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**"1,000 IDEAS & ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS"**

**The Breaking News English.com Resource Book**

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/book.html>

## **Amy Winehouse dies, aged 27**

[http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1107/110724-amy\\_winehouse.html](http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1107/110724-amy_winehouse.html)

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**24th July, 2011**

# THE ARTICLE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy\\_winehouse.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy_winehouse.html)

Singer Amy Winehouse has been found dead at her home in London on Saturday, July the 23rd. The award-winning artist was just 27 years old, the same age as Kurt Cobain, Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison and Janis Joplin. Winehouse shot to worldwide fame and acclaim following the release of her album *Back to Black* in 2006, which won five Grammy awards and became the third-highest selling album of the 2000s. She had spent years battling alcohol and drug addiction. This and other demons in her personal life affected her ability to perform live and she was booed offstage for appearing too drunk to perform in 2011. She sang about her addictions and attempts to beat them in her smash hit *Rehab*, an example of her gritty and honest songwriting.

Tributes from across the world following her death show what a unique talent she was and how much she will be missed. The BBC said: "With her gravelly voice and eclectic style, Amy Winehouse...won comparison with some of the great female singers such as Sarah Vaughan and Nina Simone." Britain's Daily Mail newspaper wrote: "She was without question the outstanding vocalist of her generation. Without Amy, there would have been no Adele, no Duffy and no Lady Gaga." It added: "The tragic loss of Amy Winehouse has robbed us of a young, if fatally troubled, life cut down in its prime. It has also cheated British music of a talent, at 27, whose best years surely still lay ahead." Singer Rihanna tweeted: "I am genuinely heartbroken...#DearAmy."

# WARM-UPS

**1. AMY WINEHOUSE:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about Amy Winehouse. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*singer / award-winning / worldwide fame / acclaim / addiction / rehab / songwriting / tribute / unique talent / eclectic style / outstanding vocalist / tragic loss / heartbroken*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. TRIBUTE:** Use the words below in sentences to make a tribute to Amy Winehouse. Complete this with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

	Tribute sentences
award-winning artist	
worldwide fame	
honest songwriting	
unique talent	
tributes	
outstanding vocalist	

**4. ADDICTIONS:** Students A **strongly** believe that one day, addictions will be a thing of the past; Students B **strongly** believe addictions will always be with us. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. TALENT:** What makes a singer so great? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- voice
- musical style
- ability to play an instrument
- dances
- interviews
- fashion
- live performances
- songwriting ability

**6. UNIQUE:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'unique'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

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# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy\\_winehouse.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy_winehouse.html)

## 1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. The singer Amy Winehouse died in her London home.                    | T / F |
| b. She joins many other singing legends who died at the age of 27.      | T / F |
| c. Her Back to Black album was the best selling album of the 2000s.     | T / F |
| d. One of her most famous songs was about trying to beat addictions.    | T / F |
| e. The BBC said she had an electric style.                              | T / F |
| f. The BBC said she couldn't be compared to singers like Sarah Vaughan  | T / F |
| g. A British newspaper spoke of Amy's influence on Lady Gaga and Adele. | T / F |
| h. The newspaper said she had already recorded her best work.           | T / F |

## 2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article.

- |             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. artist   | a. devastating |
| 2. shot     | b. fighting    |
| 3. acclaim  | c. best years  |
| 4. battling | d. remarkable  |
| 5. attempts | e. rocketed    |
| 6. unique   | f. problematic |
| 7. eclectic | g. performer   |
| 8. tragic   | h. diverse     |
| 9. troubled | i. praise      |
| 10. prime   | j. efforts     |

## 3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |                                    |                               |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. The award-winning artist was    | a. fame and acclaim           |
| 2. Winehouse shot to worldwide     | b. still lay ahead            |
| 3. the third-highest selling album | c. alcohol and drug addiction |
| 4. spent years battling            | d. her generation             |
| 5. an example of her gritty and    | e. of the 2000s               |
| 6. Tributes                        | f. heartbroken                |
| 7. the outstanding vocalist of     | g. just 27 years old          |
| 8. The tragic                      | h. honest songwriting         |
| 9. ... whose best years surely     | i. loss of Amy Winehouse      |
| 10. I am genuinely                 | j. from across the world      |

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# WHILE READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy\\_winehouse.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy_winehouse.html)

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Singer Amy Winehouse has been (1) \_\_\_\_\_ dead at her home in London on Saturday, July the 23rd. The award-winning (2) \_\_\_\_\_ was just 27 years old, the same age as Kurt Cobain, Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison and Janis Joplin. Winehouse (3) \_\_\_\_\_ to worldwide fame and acclaim following the release of her album Back to Black in 2006, which won five Grammy awards and became the third-highest (4) \_\_\_\_\_ album of the 2000s. She had spent years (5) \_\_\_\_\_ alcohol and drug addiction. This and other (6) \_\_\_\_\_ in her personal life affected her ability to perform live and she was booed offstage for appearing too drunk to perform in 2011. She sang about her addictions and (7) \_\_\_\_\_ to beat them in her smash hit Rehab, an example of her gritty and (8) \_\_\_\_\_ songwriting.

