music they liked/listened to while they were courting/dating. It would be fun to know and let your guests share the experience with the couple.
- As a fun gag gift (without celebrating the dark side of the birthday) put together a Getting Older Kit. Include items like a bus pass, piece of plastic to shield the hair from the rain, a car horn and other fun stuff like that. To make it special, tie a little note to each object as to what it can be used for. Putting these little bows on each one ensures that the recipient sees the love in the idea.



Who could ever forget the
TV shows of the 50's? How well do
YOU know them? Below are groups of characters
(first name only) from different 50's TV shows. Can you
name the show just by those names?

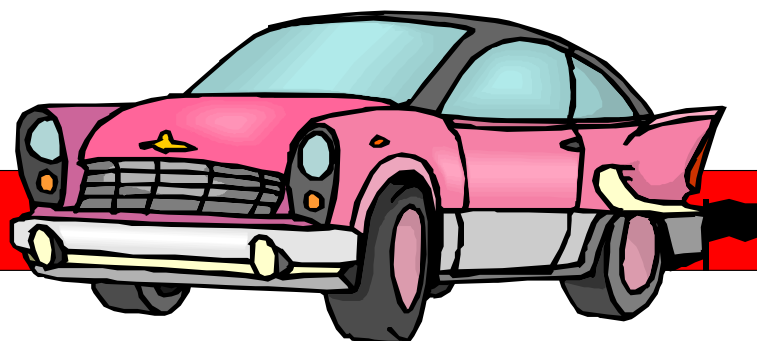
1. Ben, Joseph, Eric, Adam _____
2. George, Gracie, Blanche, Harry _____
3. Dennis, George, Henry, Alice, Martha _____
4. Bob, Nell, Ken, Gus, Hildy _____
5. Theodore, June, Ward, Wally _____
6. Ralph, Alice, Ed, Trixie _____
7. Matt, Kitty, Chester, Quint, Festus _____
8. Rowdy, Gil, Wishbone, Jim, Mushy, Joe _____
9. Lucas, Mark, Micah, Hattie, John, Eddie _____
10. Rusty, Rip, Randy _____





Music can change a lot from the beginning of a decade to the end of one. Can you match up each song with the year it was released?

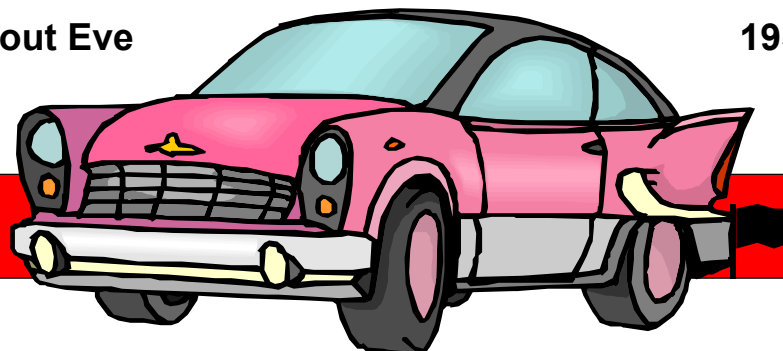
Hound Dog/Don't Be Cruel / Elvis Presley	1950
Unforgettable / Nat King Cole	1951
It's All in the Game / Tommy Edwards	1952
White Christmas / Bing Crosby	1953
Mack the Knife / Bobby Darin	1954
Come On-a My House / Rosemary Clooney	1955
Rock Around the Clock / Bill Haley & His Comets	1956
You, You, You / Ames Brothers	1957
Love Letters in the Sand / Pat Boone	1958
That's Amore / Dean Martin	1959





Match the list of
movies on the left with the year
that each won an Oscar for Best Picture
on the right.

From Here to Eternity	1950
The Bridge on the River Kwai	1951
On the Waterfront	1952
Ben-Hur	1953
Gigi	1954
The Greatest Show on Earth	1955
Marty	1956
An American In Paris	1957
Around the World in 80 Days	1958
All About Eve	1959





Below is a list of several
music bands and artists from the 50's.
Each number represents exactly one unique
letter of the alphabet. Can you figure out all of the
bands and artists?
(Here are a few starter hints: E = 18, I = 20, N = 14, S = 9)

