



Released as a single in March 1970, 'Let It Be' sounded as if it had been deliberately recorded as the Beatles' swansong. However, it was recorded in January 1969. No one had any idea that it was going to be the last single.

Paul had written 'Let it Be' out of his general feelings of despair, as the Beatles began to fall apart at the seams. The documentary had started out as a record of a rehearsal followed by a live performance, but it was to become a record of the group's death throes.

By now, John preferred to spend his time with Yoko whose presence around the studio was not welcomed by everyone. George had already quit the group once and was discouraged at the way his songs were being instantly rejected. Even Ringo had taken off for a short holiday during the recording of the White Album when the atmosphere got really bad.

Paul was clearly trying to take over the role of leader because he felt that without organization and discipline nothing would be achieved. "I think we've been very negative since Mr Epstein passed away," Paul can be heard saying in the film. "We haven't been positive. That's why all of us in turn have been sick of the group. There's nothing positive in it. It's a bit of a drag. The only way for it not to be a bit of a drag is for the four of us to think – should we make it positive or should we forget it?"

Although Paul's role may have been necessary, it didn't make him popular. The others began to resent his role as organiser, 'Let It Be' was written by Paul as a response to all this pressure: "I wrote it when all those business problems started to get me down," he said. "I really was passing through my 'hour of darkness' and writing the song was my way of exorcizing the ghosts." Written in the style of modern hymn, the religious feeling was heightened by the invocation of 'mother Mary' which appeared to be a reference to the Virgin Mary but was in fact a reference to Paul's own mother, who he was imagining being there and offering support.

"I used to lie in bed and wonder what was going on and feel quite paranoid," Paul revealed. "I had a dream one night about my mother. She had died when I was 14, so I hadn't heard from her in quite a while and it was very good. It gave me some strength. In my darkest hour, mother Mary had come to me"

1) Choose the best answer.

- a. When was 'Let It Be' released?
- b. Why had Paul written the song?
- c. Who interfered in the group dynamic?
- d. What role did Paul assume?
- e. How did the other members of the group feel about Paul's new role?
- f. Who helped Paul in his darkest hour?

2) Some words refer to music while some others refer to negative experiences. Can you drag them into their right group?

Music	Negative experiences

3. Match these words on the left with their meanings on the right.

Death throes	a) Something makes you feel unhappy or depressed.
It's a bit of drag	b) A really bad moment you're going through.
Exorcizing ghosts/demons	c) Something that is not convenient and is boring or unpleasant.
To get me down	d) To remove the bad effects of a frightening or upsetting event.
Hour of darkness	e) The process of dying or ending in a very painful or unpleasant way.