

“It’s cooler to hang Lennon’s guitar than a Picasso”: pop culture wins out at auctions

Level 2: Intermediate – Teacher’s notes

Article summary: The article describes how items belonging to pop stars are becoming popular at auctions.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Vocabulary

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

Key:

1. auction
2. outfit
3. exclusively
4. cardigan
5. talk into
6. belongings
7. estimate
8. Grammy
9. artefact
10. legacy

1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the concept of auctions and the kind of items that are sold at them. It also focuses on the types of things that people are willing to spend large amounts of money on. Ask students to match the items with the amounts of money that people paid for them. When you check the answers, ask if they are surprised by any of the amounts (e.g. the amount paid for a small piece of paper, the postage stamp).

Key:

1. c
2. d
3. a
4. e
5. b

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. Point out that explain that a legacy is not always positive. Notorious dictators or rulers from the past can also leave a legacy (a very negative one). You could also explain that the opposite of *talk someone into doing something* (i.e. *persuade them to do it*) is *talk someone out of doing something* (i.e. *persuade them not to do it*).

3. Comprehension check

- a. The answers given are only suggested answers and students may correctly answer the questions in different ways.

Key:

1. False. Kim Kardashian bought Janet Jackson’s outfit.
2. False. It was the first one to deal exclusively in pop-culture items.
3. True.
4. False. They also sell items from celebrities who are still alive.
5. True.
6. False. They sold for far more than the estimate.
7. True.
8. False. The lyrics were handwritten.
9. False. She sent it to a school boyfriend.
10. True.

4. Using key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs. Ask students to refer back to the text to check their answers. Point out that ‘big money’ is an informal expression for ‘a lot of money’.

Key:

1. e
2. a
3. f
4. c
5. d
6. b

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5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas about each statement and encourage them to say why they agree or disagree with each one.

6. In your own words

- a. Students should find some basic information about the Pink Star diamond using the basic guidelines given. They could also include other information they find interesting. The results could either be corrected as a piece of writing or students could use the information to make a short presentation to the group.