16 4 5 16 17 10 18 23 23 25

10 5 1 1 25 4 7 21 21 25

22 18 23 23 25 16 7 2 7

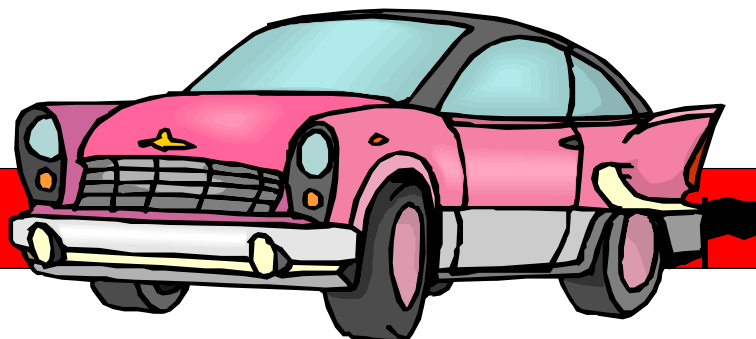
18 21 24 20 9

22 6 15 10 7 7 14 18

21 20 15 15 21 18 23 20 16 4 6 23 1

22 6 5 21 6 14 17 6

15 4 18 18 24 18 23 21 25 10 23 7 15 4 18 23 9





Below are five groups of letters.
Hidden with each are three different Fifties
themed icons. Hints for two are provided below each
group. The remaining letters will reveal the third.
The letters are NOT scrambled.

Example: Horse and Chicken – H C O H R I C K S E E N

PBOONOKDAOLRENZESANKAIWRATR

A western TV show and where the US sent their troops

JTWOIJLSAMEIEPGSHHTMDCZCEAORATNHNYYE

Rod Serling took us there and a rebel.

CLGHOUADCSZKIBSELRIRLYEA

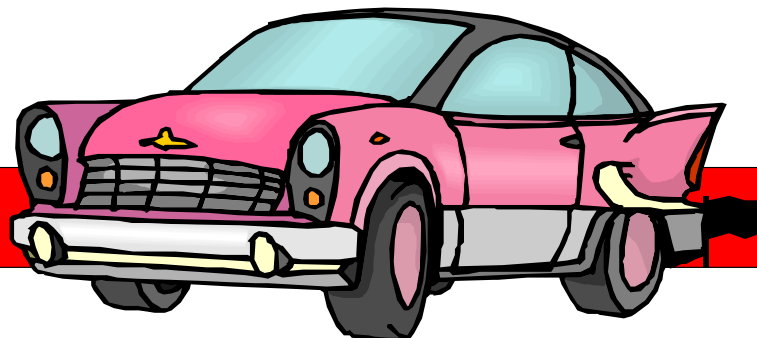
A Japanese movie monster and rescue dog.

JEELRDONRSEYURLLANLEEIGLVEWAEINRS

Tonto's companion and he had a really great 'shew'

DBBISEUDANDVEEYYRHOLLANLDY

This park opened and we left it to this little boy and animal.



1950's Answers

Oscar Movies – All About Eve (1950), An American In Paris (1951) The Greatest Show On Earth (1952), From Here to Eternity (1953), On the Waterfront (1954), Marty (1955), Around the World in 80 Days (1956), The Bridge on the River Kwai (1957), Gigi (1958), Ben-Hur (1959)

TV Characters

1. Bonanza – Ben, Joseph, Eric, Adam
2. The Burns and Allen Show – George, Gracie, Blanche, Harry
3. Dennis the Menace – Dennis, George, Henry, Alice, Martha
4. My Friend Flicka – Bob, Nell, Ken, Gus, Hildy
5. Leave It To Beaver – Theodore, June, Ward, Wally
6. The Honeymooners – Ralph, Alice, Ed, Trixie
7. Gunsmoke – Matt, Kitty, Chester, Quint, Festus
8. Rawhide – Rowdy, Gil, Wishbone, Jim, Mushy, Joe
9. The Rifleman – Lucas, Mark, Micah, Hattie, John, Eddie
10. Rin Tin Tin – Rusty, Rip, Randy

Mystery Music

Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly, Perry Como, Elvis, Pat Boone, Little Richard, Paul Anka, The Everly Brothers

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
6	10	16	1	18	13	19	4	20	26	17	21	2

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
14	7	22	11	23	9	15	5	24	12	8	25	3

Word Overlap

1. Bonanza, Korean War – Poodle Skirt
2. Twilight Zone, James Dean – Joseph McCarthy
3. Godzilla, Lassie – Chuck Berry
4. Lone Ranger, Ed Sullivan – Jerry Lee Lewis
5. Disneyland, Beaver – Buddy Holly

Songs and Years:

1950	White Christmas	Bing Crosby
1951	Come On-a My House	Rosemary Clooney
1952	Unforgettable	Nat King Cole
1953	You, You, You	Ames Brothers
1954	That's Amore	Dean Martin

1955	Rock Around the Clock	Bill Haley & His Comets
1956	Hound Dog/Don't Be Cruel	Elvis Presley
1957	Love Letters in the Sand	Pat Boone
1958	It's All in the Game	Tommy Edwards
1959	Mack the Knife	Bobby Darin