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Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

## **Bob Dylan song “changed the world”**

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**7 August, 2005**

## THE ARTICLE

### **Bob Dylan song "changed the world"**

**BNE:** The British magazine *Uncut* has declared the 1965 Bob Dylan song "Like A Rolling Stone" as the most revolutionary moment in popular Western culture over the past five decades. The magazine published a list of the 100 songs, movies, books and TV shows that "changed the world". Leading musicians, actors and industry experts voted in the poll. Dylan's influential song created a new generation of rock and punk rockers. Singer Patti Smith said: "Dylan's song got me through adolescence".

Elvis Presley's classic "Heartbreak Hotel" came second. Ex-Beatle Sir Paul McCartney voted for the song. He said: "It's the way (Presley) sings it as if he is singing from the depths of hell.... it's all so beautiful. Musically, it's perfect." The Beatles finished third with their 1963 hit "She Loves You". *Uncut* editor Allan Jones said the list had been a "massive undertaking". He also said many around the world might disagree with Dylan as number one. That may be true in Asia, Africa and South America, where people may have never heard of Dylan.

## WARM-UPS

**1. POLLS:** In pairs / groups, talk about polls. Are they popular in your country? What kind of polls do you like? How would you vote in these polls and why?

- Best ever song
- Best ever book
- Best ever movie
- Best ever TV show
- Best ever English teacher
- Most important world leader ever
- Most important leader of your country
- Most important invention
- Most important world event ever
- Best ever game

**2. WESTERN CULTURE:** How have American and British cultures affected you and your lifestyle? What American, British songs, books, movies, etc. do you listen to, read and watch? How do the songs, books and movies from these cultures compare with those from your own culture? Talk to several classmates. Change partners and talk about your findings.

**3. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*1965 / Bob Dylan / "Like a Rolling Stone" / revolutionary moments / Western culture / rock 'n' roll / adolescence / Elvis Presley / The Beatles / hell / world culture*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**4. CULTURE:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "culture". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**5. OPINIONS:** In pairs / groups, talk about how far you agree with the following opinions on Western popular culture:

- a. Western popular culture is easily the best in the world.
- b. Western cultures are too closed. Western people never accept other cultures.
- c. All of the greatest singers and movies are American or British.
- d. Japanese pop culture is more interesting than American pop culture.
- e. British popular culture is better than American popular culture.
- f. Western popular culture leads to a breakdown of traditional values.
- g. Probably 90 per cent of the world's population has never heard of Bob Dylan.
- h. Polls that decide the "best" of something are totally pointless.

**6. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A think Western popular culture is the most important in the world. Students B think not. Change partners often.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. Singer Bob Dylan recorded a new song called "Changed the world". | T / F |
| b. A Bob Dylan song was voted as a most important cultural event.   | T / F |
| c. People voted for over 100 Bob Dylan songs.                       | T / F |
| d. A Bob Dylan song helped another singer through her adolescence.  | T / F |
| e. Elvis Presley voted for Bob Dylan in the poll.                   | T / F |
| f. There were no Beatles songs in the top ten.                      | T / F |
| g. A magazine editor said the poll was a lot of work.               | T / F |
| h. Most people on other continents would have voted for Bob Dylan.  | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| a. declared    | bottom        |
| b. moment      | poll          |
| c. list        | pre-adulthood |
| d. influential | runner-up     |
| e. adolescence | announced     |
| f. came        | task          |
| g. second      | important     |
| h. depths      | huge          |
| i. massive     | finished      |
| j. undertaking | occasion      |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                                |                            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. the most revolutionary      | five decades               |
| b. over the past               | undertaking                |
| c. voted                       | adolescence                |
| d. Dylan's influential song    | disagree                   |
| e. Dylan's song got me through | never heard of Dylan       |
| f. Elvis Presley's             | moment                     |
| g. as if he is singing from    | classic "Heartbreak Hotel" |
| h. a massive                   | created a new generation   |
| i. many around the world might | in the poll                |
| j. people may have             | the depths of hell         |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

### Bob Dylan song "changed the world"

**BNE:** The British magazine *Uncut* has \_\_\_\_\_ the 1965 Bob Dylan song "Like A Rolling Stone" as the most revolutionary \_\_\_\_\_ in popular Western culture over the past five \_\_\_\_\_. The magazine published a \_\_\_\_\_ of the 100 songs, movies, books and TV \_\_\_\_\_ that "changed the world". Leading musicians, actors and industry experts \_\_\_\_\_ in the poll. Dylan's influential song created a new \_\_\_\_\_ of rock and punk rockers. Singer Patti Smith said: "Dylan's song got me through \_\_\_\_\_".

