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Bob Dylan song “changed the world”

URL: <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0508/050807-dylan.html>

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7 August, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Bob Dylan song "changed the world"

BNE: The 1965 Bob Dylan song "Like A Rolling Stone" has topped a poll of the most revolutionary moments in popular Western culture over the past five decades. The British magazine *Uncut* compiled the list to find the 100 songs, movies, books and TV shows that "changed the world". Leading musicians, actors and industry experts cast their votes in the poll. Dylan's influential track has been credited with changing the face of rock 'n' roll and spawning a new generation of rock and punk rockers. Singer Patti Smith said of Dylan's rousing anthem: "It got me through adolescence....If at that period you were indifferent, or mentally half-asleep, that song shocked you into existence. He was a mouthpiece for the energy of that time."

Elvis Presley's classic "Heartbreak Hotel" came in second. Ex-Beatle Sir Paul McCartney lauded the track, saying: "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". The top movie was Stanley Kubrick's 1971 disturbing film "A Clockwork Orange", which came fifth on the list. *Uncut* editor Allan Jones said: "This list has been a massive undertaking...What we have been left with is Dylan as the most seminal artistic statement of the last five decades - but I'm sure others will disagree." It is likely those in Africa, Asia and South America would express different preferences.

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 significant world event ever
- Best ever game

2. WESTERN CULTURE: How have American, British or other English-speaking Western cultures affected you and your lifestyle? What American, British... things do you listen to, read, 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 insular. 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 loose morals and 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. Rock 'n' roll changed Bob Dylan's face. 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. "Titanic" was voted as the most important film of the past 50 years. 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. compiled | endeavor |
| b. spawning | apathetic |
| c. rousing | commended |
| d. indifferent | stirring |
| e. mouthpiece | finished |
| f. came in | distressing |
| g. lauded | put together |
| h. disturbing | spokesperson |
| i. undertaking | influential |
| j. seminal | originating |

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

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. topped | through adolescence |
| b. industry experts cast | lauded the track |
| c. credited with | different preferences |
| d. It got me | their votes in the poll |
| e. a mouthpiece for the | a poll |
| f. Sir Paul McCartney | undertaking |
| g. as if he is singing from | energy of that time |
| h. a massive | artistic statement |
| i. the most seminal | changing the face of rock 'n' roll |
| j. express | 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 1965 Bob Dylan song "Like A Rolling Stone" has _____ a poll of the most revolutionary moments in popular Western culture over the past five decades. The British magazine *Uncut* _____ the list to find the 100 songs, movies, books and TV shows that "changed the world". _____ musicians, actors and industry experts _____ their votes in the poll. Dylan's influential track has been _____ with changing the face of rock 'n' roll and spawning a new generation of rock and punk rockers. Singer Patti Smith said of Dylan's rousing _____: "It got me through adolescence....If at that period you were indifferent, or mentally half-asleep, that song _____ you into existence. He was a _____ for the energy of that time."

Elvis Presley's classic "Heartbreak Hotel" _____ in second. Ex-Beatle Sir Paul McCartney _____ the track, saying: "It's the way (Presley) sings it as if he is singing from the depths of _____.... it's all so beautiful. Musically, it's perfect." The Beatles finished third with their 1963 hit "She Loves You". The top movie was Stanley Kubrick's 1971 _____ film "A Clockwork Orange", which came fifth on the list. *Uncut* editor Allan Jones said: "This list has been a _____ undertaking...What we have been left with is Dylan as the most _____ artistic statement of the last five decades - but I'm sure others will disagree." It is _____ those in Africa, Asia and South America would _____ different preferences.

leading
anthem
topped
mouthpiece
credited
shocked
compiled
cast
disturbing
express
hell
seminal
came
massive
likely
lauded

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:

- topped
- compiled
- cast
- credited
- anthem
- mouthpiece
- classic
- depths
- disturbing
- massive
- seminal
- express

DISCUSSION

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

- a. What were your initial thoughts on 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. What aspects of your popular culture have changed the world?
- h. Which singer, actor, or writer from your country has changed the face of your culture?
- 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. Were (Are) you an indifferent, half-asleep teenager?
- 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** _____ 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.

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Elvis Presley's _____ "Heartbreak Hotel" came in second. Ex-Beatle Sir Paul McCartney _____ the track, saying: "It's the way (Presley) sings it as if he is singing from the _____ of hell.... it's all so beautiful. Musically, it's perfect." The Beatles finished third with their 1963 hit "She Loves You". The top movie was Stanley Kubrick's 1971 _____ film "A Clockwork Orange", which came fifth on the list. *Uncut* editor Allan Jones said: "This list has been a massive _____...What we have been left with is Dylan as the most _____ artistic statement of the last five decades - but I'm sure others will disagree." It is likely those in Africa, Asia and South America would _____ different preferences.

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. F h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. compiled	put together
b. spawning	originating
c. rousing	stirring
d. indifferent	apathetic
e. mouthpiece	spokesperson
f. came in	finished
g. lauded	commended
h. disturbing	distressing
i. undertaking	endeavor
j. seminal	influential

PHRASE MATCH:

a. topped	a poll
b. industry experts cast	their votes in the poll
c. credited with	changing the face of rock 'n' roll
d. It got me	through adolescence
e. a mouthpiece for the	energy of that time
f. Sir Paul McCartney	lauded the track
g. as if he is singing from	the depths of hell
h. a massive	undertaking
i. the most seminal	artistic statement
j. express	different preferences

GAP FILL:

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Elvis Presley's classic "Heartbreak Hotel" **came** in second. Ex-Beatle Sir Paul McCartney **lauded** the track, saying: "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". The top movie was Stanley Kubrick's 1971 **disturbing** film "A Clockwork Orange", which came fifth on the list. *Uncut* editor Allan Jones said: "This list has been a **massive** undertaking...What we have been left with is Dylan as the most **seminal** artistic statement of the last five decades - but I'm sure others will disagree." It is **likely** those in Africa, Asia and South America would **express** different preferences.