Taylor Swift – superstar



Warm-up: talking about Taylor Swift Speaking Get into pairs and talk about Taylor Swift.

- 1. What have you heard about her?
- 2. Which of her songs do you know and like? Explain.
- 3. Would you buy expensive tickets for a show of hers? Why / why not?
- 4. What do you think makes her so popular?
- 5. Have you ever heard about the phenomena 'Swifties' and 'Swiftflation'?

Language in use Learning about messages in Taylor Swift's songs Read the text about Taylor Swift asking the young ge

Read the text about Taylor Swift asking the young generation to get engaged. Most prepositions have been removed. Complete the text by writing a suitable preposition for each gap (1–14) in the spaces provided. The first one (0) has been done for you.

In her early career, Taylor Swift gained millions of fans with love songs and romantic ballads. She did not speak of o her political ideas. In 2012, she made that clear. "I don't talk about politics because it might influence other people. And I don't think that I know enough yet life to be telling people who to vote

America great again"
- slogan of Trump in
2016
Senator: in the
US each state has
a senate (part of
parliament)

MAGA: "Make

bill: law

The first sign of a change happened 3 the fall of 2018 when rumours circulated that she was a big fan of MAGA and President Donald Trump. Shortly 4 that, she put an end 5 that rumour and entered the political battle an Instagram post criticising Senator Marsha Blackburn 7 her home state of Tennessee 8 having voted against the Violence Against Women Act as well as LGBTQ-friendly bills. [...] She went 9 to say, "I need to be right side of history."

In 2020, 11 the age of 30, her hit song *Only The Young* showed a new desire to speak 12 on the issues most important to her. In this song, she urges young people to get involved and calls out to them 13 passion about her concern 14 the escalating gun violence in America. At a time when many suggest that young people are politically apathetic, *Only The Young* is a powerful message that our democracy badly needs.

to escalate: to increase apathetic: not interested, not active ource: https://thefulcrum.us/Pop-Culture/Music-Poetry--Arts/only-the-young-taylo

2 c Listening

Improving your English with Taylor Swift's song Only The Young – part I

Watch the official video of her song Only The Young on a streaming platform and then highlight the political statements in the lyrics below.



	It keeps me awake	They think that it's over	
	The look on your face	But it's just begun	30
	The moment you heard the news		
	You're screaming inside	Chorus:	
5	And frozen in time	Only one thing can save us	
	You did all that you could do	Only the young (only the young)	
	The game was rigged, the ref got tricked	Only the young (only the young)	
	The wrong ones think they're right	Only the young (only the young)	35
	You were outnumbered, this time	Only the young	
		Post chorus:	
10	Chorus:	Only the young (only the young)	
	But only the young	Only the young (only the young)	
	Only the young	Only the young (only the young)	40
	Only the young	Only the young	
	Only the young can run	Only the young (only the young)	
15	Can run, so run	(Don't say you're too tired to fight	
	And run, and run	It's just a matter of time	
		Up there's the finish line)	45
	So every day now	Only the young	
	You brace for the sound	Can run	
	You've only heard on TV	Don't say you're too tired to fight	
20	You go to class, scared	It's just a matter of time (can run)	
	Wondering where the best hiding spot would be	Up there's the finish line	50
	And the big bad man and his big bad clan	So run, and run, and run	
	Their hands are stained with red	Don't say you're too tired to fight	
	Oh, how quickly, they forget	It's just a matter of time (so run)	
		Up there's the finish line	
25	They aren't gonna help us	And run, and run, and run	55
	Too busy helping themselves	Only the young	
	They aren't gonna change this	Only the young	
	We gotta do it ourselves	Only the young	

2 d

Improving your English with Taylor Swift's song *Only The Young* – part II

Speaking After highlighting the political statements in the lyrics, discuss the following:

- 1. Who does she address and why?
- 2. What is the message to her listeners? Can you identify with it? Why / why not?
- 3. Should singers get involved in politics and address issues like the climate crisis, gun violence or poverty?
- 4. Why should young people speak out?

Reading

Exploring the reasons for Taylor Swift's popularity

Read the text about Taylor Swift. Complete the sentences (1-6) using a maximum of four words. Write your answers in the spaces provided. The first one (0) has been done for you.

Why is Taylor Swift so popular among young people?

