

PRE-READING

A. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

Match the words on the left with the correct meaning on the right.

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| _____ 1. icon | a) violence in the family |
| _____ 2. prom | b) a formal high school dance |
| _____ 3. superstardom | c) full of ups and downs |
| _____ 4. gospel | d) a representative symbol |
| _____ 5. on the spot | e) one who inspires and trains another |
| _____ 6. mentor | f) a status of extreme popularity |
| _____ 7. matchup | g) a union of two |
| _____ 8. domestic abuse | h) Christian spiritual music genre |
| _____ 9. stormy | i) one who physically protects a VIP |
| _____ 10. bodyguard | j) immediately; without delay |



B. WARM-UP QUESTIONS ☀

- Where were you when you heard the news that Whitney Houston had died?
- What makes someone a superstar?
- Do you like Whitney Houston's music? Why or why not?
- What do you know about Whitney Houston's family life?
- What will Whitney Houston be remembered for?

QUICK FACTS

Name:

Nickname: Prom Queen of Soul / Queen of Pop

Nationality:

Occupation:

Birthdate: August 9, 1963 - Feb 11, 2012

Known best for:

Quote: "I just want to be recognized for my music and for what it does, and how it inspires people, and how it makes people feel, as opposed to a talking-about-Whitney-all-the-time."

Whitney Houston

Pop diva Whitney Houston was an American music **icon**. People called her the “**Prom** Queen of Soul.”

Whitney Houston was destined for **superstardom**. Her mother was **gospel** singer Cissy Houston, her godmother was Aretha Franklin, and her cousin was Dionne Warwick. When record producer Clive Davis saw Whitney singing in a nightclub, he signed her **on the spot** and became her lifelong **mentor**. Whitney had the look of a fashion model and the voice of a superstar.

Houston won over 400 music awards during her career. She was 22 when “Saving All My Love For You” became a No. 1 hit. Her most successful hit was a 1993 cover of Dolly Parton's country song “I Will Always Love You.” This song remains America's best-selling single by a female artist. Her other famous hits include “I Wanna Dance With Somebody” and “Greatest Love of All.”

In 1992, Whitney Houston married R&B singer Bobby Brown. Music fans were fascinated by this **matchup**. She was the “girl-next-door” and he was the “bad boy.” The couple had a daughter named Bobbi Kristina a year later. In the late 90s, rumors of drug use and **domestic abuse** surrounded the couple. The **stormy** marriage ended in 2006.

In addition to her music career, Whitney Houston appeared in hit films, such as *The Bodyguard* and *Waiting to Exhale*. It was Whitney Houston's **bodyguard** who discovered her body in a hotel room bathtub on February 11, 2012. She was 48 years old when she died. Her voice will never be forgotten.



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. What was Whitney Houston's nickname?
2. Name one of Whitney Houston's hit songs.
3. Why was Whitney Houston destined for a singing career?
4. Why did Clive Davis sign Whitney “on the spot”?
5. Why were music fans so interested in Whitney Houston's marriage?
6. Why is Whitney's bodyguard mentioned in the reading?

B. TIMELINE

Place the following in chronological order (1–7).

- ___ Whitney Houston’s stormy marriage ended.
- ___ Whitney Houston’s bodyguard found her dead body.
- ___ Clive Davis discovered Whitney Houston.
- ___ “Saving All My Love For You” reached No. 1 on the charts.
- ___ Whitney Houston gave birth to a daughter.
- ___ Whitney Houston was born to a musical family.
- ___ Bobby Brown and Whitney Houston got married.

VOCABULARY REVIEW

Complete the sentences using vocabulary from Page 1.

1. Whitney looked to her _____ for career and personal advice.
2. Whitney Houston is a music _____ that will not be forgotten.
3. Whitney Houston’s marriage to Bobby Brown was _____.
4. A _____ can’t protect you from the effects of drug abuse.
5. Due to her powerful voice, Whitney Houston got a record deal _____.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Compare Whitney Houston to other American music stars. *What is similar about these stars? What is different? What are each known for? Which of the following are “icons”?*

- Michael Jackson
- Mariah Carey
- Beyoncé
- Dolly Parton
- Bobby Brown
- Britney Spears

For example:

Michael Jackson was known as the King of Pop while Whitney Houston was known as the Queen of Pop.



Cover Songs

Whitney Houston hit notes that most singers can’t hit. The day after she died, Jennifer Hudson covered “I Will Always Love You” as a tribute to her at the 54th Grammy Awards. Many people have tried to cover Whitney Houston songs, but few have succeeded. *How do you feel about cover songs? Do you enjoy listening to remakes, or do you prefer the original versions? Whose music is covered often? Listen to Jennifer Hudson’s version online. How does it “measure up” to Whitney’s?*

FACT or FICTION? Guess!

1. Whitney Houston once dated Eddie Murphy.
2. In 1994, Whitney Houston became the highest paid black American actress.
3. Whitney Houston's Superbowl version of “The Star Spangled Banner” hit the music charts.
4. Whitney Houston started out as a country singer.
5. Before becoming a professional singer, Whitney Houston was a professional dancer.
6. Whitney starred in a reality TV show called *Being Whitney Houston*.
7. In 2009, Whitney Houston quit her singing career.

ANSWER KEY

Lesson Description: Students read a brief bio about iconic music star Whitney Houston. In addition to comprehension questions and a vocabulary review, they discuss where they were at the time of her death and how the “Queen of Pop” compares to other stars.

VOCABULARY PREVIEW

1. d 2. b 3. f 4. h 5. j 6. e 7. g 8. a 9. c 10. i

COMPREHENSION**A. QUIZ YOUR PARTNER**

1. People called her the “Prom Queen of Soul.”
2. Whitney Houston’s hit songs included “I Will Always Love You,” “I Wanna Dance With Somebody,” “Greatest Love Of All,” and “Saving All My Love For You.” (Many more are possible.)
3. Whitney Houston was destined for a singing career because she was born into a musical family.
4. Clive Davis signed Whitney “on the spot” because he believed she would be a star.
5. Music fans were so interested in Whitney Houston’s marriage because it was an “opposites attract” type of matchup.
6. Whitney’s bodyguard found her dead in a hotel room bathtub. *The Bodyguard* is also the name of a movie Whitney starred in.

B. TIMELINE

- 6 Whitney Houston’s stormy marriage ended.
- ~~7~~ Whitney Houston’s bodyguard found her dead body.
- 2 Clive Davis discovered Whitney Houston.
- 3 “Saving All My Love For You” reached No. 1 on the charts.
- 5 Whitney Houston gave birth to a daughter.
- 1 Whitney Houston was born to a musical family.
- 4 Bobby Brown and Whitney Houston got married.

VOCABULARY REVIEW

1. mentor
2. icon
3. stormy
4. bodyguard
5. on the spot

Spelling Note: The reading shows the American spelling of the word ‘Rumors’. Most other English-speaking countries spell it this way: Rumours. Make it a challenge for your students to find this word in the reading and see if they know the alternate spelling.

FACT OR FICTION

You can invite your students to do some research to find out these answers, or you can give them the answers.

1. Fact. 2. Fact. 3. Fact. 4. Fiction. Whitney Houston started out as a gospel singer. 5. Fiction. Before becoming a professional singer, Whitney Houston was a fashion model. 6. Fiction. The show was called *Being Bobby Brown*, though Whitney did appear in it regularly. 7. Fiction. In 2009, she launched her comeback tour.