Will a song **stand the test of time?**

What is it about a pop song that makes it **compelling** not only as **a hit single** when it's released, but for future generations as well? Take, for example, *Bohemian Rhapsody* by Queen. Is it the interesting **lyrics**, the **melodies** or the fascinating changes of **rhythm** that make it so popular? Much less **complicated**, on the **surface** at least, but no less successful is: *All You Need is Love* by the Beatles. The **sentiment** in its **catchy chorus** couldn't be simpler, and it is such an easy song to **sing along to**. Or is it the personality and quality of the singer or the band that **determine** whether the song will **engage** the listener or not? David Bowie's music is certainly **memorable** for those reasons; the colourful characters he created, such as Ziggy Stardust, only add to that.



Are great songs ones that you recognize as great the first time you **encounter** them, or are there some that you need to listen to several times before they have an effect? *Eleanor Rigby* by The Beatles is perhaps an example of one which you need to listen to carefully because of its complex lyrics (e.g.'wearing the face that she keeps in a jar by the door'), but also because it was such an original and different type of pop song at the time.



But whatever **criteria** you use to measure the greatness of a pop song (or any **genre** of music), one thing seems true for all of them: they have the ability to stand the test of time because people can **relate to** them and still see them as **relevant** decades after they were first written.

GLOSSARY

stand the test of time	If sth **stands the test of time**, it is remembered positively for a long time, or functions successfully for a long time.
compelling	that makes you pay attention to it because it is so interesting and exciting
hit	a popular and successful song, often called **a hit single**
lyrics	the words of a song
melody	a tune, especially the main tune in a piece of music written for several instruments or voices SYN **tune**
rhythm	a regular repeated pattern of sounds or movements
complicated	difficult to understand SYN **complex**; **complicate** *v*
surface	the outer appearance of a person, thing or situation; the qualities you see or notice that are not hidden
sentiment	a feeling or an opinion, especially one based on emotions
catchy	(of a tune or the words of a song) easy to remember
chorus	the part of a song that is repeated
sing along (to sth)	sing a song at the same time as listening to it
determine	discover the facts about sth or calculate sth exactly SYN **establish**; **determination** *n*
engage *formal*	succeed in attracting and keeping sb's attention and interest
memorable	worth remembering or easy to remember SYN **unforgettable**
encounter *formal*	meet sb unexpectedly **encounter** *n*
criteria *pl* (*sing* **criterion**)	the standards that you use when you make a decision or form an opinion about sb/sth
genre *formal*	a particular type or style of literature, art, film or music
relate to sth	feel able to understand sth
relevant	important and useful OPP **irrelevant**; **relevance** *n*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1 **Is the pronunciation of the underlined letters the same or different? Write *S* or *D*. Use the APP to help you.**

1 catchy chorus .....
2 relate engage .....
3 memorable relevant .....
4 relate surface .....
5 compelling melody .....
6 rhythm lyrics .....
7 genre engage .....
8 criteria single .....
9 genre engage .....
10 sentiment memorable .....

2 **Circle the words in the box which we usually associate with music.**

rhythm	compelling	tune	encounter	catchy	sing along
melody	chorus	criteria	hit single	lyrics	genre

3 **Answer the questions.**

1 What's the noun formed from ***determine***? .....
2 What's a synonym for ***complicated***? .....
3 What's the opposite of ***relevant***? .....
4 What's the singular form of ***criteria***? .....
5 What is the related noun for the verb ***encounter***? .....
6 What's a synonym for ***memorable***? .....

4 **Replace the underlined words with a word or phrase that keeps the same meaning.**

1 The song is very easy to remember. .....
2 He played a series of musical notes on the piano. .....
3 *One Direction* had a number of very successful songs in the 2010s. .....
4 I really like the bit of the song that gets repeated. .....
5 The words of the song are interesting. .....
6 This type of music is difficult to understand. .....
7 The band thinks it's important that young people are able to feel and understand the music. .....
8 I just love that regular repeated pattern of sound. .....

5 **Complete the sentences.**

1 Websites often choose the 'best' pop songs, but what are the _____ for selection?
2 I like the song because of the lyrics and the catchy _____ .
3 Marie likes pop, but classical is still her favourite music _____ .
4 I first _____ Hungarian folk music on a visit to Budapest five years ago.
5 Many protest songs were written about the Vietnam war, but they still seem just as _____ today, and many young people can still _____ to them.
6 Great performers have a natural ability to _____ their audiences.
7 The most _____ concert I've ever been to was in Edinburgh last year. It was amazing!
8 Many young people seem to see the _____ of music to their lives more than art or literature.
9 Music journalists often try to _____ what makes a great singer. Is it the qualities in their voice or their ability to convey a range of emotions?
10 On the _____ , a song may seem quite positive, but when you listen to the lyrics a few more times, it can sometimes reveal a deeper and more pessimistic meaning.

6 ABOUT YOU **Write answers to the questions, or talk to another student.**

1 Do you agree with the text about the features of a great song? .....
2 Is there anything else you think is important in a great pop song? .....
3 What attracts you the most? Is it: the melody? the rhythm? the lyrics? .....
4 Do you often sing along to pop songs in English? .....
5 Is the sentiment expressed in a song important? Why? .....
6 Can you think of several more pop songs that have stood the test of time? .....

TEST YOURSELF

LIVEWORKSHEETS