

Unit 8: One love

Instructions: Read the text below. Use the word in capitals at the end of some of the lines to form a word that fits in the gap in the same line.

Why is Bob Marley such an important figure in popular music? (1) _____ perhaps **GLOBAL**
only Elvis, the Beatles and Michael Jackson are bigger names. Marley was not the first
person to introduce reggae to a wider audience outside the West Indies, but he remains
the only global reggae superstar. Yet, (2) _____ the artists above, Marley and his music **LIKE**
represent more than just great pop. Indeed, in many developing countries, he is
celebrated as some kind of saviour, a symbol of hope. To understand why this is, one
needs to know more about the man and his background.

This is where the (3) _____, Marley, fascinates, even if it does not provide all the **DOCUMENT**
answers. Containing a lot of previously unseen footage – interviews, performances,
recording sessions – the film provides an insight into the mind and motivation of a
musician whose life was cut (4) _____ short: Marley died of cancer in 1981 aged 36. **TRAGIC**

Born in a poor ghetto of Kingston, Jamaica, Marley had a passion for music and began
recording at a young age, his first hit coming when he was only eighteen. His difficult
environment instilled in him a keen sense of social justice, which came to be expressed in
his music. His mixed-race origins taught him what it felt like to be an (5) _____: his **OUTSIDE**
father was a white Jamaican who worked as a British marine officer; his mother a black
Jamaican who married at eighteen.

His father was (6) _____ present, travelling as he did for his work, and died when Bob **RARE**
was only ten years old. Did this absence have any bearing on Marley's behaviour towards
his own children, of whom there were eleven in all? In the film, his daughter, Cedella, talks
about her difficulty in getting her father to notice her. But neither she, nor any others in
the family, has a bad word to say about him. There is no sense that he did not have time for
them; simply that he was (7) _____, because Marley's duty was first and foremost to **PRIORITIZE**
music and its power to effect change.

Shortly after his marriage to Rita Anderson in 1966, Marley became a Rastafarian, a faith that champions the right of black Africans taken into slavery in the West Indies to return one day to Africa. So while themes of social (8) _____ and hardship in the shanty towns of Kingston, Jamaica characterize early songs like *Trenchtown Rock* and *I Shot the Sheriff*, it is the theme of a displaced people that is dominant in later songs: *Exodus* and *Redemption Song*.

JUSTICE

But whether the songs deal with injustice or with dislocation, they still contain the sentiments of unity and love that run through all his work. Marley himself maintained that, 'People want to listen to a message. This could be passed through me or anybody. I am not a leader, but a

(9) _____.' This is too modest. Marley experienced genuine hardship and even put his life on the line for justice. In 1976, he took great risks to organize a free concert in his hometown of Kingston called 'Smile Jamaica'. The concert was intended to unite the warring political factions in Jamaica, but while preparing for it, he was the victim of an assassination attempt that left him wounded.

MESSAGE

A heartfelt message and an appeal to people in hardship are certainly a key to Marley's enduring status as a songwriter. But what really strikes you watching this film is the magic of his performances. The music sounds as fresh as it was when it was first recorded and Marley himself is lost in it, living each note as he spins and jumps (10) _____ around the stage.

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