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## Whitney Houston dies aged 48

**13th February, 2012**

[http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1202/120213-whitney\\_houston.html](http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1202/120213-whitney_houston.html)

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# THE ARTICLE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney\\_houston.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney_houston.html)

Pop superstar Whitney Houston has passed away aged 48. The blues and soul songstress died in a Beverly Hills hotel room on Sunday, just hours before she was to appear at a pre-Grammy Awards party. Ms Houston was expected to receive a lifetime achievement award at the main ceremony. Medics arrived at her room around 3.43 pm and administered CPR. She was pronounced dead 12 minutes later. The cause of her death is not yet known. Her body was quickly removed from the hotel to avoid the chaos of the world's media, which had congregated to cover the story. A police officer told reporters: "She has been positively identified by friends and family...and next of kin have already been notified."

Whitney Houston was one of the world's most influential, successful and popular singers. She was born into a musical family. Her mother Cissy was a gospel singer and her aunt was the legendary Dionne Warwick. Houston won six Grammy awards among many other top prizes. She released seven studio albums and sold over 170 million CDs, singles and videos. Her most famous song is her worldwide hit, "I Will Always Love You." In 1992, she married soul singer Bobby Brown. They had a rocky relationship that was widely covered in the press. The last 10 years of her life were dominated by drug use. Tributes to her have poured in from the world's music superstars. Rihanna posted on Twitter: "No words, just tears."

# WARM-UPS

**1. POP SUPERSTARS:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about pop superstars. 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.

*pop superstars / blues and soul / awards / ceremony / chaos / reporters / next of kin / influential / musical family / legendary / worldwide hit / rocky relationship / tears*

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

**3. LEGENDS:** Who are the biggest? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

The biggest legend	Who?	Why?
in music		
in sport		
in politics		
in business		
in environment		
in fashion		

**4. ROLE MODELS:** Students A **strongly** believe singers and actors should be role models; Students B **strongly** believe not because rebels are necessary. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. DIVAS:** Who's the best? Rank them and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- Whitney Houston
- Ella Fitzgerald
- Britney Houston
- Madonna
- Mariah Carey
- Hannah Montana
- Aretha Franklin
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

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

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney\\_houston.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney_houston.html)

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

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. Whitney Houston died at her home in Beverly Hills.                | T / F |
| b. Ms Houston had just received an award for her life spent singing. | T / F |
| c. Police took her body away to escape the media glare.              | T / F |
| d. Police told Ms Houston's closest relatives about her death.       | T / F |
| e. Whitney Houston had a very famous aunt who was an actor.          | T / F |
| f. Ms Houston sold over 170 million CDs, singles and videos.         | T / F |
| g. The article describes her marriage as being a stony one.          | T / F |
| h. The singer Rihanna said she could not speak, only cry.            | T / F |

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

- |                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. passed away  | a. renowned       |
| 2. achievement  | b. gave           |
| 3. administered | c. important      |
| 4. chaos        | d. accolades      |
| 5. kin          | e. died           |
| 6. influential  | f. relatives      |
| 7. legendary    | g. accomplishment |
| 8. prizes       | h. flooded        |
| 9. rocky        | i. havoc          |
| 10. poured      | j. troubled       |

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

- |                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Whitney Houston has passed away | a. kin                   |
| 2. just hours before she was       | b. is not yet known      |
| 3. receive a lifetime              | c. by the press          |
| 4. The cause of her death          | d. to appear             |
| 5. next of                         | e. aged 48               |
| 6. She was born                    | f. poured in             |
| 7. worldwide                       | g. relationship          |
| 8. They had a rocky                | h. achievement award     |
| 9. widely covered                  | i. hit                   |
| 10. Tributes to her have           | j. into a musical family |

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# WHILE READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney\\_houston.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney_houston.html)

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

Pop superstar Whitney Houston has (1) \_\_\_\_\_ away aged 48. The blues and soul songstress died in a Beverly Hills hotel room on Sunday, just hours before she was to (2) \_\_\_\_\_ at a pre-Grammy Awards party. Ms Houston was expected to (3) \_\_\_\_\_ a lifetime achievement award at the main (4) \_\_\_\_\_. Medics arrived at her room around 3.43 pm and administered CPR. She was pronounced dead 12 minutes later. The (5) \_\_\_\_\_ of her death is not yet known. Her body was quickly removed from the hotel to (6) \_\_\_\_\_ the chaos of the world's media, which had congregated to (7) \_\_\_\_\_ the story. A police officer told reporters: "She has been positively identified by friends and family...and next of (8) \_\_\_\_\_ have already been notified."

