

Unit 1



The Power of Music

Introduction

In this unit, you will:

- Learn how people talk about musical works.
- Learn how musicians create their music.
- Improve your language abilities.
- Enhance your cultural awareness: American Lindy Hop dance.

Lead-in

Watch the video about the song *Heal the World* by Michael Jackson. Work in pairs. Discuss the following questions with each other and then share your answers with your classmates.

- (1) What is this song mainly about?
- (2) What do you think are the main factors that may contribute to the success of a piece of music?
- (3) What kind of social responsibilities should an artist take?



Module 1 Learn to Talk

In this part, first you are going to learn how to make comments on musical works. Then you are going to practise listening for some key information about the song “Heal the World”.

Speaking

- 1 Listen to the dialogue, and pay attention to how the two speakers make comments on the song *Heal the World*.

Kent: Hi!

Mary: Hello!

Kent: I'm going shopping for CDs this weekend. Would you like to come along?

Mary: Sure, that sounds great. What kind of CDs would you like to buy?

Kent: I'd like to buy Michael Jackson's album *Dangerous*.

Mary: Oh, I see. You must have been attracted by his song *Heal the World*.

Kent: Yes, I think this song has a very powerful meaning! I think it amazing that Michael Jackson uses his songs to put a message across the world!

Mary: To be honest, I really don't like him but I have to admit he has some great songs and this is definitely one of them. He sings about nature and the world as a whole and I admire him for that.

Kent: Michael Jackson is a genius, as far as I can see. This song reminds me of my childhood and some very sweet memories. Really he's the true King of Pop.

Mary: This song reminds me of what happened on September 11, 2001. I wish everyone would make this world a better place instead of fighting stupid wars and having people die.

Mary: Actually, he wanted to make a change in this world through charities, helping promote awareness of the world with his songs.

Kent: I totally agree with you. This song, especially its lyrics really touches me a lot, not to mention such very beautiful music, melody tones!

Mary: It makes me want to be a better person inside and to help others who are less fortunate.

Kent: This shows how powerful music can influence people!

- 2 Listen to the dialogue again, repeat it sentence by sentence.
- 3 Work in pairs. Talk with each other about your favourite work of art (a song, a movie, a painting, etc.), using the following expressions when necessary.

Language Tips

- I think...
- I think it amazing/wonderful/marvelous...
- I really don't like...
- I admire him / her for...
- As far as I can see... / In my opinion,
- Really he's the true king / a great master of...
- This song / movie / painting touches / moves me a lot.
- It makes me want to...

Listening

Before You Listen

- 1 Do you know how to read the following proper names and words? Try to read them aloud.

Proper Names

Staples Center

Giorgio Morandi /'dʒɔ:dʒəu mɔ'rændi/

Auguste Rodin /əu'gu:st rɔ'din/

Los Angeles

Giotto /'dʒɔtəu/

Piero della Francesca /'piərə delə fræn'seskə/

Deepak Chopra

Words

memorial	request	reminder	anthem	refrain
reportedly	abhorrent	clutter	cluster	documentary
haphazard	banality	pose		

- 2 Do you like listening to Michael Jackson's songs or watching him dance? Why or why not?
- 3 Can you name some other famous artists? Share your knowledge with your partner.

While You Listen**What Did Michael Jackson Want to Tell the World?**

- 1 Listen to the short passage about the song *Heal the World* and choose the best answer to each question below.
 - (1) Why did people sing the song *Heal the World* at the Staples Center on July 7, 2009?
 - A. To celebrate the success of this song.
 - B. To mourn the death of Michael Jackson.
 - C. To inspire people with the music.
 - D. To close its service for several days.
 - (2) What message does the song send to people around the world?
 - A. We should work together to make this world a better place.
 - B. We must keep requesting new things.
 - C. We must desire a better life.
 - D. We should actively engage in charity work.
 - (3) What did Michael Jackson think about this song?
 - A. He thought it's the most beautiful song he created.
 - B. He regarded it as motivation for poor children.
 - C. He thought it's the song that he was most proud to have created.
 - D. He regarded it as a reminder for those who do charity work.
- 2 Listen again and discuss the following questions with a partner.
 - (1) Why did the author's daughter ask to listen to the song *Heal the World* again and again?
 - (2) What does the refrain "Make it a Better Place" mean to people who do charity work?
 - (3) Why did Michael Jackson set up the Heal the World Foundation?