*battling*

*shot*

*selling*

*attempts*

*found*

*honest*

*artist*

*demons*

Tributes from across the world (9) \_\_\_\_\_ her death show what a unique talent she was and how much she will be (10) \_\_\_\_\_. The BBC said: "With her gravelly voice and eclectic style, Amy Winehouse...won (11) \_\_\_\_\_ with some of the great female singers such as Sarah Vaughan and Nina Simone." Britain's Daily Mail newspaper wrote: "She was without (12) \_\_\_\_\_ the outstanding vocalist of her generation. Without Amy, there would have been no Adele, no Duffy and no Lady Gaga." It added: "The (13) \_\_\_\_\_ loss of Amy Winehouse has (14) \_\_\_\_\_ us of a young, if fatally troubled, life cut down in its prime. It has also cheated British music of a talent, at 27, whose best years (15) \_\_\_\_\_ still lay ahead." Singer Rihanna tweeted: "I am (16) \_\_\_\_\_ heartbroken...#DearAmy."

*tragic*

*missed*

*surely*

*question*

*following*

*robbed*

*genuinely*

*comparison*

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# LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy\\_winehouse.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy_winehouse.html)

Singer Amy Winehouse has been found dead at her home in London on Saturday, July the 23rd. The \_\_\_\_\_ just 27 years old, the same age as Kurt Cobain, Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison and Janis Joplin. Winehouse \_\_\_\_\_ and acclaim following the release of her album Back to Black in 2006, which won five Grammy awards and became the \_\_\_\_\_ of the 2000s. She had spent years battling alcohol and drug addiction. This \_\_\_\_\_ her personal life affected her ability to perform live and she was booed offstage for appearing too drunk to perform in 2011. She \_\_\_\_\_ and attempts to beat them in her smash hit Rehab, an example of \_\_\_\_\_ songwriting.

\_\_\_\_\_ the world following her death show what a unique talent she was and how much she will be missed. The BBC said: "With her gravelly \_\_\_\_\_, Amy Winehouse...won comparison with some of the great female singers such as Sarah Vaughan and Nina Simone." Britain's Daily Mail newspaper wrote: "\_\_\_\_\_ the outstanding \_\_\_\_\_. Without Amy, there would have been no Adele, no Duffy and no Lady Gaga." It added: "The tragic loss of Amy Winehouse \_\_\_\_\_ young, if fatally troubled, life cut down in its prime. It has also cheated British music of a talent, at 27, whose best years \_\_\_\_\_." Singer Rihanna tweeted: "I am genuinely heartbroken...#DearAmy."

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# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy\\_winehouse.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy_winehouse.html)

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'unique' and 'talent'.

<b>unique</b>	<b>talent</b>

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• found</li><li>• just</li><li>• third</li><li>• other</li><li>• attempts</li><li>• honest</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• unique</li><li>• style</li><li>• vocalist</li><li>• question</li><li>• robbed</li><li>• genuinely</li></ul>
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# STUDENT AMY WINEHOUSE SURVEY

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy\\_winehouse.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy_winehouse.html)

Write five GOOD questions about Amy Winehouse in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



# AMY WINEHOUSE DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the name 'Amy Winehouse'?
- c) Why do so many great artists die so young?
- d) What do you think of Amy Winehouse's voice and music?
- e) Do you think someone should have helped her more?
- f) How can we do more to help people fight addictions?
- g) What were you doing when you heard about Amy Winehouse's death?
- h) Would you like to have seen Amy Winehouse live in concert?
- i) Have you had demons in your personal life?
- j) Do you think Amy Winehouse was brave to write and sing about her personal demons?

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# AMY WINEHOUSE DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) What do you think about what you read in this article?
- b) What tribute would you make to Amy Winehouse?
- c) How unique do you think she was?
- d) Which other current artists could you describe as being uniquely talented?
- e) What do you think of comparisons to greats like Sarah Vaughan and Nina Simone?
- f) Do you think she was "without question the outstanding vocalist of her generation"?
- g) Would there have been a Lady Gaga without Amy Winehouse?
- h) How sad is it that Amy's best material will never be written?
- i) What three adjectives would you use to describe this story (and why)?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Amy's future biographer?

# LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy\\_winehouse.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy_winehouse.html)

Singer Amy Winehouse has been found dead at her home in London on Saturday, July the 23rd. The award-(1) \_\_\_\_\_ artist was just 27 years old, the same age as Kurt Cobain, Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison and Janis Joplin. Winehouse (2) \_\_\_\_\_ to worldwide fame and (3) \_\_\_\_\_ following the release of her album Back to Black in 2006, which won five Grammy awards and became the third-highest selling album of the 2000s. She had spent years battling alcohol and drug addiction. (4) \_\_\_\_\_ and other demons in her personal life affected her ability to perform (5) \_\_\_\_\_ and she was booed offstage for appearing too drunk to perform in 2011. She sang about her addictions and attempts to beat them (6) \_\_\_\_\_ her smash hit Rehab, an example of her gritty and honest songwriting.