Elvis Presley's \_\_\_\_\_ "Heartbreak Hotel" came second. Ex-Beatle Sir Paul McCartney voted for the song. He said: "It's the \_\_\_\_\_ (Presley) sings it as if he is singing from the \_\_\_\_\_ of hell.... it's all so beautiful. Musically, it's \_\_\_\_\_." The Beatles finished third with their 1963 \_\_\_\_\_ "She Loves You". *Uncut* editor Allan Jones said the list had been a "\_\_\_\_\_ undertaking". He also said many around the world might \_\_\_\_\_ with Dylan as number one. That may be \_\_\_\_\_ in Asia, Africa and South America, where people may have never heard of Dylan.

shows  
moment  
generation  
list  
declared  
adolescence  
decades  
voted  
massive  
way  
perfect  
true  
classic  
hit  
depths  
disagree

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'change' and 'world'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "WESTERN CULTURE" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about Western culture.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- declared
- decades
- 100
- experts
- generation
- adolescence
- classic
- depths
- editor
- massive
- disagree
- Africa

## DISCUSSION

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What did you think when you read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. Do you agree with the headline?
- d. What did you know about Bob Dylan?
- e. What do you know about the song "Like A Rolling Stone"?
- f. What songs, movies, TV shows and books do you think have changed the world?
- g. How has your popular culture have changed the world?
- h. Which singer, actor, or writer from your country has changed your culture most?
- i. Did you need anything to get you through adolescence?
- j. What do you think of rock 'n' roll?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. Are Elvis Presley and The Beatles "everywhere" in your country?
- d. Which do you like better, American or British culture?
- e. What aspects of Western popular culture do you dislike?
- f. What can Britain and America learn from your culture?
- g. Are your favorite movies, songs and books from American/British culture or your own?
- h. Do you think Western culture has too much influence in your country?
- i. Are you interested in all world cultures?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

## SPEAKING

**CLASS POLL:** Write your top three choices in the poll below. Compare your choices with those of other students. Talk about why you made your three choices in that particular order. Try to persuade your partners to agree with your choices.

Write your choices for the **most influential / important** \_\_\_\_\_ of the past 50 years in each of the categories:

CATEGORY	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD
World leader			
Singer			
News channel			
Magazine			
World event			
Other			

After you have finished, take a class poll to decide on the overall winner in each category.

Discuss with your partner(s) what you think of the class poll results.

(In monolingual classes, this could be done / repeated for the most influential people / things / events in the students' own country.)



## LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### Bob Dylan song "changed the world"

**BNE:** The British magazine *Uncut* has \_\_\_\_\_ the 1965 Bob Dylan song "Like A Rolling Stone" as the most revolutionary \_\_\_\_\_ in popular Western culture over the past five decades. The magazine \_\_\_\_\_ a list of the 100 songs, movies, books and TV shows that "changed the world". \_\_\_\_\_ musicians, actors and industry experts voted in the poll. Dylan's \_\_\_\_\_ song created a new generation of rock and punk rockers. Singer Patti Smith said: "Dylan's song \_\_\_\_\_ adolescence".

Elvis Presley's \_\_\_\_\_ "Heartbreak Hotel" came second. Ex-Beatle Sir Paul McCartney voted for the song. He said: "It's the \_\_\_\_\_ (Presley) sings it as if he is singing from the \_\_\_\_\_ of hell.... it's all so beautiful. Musically, it's \_\_\_\_\_." The Beatles finished third with their 1963 hit "She Loves You". *Uncut* editor Allan Jones said the list had been a "\_\_\_\_\_ undertaking". He also said many around the world might disagree with Dylan as number one. That may be \_\_\_\_\_ in Asia, Africa and South America, where people may have never \_\_\_\_\_ of Dylan.

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on Bob Dylan. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. MY ADOLESCENCE:** Write an essay about your adolescence. Was it difficult? Did you have any angry feelings? Did any books, movies or songs have a big influence on you? Explain the main points of your essay to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

**4. MY LIST:** Make your own list of the things you like best and why. Choose between five and ten categories. Show your list to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all include similar things?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F      b. T      c. F      d. T      e. F      f. F      g. T      h. F

### SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| a. declared    | announced     |
| b. moment      | occasion      |
| c. list        | poll          |
| d. influential | important     |
| e. adolescence | pre-adulthood |
| f. came        | finished      |
| g. second      | runner-up     |
| h. depths      | bottom        |
| i. massive     | huge          |
| j. undertaking | task          |

### PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                |                            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. the most revolutionary      | moment                     |
| b. over the past               | five decades               |
| c. voted                       | in the poll                |
| d. Dylan's influential song    | created a new generation   |
| e. Dylan's song got me through | adolescence                |
| f. Elvis Presley's             | classic "Heartbreak Hotel" |
| g. as if he is singing from    | the depths of hell         |
| h. a massive                   | undertaking                |
| i. many around the world might | disagree                   |
| j. people may have             | never heard of Dylan       |

### GAP FILL:

#### Bob Dylan song "changed the world"

**BNE:** The British magazine *Uncut* has **declared** the 1965 Bob Dylan song "Like A Rolling Stone" as the most revolutionary **moment** in popular Western culture over the past five **decades**. The magazine published a **list** of the 100 songs, movies, books and TV **shows** that "changed the world". Leading musicians, actors and industry experts **voted** in the poll. Dylan's influential song created a new **generation** of rock and punk rockers. Singer Patti Smith said: "Dylan's song got me through **adolescence**".

Elvis Presley's **classic** "Heartbreak Hotel" came second. Ex-Beatle Sir Paul McCartney voted for the song. He said: "It's the **way** (Presley) sings it as if he is singing from the **depths** of hell.... it's all so beautiful. Musically, it's **perfect**." The Beatles finished third with their 1963 **hit** "She Loves You". *Uncut* editor Allan Jones said the list had been a "**massive** undertaking". He also said many around the world might **disagree** with Dylan as number one. That may be **true** in Asia, Africa and South America, where people may have never heard of Dylan.