

Units 5 Reading

Making music

Many teenagers dream of having a hit single and becoming a famous musician but Rihanna made her dream come true. By the time she was seventeen, she had released her first album and had an international smash hit with her first single *Pon de Replay*. Today she is a successful singer with fans all over the world.

Rihanna was born Robyn Rihanna Fenty in 1988 in Saint Michael, Barbados. She grew up there with her two younger brothers. As a child, she loved singing. She formed her first group with two friends from secondary school when she was just fifteen. In 2004 friends introduced the group to American record producer Evan Rogers, who was on holiday in Barbados. Rogers thought Rihanna could be a big star in America so she moved there aged sixteen to pursue her music career while she finished school.

Rihanna lived with Rogers and his wife and recorded a demo of four songs during the school holidays. As a result of the demo, she signed up with Def Jam Recordings and started work on her first album, *Music of the Sun*. It came out in 2005 and got into the top ten. Over 69,000 copies of the album were sold in the first week alone. It went on to sell over two million copies worldwide and Rihanna quickly became a big star. Her second album, *A Girl Like Me*, came out a year later and included the song *SOS*, which was her first number one hit in America.

In 2007 Rihanna brought out her third album, *Good Girl Gone Bad*, which had more dance tracks than the first two albums. It featured five top ten hits, including three number one singles in America and the worldwide hit *Don't Stop the Music*. The album was nominated for nine Grammy Awards and won Best Rap Sung Collaboration for the song *Umbrella*, which she sang with rapper Jay-Z. Her fourth album, *Rated R*, came out in 2009, followed by her fifth album, *Loud*, in 2010. These featured five international hit singles.

Rihanna has sold more than fifteen million albums and forty-five million singles worldwide, and had nine number one singles between 2005 and 2010, the most of any artist at the same time. However, she manages to find time for her charity work, too. She has performed in several concerts to raise money for charity and in 2006 she created her Believe Foundation to help sick children. She also took part in Gucci's campaign to raise funds for children in Africa.

1) Read the text. Choose the correct answer.

- 1 Rihanna released her first album
 - a before she was seventeen.
 - b after her seventeenth birthday.
 - c after her first single.
- 2 She moved to America
 - a in order to meet the record producer Evan Rogers.
 - b in order to form her first music group.
 - c when she was sixteen years old.
- 3 Which statement is not true about her first album?
 - a It became a hit and got into the top ten.
 - b She made it during the school holidays.
 - c It sold over two million copies all over the world.

4 Rihanna's song *Umbrella*

- was nominated for an award but didn't win.
- was from the album *Good Girl Gone Bad*.
- was written by the rap artist Jay-Z.

5 The Believe Foundation was created by Rihanna

- to raise money for children in Africa.
- to organise concerts to raise money.
- to help children with health problems.

2) Read the text again. Tick (✓) true or cross (✗) false.

- Rihanna's first single was a hit only in America.
- There were three other singers in the first group she was in.
- Rihanna didn't make the demo during term time.
- Her third album was very similar to the first two albums.
- Between 2005 and 2010 Rihanna had more number one hits than any other singer at that time.