Tributes from across the world (7) \_\_\_\_\_ her death show what a unique talent she was and how much she will be missed. The BBC said: "With her gravelly voice and eclectic (8) \_\_\_\_\_, Amy Winehouse...won comparison with some of the great female singers such as Sarah Vaughan and Nina Simone." Britain's Daily Mail newspaper wrote: "She was without (9) \_\_\_\_\_ the outstanding vocalist of her generation. Without Amy, there would have been no Adele, no Duffy and no Lady Gaga." It added: "The (10) \_\_\_\_\_ loss of Amy Winehouse has robbed us of a young, if fatally troubled, life cut down (11) \_\_\_\_\_ its prime. It has also cheated British music of a talent, at 27, whose best years surely still lay (12) \_\_\_\_\_." Singer Rihanna tweeted: "I am genuinely heartbroken...#DearAmy."

**Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.**

- |     |               |                |              |               |
|-----|---------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1.  | (a) won       | (b) winning    | (c) winner   | (d) wins      |
| 2.  | (a) bullet    | (b) gunned     | (c) shot     | (d) fired     |
| 3.  | (a) acclaim   | (b) reclaim    | (c) claim    | (d) claimant  |
| 4.  | (a) Therefore | (b) So         | (c) Thus     | (d) This      |
| 5.  | (a) lives     | (b) livelihood | (c) live     | (d) lifestyle |
| 6.  | (a) in        | (b) to         | (c) at       | (d) of        |
| 7.  | (a) followers | (b) follow     | (c) follows  | (d) following |
| 8.  | (a) styled    | (b) style      | (c) stylish  | (d) stylishly |
| 9.  | (a) answer    | (b) statement  | (c) negative | (d) question  |
| 10. | (a) tragedy   | (b) tragically | (c) tragic   | (d) tragedies |
| 11. | (a) on        | (b) in         | (c) up       | (d) to        |
| 12. | (a) ahead     | (b) future     | (c) before   | (d) forward   |

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# WRITING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy\\_winehouse.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1107/110724-amy_winehouse.html)

Write about **Amy Winehouse** for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

[illegible]

# HOMEWORK

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about Amy Winehouse. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. SONGS:** Make a poster about one of Amy Winehouse's songs. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson.

**4. AMY WINEHOUSE:** Write a magazine article about Amy Winehouse and her music. Include imaginary interviews with her fans.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to a music magazine. Ask three questions about Amy Winehouse. Give three of your opinions on her music. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T      b. T      c. F      d. T      e. F      f. F      g. T      h. F

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. artist   | a. performer   |
| 2. shot     | b. rocketed    |
| 3. acclaim  | c. praise      |
| 4. battling | d. fighting    |
| 5. attempts | e. efforts     |
| 6. unique   | f. remarkable  |
| 7. eclectic | g. diverse     |
| 8. tragic   | h. devastating |
| 9. troubled | i. problematic |
| 10. prime   | j. best years  |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                    |                               |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. The award-winning artist was    | a. just 27 years old          |
| 2. Winehouse shot to worldwide     | b. fame and acclaim           |
| 3. the third-highest selling album | c. of the 2000s               |
| 4. spent years battling            | d. alcohol and drug addiction |
| 5. an example of her gritty and    | e. honest songwriting         |
| 6. Tributes                        | f. from across the world      |
| 7. the outstanding vocalist of     | g. her generation             |
| 8. The tragic                      | h. loss of Amy Winehouse      |
| 9. ... whose best years surely     | i. still lay ahead            |
| 10. I am genuinely                 | j. heartbroken                |

## GAP FILL:

### Amy Winehouse dies, aged 27

Singer Amy Winehouse has been (1) **found** dead at her home in London on Saturday, July the 23rd. The award-winning (2) **artist** was just 27 years old, the same age as Kurt Cobain, Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison and Janis Joplin. Winehouse (3) **shot** to worldwide fame and acclaim following the release of her album *Back to Black* in 2006, which won five Grammy awards and became the third-highest (4) **selling** album of the 2000s. She had spent years (5) **battling** alcohol and drug addiction. This and other (6) **demons** in her personal life affected her ability to perform live and she was booed offstage for appearing too drunk to perform in 2011. She sang about her addictions and (7) **attempts** to beat them in her smash hit *Rehab*, an example of her gritty and (8) **honest** songwriting.

Tributes from across the world (9) **following** her death show what a unique talent she was and how much she will be (10) **missed**. The BBC said: "With her gravelly voice and eclectic style, Amy Winehouse...won (11) **comparison** with some of the great female singers such as Sarah Vaughan and Nina Simone." Britain's Daily Mail newspaper wrote: "She was without (12) **question** the outstanding vocalist of her generation. Without Amy, there would have been no Adele, no Duffy and no Lady Gaga." It added: "The (13) **tragic** loss of Amy Winehouse has (14) **robbed** us of a young, if fatally troubled, life cut down in its prime. It has also cheated British music of a talent, at 27, whose best years (15) **surely** still lay ahead." Singer Rihanna tweeted: "I am (16) **genuinely** heartbroken...#DearAmy."

## LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - b      2 - c      3 - a      4 - d      5 - c      6 - a      7 - d      8 - b      9 - d      10 - c      11 - b      12 - a

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