

# The Beatles

*In this lesson, you will learn about the Beatles, one of the most iconic music bands of all time. You'll also practise comparing and contrasting this band to some other bands. Let's get started by sharing what you know about the Beatles.*



## Pre-Reading

### A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Do you like listening to the Beatles?
2. How many members of the Beatles can you name?
3. How do the Beatles compare to modern rock bands?
4. Why do you think the Beatles were so successful?
5. Why do bands break up?

### B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.  
Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| _____ 1. form       | a) to commit to a contract                    |
| _____ 2. schoolmate | b) to stop supporting for a specific reason   |
| _____ 3. audition   | c) to go from place to place                  |
| _____ 4. core       | d) short for "fabulous"                       |
| _____ 5. tour       | e) a person you go to school with             |
| _____ 6. come out   | f) the strongest / main part(s)               |
| _____ 7. sign       | g) to demonstrate one's talents to someone    |
| _____ 8. fab        | h) a large venue for shows or sporting events |
| _____ 9. stadium    | i) to build into something                    |
| _____ 10. boycott   | j) to be made available for buyers            |

## Reading

1. John Lennon was 17 when he **formed** a band called the Quarrymen. His band was made up of **schoolmates** from the Quarry Bank Grammar School in Liverpool, England. Lennon's band played a mix of jazz, blues, and folk music. In 1957, Paul McCartney **auditioned** to be a guitarist in Lennon's band. The following year, George Harrison joined, and the band began playing rock and roll music. The Quarrymen broke up, but the **core** members kept playing together. In 1960, they became the Beatles.
2. The Beatles began **touring** around Europe. In 1962, Ringo Starr became the new drummer. The band released their first hit "Love Me Do" that same year. The Beatles' first album, *Please Please Me*, **came out** in 1963. A year later, "Love Me Do" was released in the US and became a #1 hit. Capitol Records **signed** the Beatles in 1964. Nobody expected the British group to do so well in the US.
3. Music fans went crazy for the Beatles after the band appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in 1964. The term *Beatlemania* was born, and the young musicians from England were nicknamed "the **Fab Four**." In 1965, more than 55,000 people filled a New York **stadium** to watch their concert. The Beatles started making movies and went on a world tour.
4. 1966 was the beginning of the end of *Beatlemania*. The Beatles had tour troubles in the Philippines and in Japan. When John Lennon called his band "more popular than Jesus," some people began to **boycott** them. The Beatles played their final concert on August 29, 1966. Between 1962 and 1970, the Beatles made over two dozen albums and became the most popular rock band of all time.

*"I'm really glad that most of our songs were about love, peace, and understanding."*

—Paul McCartney



# Comprehension

## A. Quiz Your Partner

Student A asks questions 1–3. Student B asks questions 4–6.  
Don't look at the reading as you answer.

1. Name the four core members of the Beatles.
2. Which different types of music are mentioned?
3. How did the Beatles surprise people in the music industry?
4. What was *Beatlemania*?
5. How did John Lennon contribute to the Beatles' loss of popularity in 1966?
6. What happened in August of 1966?

## B. Timeline

Place the following in chronological order (1–8).  
One of the items is not mentioned in the reading.  
Place a star beside this item and try to fit it into the correct order.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Paul McCartney auditioned for John Lennon's band.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ringo Starr joined the Beatles as a drummer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ An American record company signed the Beatles.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Beatles appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show*.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Fab Four began making movies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ John Lennon was shot and killed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ John Lennon made a statement that upset many people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Quarrymen broke up.

## Vocabulary Review

Complete the sentences using vocabulary from page 1.  
You may need to change the word forms.

1. The singers \_\_\_\_\_ for a spot on the reality show.
2. The band is playing at a \_\_\_\_\_ in the Philippines.
3. Their first album \_\_\_\_\_ before you were born.
4. That boy band on Youtube \_\_\_\_\_ a record deal today.
5. The teens are \_\_\_\_\_ all musicians with unfair concert ticket prices.

## Sir Paul McCartney

In 1997, Paul McCartney was knighted by the Queen of England. From then on, many people began referring to him as "Sir Paul." Do a little research about knighthood, and share your findings with the class.

1. What types of people usually get knighted?
2. Why did Paul McCartney get knighted?
3. What happens at a knighting ceremony?
4. Are there "perks" to becoming a knight?
5. Which other famous people currently have this title?
6. Can a female be knighted?



## Compare & Contrast

Compare the Beatles to other famous music groups. What is similar about these groups? What is different? What is each known for? If you don't recognize these groups, try listening to some music on the Internet.

### Famous Music Groups

- |                        |                                    |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. The Spice Girls     | 4. The Bangles                     |
| 2. The Backstreet Boys | 5. The Jackson 5                   |
| 3. Aerosmith           | 6. a famous band from your country |

### Examples

- The Beatles were a young male band, **and so were** the Backstreet Boys.
- The Jackson 5 were from the US, **while** the Beatles were from the UK.

### Helpful Vocabulary

#### COMPARE

- just as
- similarly
- in the same way
- likewise

#### CONTRAST

- however
- while
- although
- in contrast

## Fact or Fiction?

Guess whether the following statements are fact or fiction.

1. In 1964, the Beatles played 32 concerts in 19 days.
2. Some fans believed that Paul McCartney died in the '60s and was replaced by a look-alike actor.
3. Yoko Ono had a bed inside John Lennon's car.
4. The Beatles disliked Elvis Presley and American music.
5. The Beatles were against smoking.
6. "Hey Jude" was written by Paul McCartney for Julian Lennon, whose parents were getting divorced.
7. Before joining the Beatles, Ringo Starr wanted to be a hairdresser.