

1. Michael Jackson

This week's lesson is about one of the most influential performers in the history of pop music, who died almost a year ago on 25th June 2009: Michael Jackson.

Level

Intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level B1 and above)

How to use the lesson

1. Ask your students who their favourite pop singers or groups (past or present) are, and why. If his name hasn't already been mentioned, ask for your students' opinions on the music of Michael Jackson. Would they agree that he was one of the greatest performers of all time? What about Jackson's life away from his music? Do your students see him as a victim of fame?
2. Give your students five to ten minutes to read through the text on Worksheet A, encouraging them to look up new vocabulary. Tell them they are going to answer a series of questions on the text, but that they shouldn't write anything down at this stage.
3. Divide the students into pairs and hand out Worksheet B. Ask them to work together to complete the true/false/doesn't say questions in Exercise 1 and the comprehension questions in Exercise 2.
4. Check answers in open class.
5. Keeping the students in their pairs, hand out Worksheet C and ask the students to complete the crossword.
6. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. D 2. T 3. F 4. F 5. F 6. D 7. F 8. T 9. F 10. D

Exercise 2

1. It was Jackson's ranch in California.
2. He was Jackson's pet chimpanzee.
3. Around 110 million.
4. Michael Jackson and four of his brothers.
5. Because their make-up was so good.
6. His skin becoming much paler and his face changing shape.
7. In the way that when he was a small boy his father forced him to spend most of his time rehearsing and touring, so that he was rarely able to play with other children.
8. His singing and dancing.

Exercise 3

1. tours 2. downhill 3. superstar 4. childlike 5. bizarre 6. rehearsing
7. height 8. troubled 9. influential 10. chimpanzee 11. boy 12. performer

If the sentences have been completed correctly, *The King of Pop* will read from top to bottom.

2. Related Websites

Send your students to these websites, or just take a look yourself.

http://www.mjfanclub.net/home/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1

A Michael Jackson fan site, including (in 'Music') the lyrics to many of his songs. Intermediate level and above.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/4612963.stm>

Jackson's obituary (June 2009) on the BBC website. Challenging for intermediate level.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-jackson-memorial8-2009jul08,0,199118.story>

Jackson's obituary (June 2009) in the *Los Angeles Times*. Upper-intermediate level and above.