Taylor Swift doesn't need a big introduction for the music lovers. After the release of her album Taylor Swift in 2006, this American singer quickly rose to fame in the US and since then, her popularity has been growing rapidly.

Her fanbase mainly consists of teenagers and young adults. She is definitely not the best singer out there, which makes people wonder why she is so massively popular among young people. One way to attract the young audience is to write songs about things they can most relate

Swift is a prolific songwriter famous for writing songs based on her emotions and experiences. She can take universal emotions such as teenage heartbreak and turn them into a catchy song that every teenager worldwide can relate

Initially, Swift started in country music, but shifted to pop music to reach out to bigger audiences. Pop music made her lyrics more memorable and universal to reach teenagers beyond borders.

Swift is able to express the complexity of her feelings with simple lyrics. Apart from the teenage heartbreaks and past relationships,

her creative talent of writing lyrics also touches upon concepts like friendships, life lessons, confidence, and so on.

Nowadays, pop music stars are criticised for 30 not interacting enough with their audience. But Swift is an exception, listening to the audience about producing her songs, which she confessed in an interview on Late Night with Seth Meyers. As she makes her fans feel close to her. 35 she has a unique relationship with her fans that other artists often don't have.

Swift is known for her wide range of activism. The young population in present times is associated with many causes, like gender and racial 40 equality, gun control, pro-choice, and so on. Swift has been a critic of these causes and often uses her platform to talk about them, which makes her one of the leading figures of young activists.

Taylor Swift is one of the best-selling artists of all time. There are a lot of famous musicians around, but what makes her unique among them is her ability to reach out and connect to her ever-growing young audience with her 50 music and her flamboyant personality.

initially: ursprünglich memorable: einprägsam

to confess: (ein)gestehen,

einräumen

range: Bandbreite

prolific:

ideenreich

pro-choice:

Abtreibung

Recht auf

beyond borders: iiher die Grenzen (der USA) hinaus flamboyant: extravagant,

Test format Note form

auffällig

0	Taylor Swift's career started	in 2006
1	She is popular among	
2	She became famous although she	
3	Some basic themes in her lyrics are (Name two.)	
4	Taylor Swift is able to connect	
5	When writing her lyrics, she draws on	
6	In recent years, Taylor Swift has spoken out on (Name <u>two</u> .)	

45

The many faces of Taylor Swift

Speaking Get into pairs and look at the pictures.

- 1. Describe how Taylor Swift's outfits and shows have changed.
- 2. Briefly discuss which your favourite Taylor Swift style is and why.
- 3. Speculate on the reasons why pop stars like Taylor Swift have changed their appearance over time.

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2023

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2018

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Searching information about a person's life

Reading / Watching

Either stream the video or use the Taylor Swift Museum site to collect some basic information about Taylor Swift's life and career.



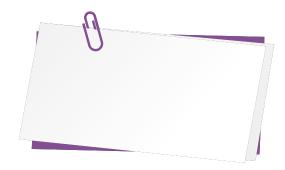


Taylor Swift Museum: Life and Career

Video: Taylor Swift – Life Story (Short Biographies)

You may take notes on the following:

- » childhood / family
- » musical influences
- » education
- » beginning of her career
- boyfriends / relationships
- awards



Source: Adobe Stock/thingamajiggs

2 h

Writing out an imaginary interview

Writing

Use your info from above and work out five to six questions about Taylor Swift's life. What have you always wanted to ask Taylor Swift? Give imaginary answers to your questions, pretending you are Taylor Swift. Write down the whole "interview" in your notebook.

2 i The Swiftie friendship bracelets

Add-on Do the additional interactive tasks on the Swiftie friendship bracelets.

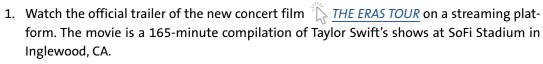




2 j

A new concert film

Watching / Speaking





- 2. Together with a partner, discuss your views on how the movie might convey the impression of having a front row seat in the show. Is it a full replacement to those who couldn't get or couldn't afford concert tickets? Explain.
- 3. Taylor Swift and her management decided to work directly with the cinemas / movie theaters and avoid the usual routes of film distribution. Discuss in class: What might be the motivation behind this decision? What are the pros and cons of circumventing professional film distributors?

to circumvent: to avoid sth