*avoid*

*receive*

*kin*

*passed*

*cover*

*appear*

*ceremony*

*cause*

Whitney Houston was one of the world's most (9) \_\_\_\_\_, successful and popular singers. She was born into a musical family. Her mother Cissy was a gospel singer and her aunt was the (10) \_\_\_\_\_ Dionne Warwick. Houston won six Grammy awards among many other top prizes. She (11) \_\_\_\_\_ seven studio albums and sold over 170 million CDs, singles and videos. Her most famous song is her worldwide (12) \_\_\_\_\_, "I Will Always Love You." In 1992, she married soul singer Bobby Brown. They had a (13) \_\_\_\_\_ relationship that was (14) \_\_\_\_\_ covered by the press. The last 10 years of her life were dominated by drug (15) \_\_\_\_\_. Tributes to her have poured in from the world's music superstars. Rihanna posted on Twitter: "No words, just (16) \_\_\_\_\_."

*use*

*released*

*widely*

*hit*

*influential*

*tears*

*legendary*

*rocky*

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# LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney\\_houston.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney_houston.html)

Pop superstar Whitney Houston \_\_\_\_\_ 48. The blues and soul songstress died in a Beverly Hills hotel room on Sunday, just hours before \_\_\_\_\_ a pre-Grammy Awards party. Ms Houston was expected to receive \_\_\_\_\_ award at the main ceremony. Medics arrived at her room around 3.43 pm and administered CPR. She was pronounced dead 12 minutes later. The \_\_\_\_\_ is not yet known. Her body was quickly removed from the hotel to \_\_\_\_\_ of the world's media, which had congregated to cover the story. A police officer told reporters: "She has been positively identified by friends and family...and \_\_\_\_\_ already been notified."

Whitney Houston was one of the \_\_\_\_\_, successful and popular singers. She was born into a musical family. Her mother Cissy was a gospel singer and her aunt \_\_\_\_\_ Dionne Warwick. Houston won six Grammy awards among many other top prizes. She \_\_\_\_\_ albums and sold over 170 million CDs, singles and videos. Her most famous song is \_\_\_\_\_, "I Will Always Love You." In 1992, she married soul singer Bobby Brown. They had a rocky relationship that \_\_\_\_\_ by the press. The last 10 years of her life were dominated by drug use. Tributes to \_\_\_\_\_ from the world's music superstars. Rihanna posted on Twitter: "No words, just tears."

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# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney\\_houston.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney_houston.html)

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

<b>pass</b>	<b>away</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>• away</li><li>• just</li><li>• main</li><li>• yet</li><li>• cover</li><li>• next</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• musical</li><li>• six</li><li>• top</li><li>• rocky</li><li>• last</li><li>• tears</li></ul>
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# WHITNEY HOUSTON SURVEY

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney\\_houston.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney_houston.html)

Write five GOOD questions about Whitney Houston 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.



# WHITNEY HOUSTON 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 word 'superstar'?
- c) Where were you when you heard the news of Whitney Houston's death?
- d) What do you know about Whitney Houston?
- e) Do you think she deserves a lifetime achievement award?
- f) Do you think there's anything suspicious about her death?
- g) Why was it a good idea to quickly remove her body?
- h) What do you think of Whitney Houston's music?
- i) Where would you rank Whitney Houston in the list of all-time greats?

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# WHITNEY HOUSTON DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) How influential do you think Whitney Houston was?
- c) How musical are you and your family?
- d) Do you know / like the song "I Will Always Love You"?
- e) Why do so many music stars and actors take drugs?
- f) Do you think Whitney Houston was a good role model?
- g) Have you ever had a rocky relationship?
- h) What would be your tribute to Whitney Houston?
- i) What questions would you like to have asked Whitney Houston?

# LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney\\_houston.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney_houston.html)

Pop superstar Whitney Houston has passed away aged 48. The (1) \_\_\_\_\_ and soul songstress died in a Beverly Hills hotel room on Sunday, just hours before she was to (2) \_\_\_\_\_ at a pre-Grammy Awards party. Ms Houston was expected to receive a lifetime achievement award at the (3) \_\_\_\_\_ ceremony. Medics arrived at her room around 3.43 pm and administered CPR. She was (4) \_\_\_\_\_ dead 12 minutes later. The cause of her death is not yet known. Her body was quickly removed from the hotel to (5) \_\_\_\_\_ the chaos of the world's media, which had congregated to cover the story. A police officer told reporters: "She has been positively identified (6) \_\_\_\_\_ friends and family...and next of kin have already been notified."

