



STUDY GUIDE FOR SQUEAKY CLEAN'S PROGRAM "BIG 80s"

"BIG 80s" is a fast-paced overview of the decade when technology developed for business, universities and the military was turned into consumer products that found their way into nearly every American home.

TECHNOLOGY: THE USE OF SCIENCE TO INVENT USEFUL THINGS

The program combines live musical performances of 1980s music with brief "commercials," presenting various aspects of new technology that changed life in the 1980s.

ABOUT THE SHOW

BIG 80s features live performances of the hits from the era combined with a multimedia overview of the decade, with a special focus on the role of technology in changing everyday life.

- Pre Show/Introduction: a selection of early MTV videos; "Big Brother/Max Headroom" and 1984 surveillance
- Technology commercial: "1980s Technology: We're Moving In... We're Taking Over"
- Song: *What I Like About You* (BIG things from the 1980s)
- Technology commercial: the computer comes home, Bill Gates and Steve Jobs, early years of the World Wide Web and E-mail
- Song: *Material Girl* (greed/excess/conspicuous consumption)



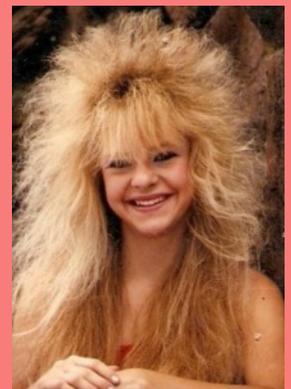
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squeakycleanband.com

- Technology commercial: Computers and CGI change moviemaking
- Song: *Ghostbusters* (thrill and chills in 1980s movies)
- Technology commercial: computer chips in toys; video games, early game consoles
- Song: *Girls Just Wanna Have Fun* (popular 1980s toys, many of which utilize technology)
- Song: *We Will Rock You* (1980s metal bands)
- Technology commercial: innovations in 1980s American cars, including on-board computers; invention of minivan and sports-utility vehicle (SUV)
- Song: *Motorman* (1980s car commercials)
- Technology commercial: instant replay in sports, Jumbotron; ESPN
- Song: *Eye of the Tiger* (memorable sports moments from the 1980s)
- Technology commercial: cable TV begins to replace broadcast TV, debut of MTV
- Song: *Thriller* (Michael Jackson's influential video and parodies)
- Technology commercial: Introduction of camcorder, early development of digital camera
- Song: *I've Had The Time of My Life* (fashion disasters)
- Song: *Don't Stop Believin'* (noteworthy accomplishments)

STAFF AND FACULTY PHOTOS

We offer schools the opportunity to send us JPEG photos of staff members as they appeared in the 1980s. The photos are shown onscreen while we perform *I've Had The Time of My Life*. We reveal the identity of the photo subject after a few seconds for audience speculation.



EXCERPTS FROM NEW YORK STATE LEARNING STANDARDS FOR TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

Full text at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/cte/technology/documents/techtsta5.pdf>

History and Evolution of Technology

Key idea: Technology has been the driving force in the evolution of society from an agricultural to an industrial to an information base.

Students will identify technological developments that have significantly accelerated human progress; describe how new technologies have evolved as a result of combining existing technologies

Computer Technology

Key idea: Computers, as tools for design, modeling, information processing, communication, and system control, have greatly increased human productivity and knowledge.

Impacts of Technology

Key idea: Technology can have positive and negative impacts on individuals, society, and the environment and humans have the capability and responsibility to constrain or promote technological development.

SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES:

- Students will reflect on the electronic devices that are part of their everyday lives and research if these devices existed in the 1980s and, if so, how they differed in size and capability. Particular emphasis can be placed on size, battery/power consumption and graphics.
- So much of contemporary life takes place online. In the proto-Internet world of the 1980s, how was life different? How did people accomplish tasks that are now dependent on being online?
- Has access to the Internet made us better informed citizens? What were the trusted sources on information in the 1980s? What sources can be trusted today? Is there such a thing as “too much information?”
- Computer graphics (CGI) are an important part of contemporary film making. How were special effects created before computers? How did the content of movies change once events no longer had to be staged in front of a camera?
- MIDI technology, which enables computers to make musical sounds, first came into use in the 1980s. How has technology changed the sound of popular music? How has easy access to low cost home recording technology and YouTube transformed the way new pop stars are created?
- How did young people connect with each other before the invention of social media? What new forms of social interaction were enabled by social media? Are these good or bad?
- How did the introduction of “on demand” video services change the nature of television watching? What new technologies enable “cord cutting?” What kinds of television programming are still viewed in real time? What is the future of what was once called “broadcasting?”



RESOURCES

Books:

- Camardella, Michele L. *America in the 1980s (Decades of American History)* New York: Facts On File, 2005.
- Editors of People Magazine *People: Celebrate the 80's* New York: People, 2008
- Ehrman, John *The Eighties: America in the Age of Reagan* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005
- Majewski, Lori and Jonathan Bernstein *Mad World: An Oral History of New Wave Artists and Songs That Defined the 1980s* New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2014
- The New York Times and William Grimes *New York Times: The Times of the Eighties: The Culture, Politics, and Personalities that Shaped the Decade* New York: Black Dog and Leventhal, 2013.
- Rettenmund, Matthew *Totally Awesome 80s: A Lexicon of the Music, Videos, Movies, TV Shows, Stars, and Trends of that Decadent Decade* New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1996.

Sirota, David *Back to Our Future: How the 1980s Explain the World We Live in Now--Our Culture, Our Politics, Our Everything* New York: Ballantine Books, 2011

Troy, Gil and Vincent J. Cannato *Living in the Eighties (Viewpoints on American Culture)* London: Oxford University Press, 2009

Films: David Sirota's list of Five '80s Flicks That Explain How the '80s Still Define Our World (from his book, listed above)

Back To Our Future posits that the 1980s--and specifically 1980s pop culture--frames the way we think about major issues today. The decade is the lens through which we see our world...

1. Ghostbusters (1984): Peter Venkman, Ray Stantz, Egon Spengler, and Winston Zeddemore seem like happy-go-lucky guys, but these are cold, hard military contractors... the Ghostbusters were providing 1980s audiences with a cinematic version of what would later become the ...privatize-everything narrative of the twenty-first century.

2. Die Hard (1988): The 1980s was setting the stage for the rise of anti-government politics today...In one memorable scene, McClane is yelling at one police lieutenant that the government has become "part of the problem."

3. Rambo: First Blood Part II (1985): "Sir, do we get to win this time?"...The question was a direct rip-off of Ronald Reagan's insistence that when it came to the loss in Vietnam, America had been too "afraid to let them win"--them, of course, being the troops.



4. Rocky III (1982): ...The Italian Stallion could see only two kinds of black people—on one side the suave, smooth, post-racial Apollo Creed, and on the other side the enraged, animalistic Clubber Lang. Rocky thus gravitated to the former, and reflexively feared the latter, essentially summarizing twenty-first-century White America's often over-simplistic and bigoted attitudes toward the black community today.

5. The Big Chill (1983): ... The 1980s-created narrative of the Bad Sixties can still be found in everything from national Tea Party protests to never-ending culture-war battles on local school boards. The message is always the same: If only America can emulate the Big Chillers and get past its Sixties immaturity and liberalism, everything will be A-okay.

Websites:

History Channel the 1980s <http://www.history.com/topics/1980s>

Kids of the 80s <http://www.kidsofthe80s.com/>

Like Totally 80s <http://www.liketotally80s.com/>

Remembering the 1980s - Hold On, Was It Really Like That? <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/remembering-the-1980s-hold-on-was-it-really-like-that/>

The 80s Server <http://www.80s.com/>