How Did Robert Chunn Become a Painter?

1 Listen to the interview with an American painter — Robert Chunn — and decide whether the following statements are True (T) or False (F).

_____ (1) To Robert, the color and form of objects are more interesting than their use.

_____ (2) He is greatly influenced by the works of the Italian Primitives.

_____ (3) He is interested in nothing else except painting.

_____ (4) The form and color of still lifes are very boring to Robert.

_____ (5) To be an artist one needs to learn to draw from life first.

2 Listen again and fill in the blanks with the information you hear.

(1) I was in my early twenties when I discovered that I was _____ a painter.

(2) The subject has to _____ somehow.

(3) There's a tender sensitivity and calm in their works that _____.

(4) They possess all the qualities of form and color that are needed to keep a painter occupied _____.

(5) First, _____ carrying a sketchbook with you wherever you go.

After You Listen

1 Role play

Interview: Work in pairs and create a dialogue according to the following instructions. Then present it to the class.

Student A: Suppose you are a college journal newspaper reporter and appointed to interview a famous pop singer. Prepare some questions to ask him / her. The questions below are for your reference.

- When did you first start to learn singing?
- Could you tell us some more about your work?
- What is it that inspires you to sing?
- What famous singers have influenced you most, and how?
- What do you do for fun (besides singing)?
- What are the main factors that led to your success?
- What advice would you give to a music student just starting out?

Student B: Suppose you are a famous singer and now a college newspaper reporter is going to interview you. Think about what you want to say. For example, try to explain to the reporter what you believe are the main reasons for your success.

2 Group discussion

Work in groups of four. Each of you will have a cue card named A, B, C and D. Read the art quote on the card and make comments on it. Then share your ideas with your partners.

Card A

Music should strike fire from the heart of man, and bring tears from the eyes of woman.
Ludwig van Beethoven

Card B

Music can save people, but it can't in the commercial way it's being used. It's just too much. It's pollution.

Bob Dylan

Card C

Take a music bath once or twice a week for a few seasons, and you will find that it is to the soul what the water-bath is to the body.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

Card D

Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life.

Berthold Auerbach

Module 2 Learn to Read

In this part you are going to read two passages about musical artists and their influence. After reading you are going to do some follow-up exercises to improve your reading skills and enlarge your vocabulary.

Before You Read

1 Communicate with other students about the following questions.

- (1) Why do some artists become important?
- (2) How does a piece of artistic work influence you?
- (3) What elements do you think a piece of famous music or a song ought to have?
- (4) What contributes to a successful artist?

2 Watch a video about the song called *The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll* by Bob Dylan, who is an American singer, song-writer, musician, poet, and painter. After watching and listening, discuss with your classmates the questions below.

- (1) What social issues does the song reveal?
- (2) How does Bob Dylan feel about the death of Hattie Carroll?
- (3) How did social events influence the artists and their works?

Below are the lyrics of the song *The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll*, which might help you better understand it.

The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll

William Zanzinger killed poor Hattie Carroll
With a cane that he twirled around his diamond ring finger
At a Baltimore hotel society gathering
And the cops were called in and his weapon took from him
As they rode him in custody down to the station
And booked William Zanzinger for first-degree murder
But you who philosophize disgrace and criticize all fears
Take the rag away from your face
Now ain't the time for your tears
William Zanzinger, who at twenty-four years
Owns a tobacco farm of six hundred acres
With rich wealthy parents who provide and protect him
And high office relations in the government of Maryland
Reacted to his deed with a shrug of his shoulders
And swear words and sneering, and his tongue it was snarling
In a matter of minutes on bail was out walking
And you who philosophize disgrace and criticize all fears
Take the rag away from your face