

I'm only seeing bands I loved when I was 14. Am I in a musical rut – or is this growing up?

Level 1: Elementary / Pre-Intermediate

1 Warmer

a. Match these musicians and bands with the decade in which they had their first success.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1. Foo Fighters | a. the 1960s |
| 2. Blackpink | b. the 1980s |
| 3. Guns and Roses | c. the 1990s |
| 4. The Rolling Stones | d. the 2000s |
| 5. The Killers | e. the 2010s |
| 6. Ed Sheeran | f. the 2020s |

2 Key words

a. Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text.

entire

gig

nostalgia

rut

taste

1. If you talk about the _____ stadium, you mean all the people in it.
2. _____ is remembering happy times in the past.
3. A _____ is a public concert or performance.
4. If you are in a _____, you are in a boring situation that is difficult to change.
5. Your musical _____ is the type of music you like.

ageism

calculate

high

study

thrilling

6. If people _____ something, they decide what is probably true using the information they have.
7. A _____ is a feeling of great happiness or excitement.
8. If something is _____, it is very exciting.
9. A _____ is a project that examines a problem or a particular subject.
10. _____ is the belief that you are better than people older than you because of your age.

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- 1 Is it strange that, recently, I've only seen bands I loved when I was 14? The last concert I went to was Yeah Yeah Yeahs. The lead singer said it was 20 years since their first album. "No way!" I said, and so did the entire stadium of other 32- to 52-year-olds.
- 2 I was confused to discover that nostalgia was the main reason I was going to gigs. Am I in a musical rut? When you reach a certain age, does your musical taste stop changing?
- 3 Probably, it means nothing. It might just be a normal part of getting older. In 2018, *The New York Times* studied Spotify data to analyse how our musical tastes change as we get older. They calculated that the most "important period for forming musical taste" is 14 for men and 13 for women.
- 4 We connect songs with different periods in our lives, and music can bring back those times. It makes sense that I want to find that high. And I have found it again at concerts.
- 5 But what does that mean for finding new music? When I was younger, I spent a lot of time trying to find new bands – and when I found one, it was thrilling. It was like falling in love. Studies have found that when you reach your thirties, you stop trying to find new music. Many people want to find new bands, but they don't have the time because of jobs and kids. I understand that – I, too, have less time these days – but there is so much new music. The music is out there! Why am I not looking for it?
- 6 If I'm worried by all of this (I'm fine!), it might be a question of ageism. I don't want to decide that music I don't understand is just "people yelling". My nostalgia may be because the early to mid-2000s popular bands are big business again.
- 7 At least when I *do* actually try, I can still find stuff I love. It might not produce the high it did when I was 14, but it is still thrilling to find something completely new. If you're wondering if I want to see the Chemical Brothers and the Presets, the answer is a thousand times yes.

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3 Comprehension check

a. Answer these questions about the text.

1. When was Yeah Yeah Yeahs' first album?
2. What is the author's main reason for going to gigs?
3. What is the most important age for forming a musical taste for men and women?
4. According to the author, what was finding a new band like?
5. Why can't some people find new bands even if they want to?
6. When do people stop trying to find new music?
7. What is 'big business again'?
8. What does the author find thrilling?

4 Key language

a. Complete phrases from the text using these prepositions.

1. falling _____ love
2. because _____ jobs and kids
3. worried _____ this
4. _____ a rut
5. a lot _____ time

b. Use three of the phrases to complete the sentences.

1. I'm _____. My job is so boring, and it never changes.
2. I spend _____ listening to music.
3. Global warming? I'm really _____.

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5 Discussion

a. Answer this question.

- Think about your musical tastes. How have they changed as you have got older?

6 In your own words

a. Use an internet search engine for more information about Yeah Yeah Yeahs or the Chemical Brothers. Include the following information.

- When did they form the band?
- How many people were in the band?
- Are the same people in the band now?
- When did they make their first album?
- What was their biggest hit?
- Have they played in your country?

b. Report your findings to the class.