Whitney Houston was one of the world's (7) \_\_\_\_\_ influential, successful and popular singers. She was born into a musical family. Her mother Cissy was a gospel singer and her aunt was the legendary Dionne Warwick. Houston won six Grammy awards (8) \_\_\_\_\_ many other top prizes. She released seven studio albums and sold over 170 million CDs, singles and videos. Her most famous song is her worldwide (9) \_\_\_\_\_, "I Will Always Love You." In 1992, she married soul singer Bobby Brown. They had a (10) \_\_\_\_\_ relationship that was widely covered (11) \_\_\_\_\_ the press. The last 10 years of her life were dominated by drug use. Tributes to her have poured (12) \_\_\_\_\_ from the world's music superstars. Rihanna posted on Twitter: "No words, just tears."

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

- |                  |                |                   |                |
|------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. (a) yellows   | (b) greens     | (c) reds          | (d) blues      |
| 2. (a) appear    | (b) appearance | (c) appears       | (d) appeared   |
| 3. (a) lain      | (b) pain       | (c) main          | (d) rain       |
| 4. (a) pronounce | (b) pronounced | (c) pronunciation | (d) pronounces |
| 5. (a) evasive   | (b) avoid      | (c) avid          | (d) avoidance  |
| 6. (a) at        | (b) by         | (c) of            | (d) so         |
| 7. (a) most      | (b) many       | (c) lots          | (d) some       |
| 8. (a) all       | (b) whole      | (c) lots          | (d) among      |
| 9. (a) smack     | (b) slap       | (c) strike        | (d) hit        |
| 10. (a) stony    | (b) rocky      | (c) pebbly        | (d) sandy      |
| 11. (a) by       | (b) of         | (c) to            | (d) on         |
| 12. (a) up       | (b) to         | (c) in            | (d) as         |

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## WRITING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney\\_houston.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1202/120213-whitney_houston.html)

Write about **Whitney Houston** 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 Whitney Houston. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. WHITNEY HOUSTON:** Make a poster about Whitney Houston. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. LEGEND:** Write a magazine article about Whitney Houston. Include imaginary interviews with people who knew her.

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 Whitney Houston expert. Ask him/her three questions about Whitney Houston. Give him/her three of your opinions on the singer. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

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

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. passed away  | a. died           |
| 2. achievement  | b. accomplishment |
| 3. administered | c. gave           |
| 4. chaos        | d. havoc          |
| 5. kin          | e. relatives      |
| 6. influential  | f. important      |
| 7. legendary    | g. renowned       |
| 8. prizes       | h. accolades      |
| 9. rocky        | i. troubled       |
| 10. poured      | j. flooded        |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Whitney Houston has passed away | a. aged 48               |
| 2. just hours before she was       | b. to appear             |
| 3. receive a lifetime              | c. achievement award     |
| 4. The cause of her death          | d. is not yet known      |
| 5. next of                         | e. kin                   |
| 6. She was born                    | f. into a musical family |
| 7. worldwide                       | g. hit                   |
| 8. They had a rocky                | h. relationship          |
| 9. widely covered                  | i. by the press          |
| 10. Tributes to her have           | j. poured in             |

## GAP FILL:

### Whitney Houston dies aged 48

Pop superstar Whitney Houston has (1) **passed** away aged 48. The blues and soul songstress died in a Beverly Hills hotel room on Sunday, just hours before she was to (2) **appear** at a pre-Grammy Awards party. Ms Houston was expected to (3) **receive** a lifetime achievement award at the main (4) **ceremony**. Medics arrived at her room around 3.43 pm and administered CPR. She was pronounced dead 12 minutes later. The (5) **cause** of her death is not yet known. Her body was quickly removed from the hotel to (6) **avoid** the chaos of the world's media, which had congregated to (7) **cover** the story. A police officer told reporters: "She has been positively identified by friends and family...and next of (8) **kin** have already been notified."

Whitney Houston was one of the world's most (9) **influential**, successful and popular singers. She was born into a musical family. Her mother Cissy was a gospel singer and her aunt was the (10) **legendary** Dionne Warwick. Houston won six Grammy awards among many other top prizes. She (11) **released** seven studio albums and sold over 170 million CDs, singles and videos. Her most famous song is her worldwide (12) **hit**, "I Will Always Love You." In 1992, she married soul singer Bobby Brown. They had a (13) **rocky** relationship that was (14) **widely** covered in the press. The last 10 years of her life were dominated by drug (15) **use**. Tributes to her have poured in from the world's music superstars. Rihanna posted on Twitter: "No words, just (16) **tears**."

## LANGUAGE WORK

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

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