

MARLEY'S GHOSTS¹

There is something mystical about the man and his music. Before Bob Marley, reggae was an island; after him, reggae was global. Today, almost 20 years after his death, Marley's influence is still growing. A dance remix of his hit *Sun Is Shining* is the No. 1 song in many U.S. clubs. Next month an all-star tribute to Marley will be held in Oracabessa Bay, Jamaica. Earlier this year a Marley-themed restaurant opened in Orlando, Florida. The menu features Caribbean cuisine, and the decoration is based on Marley's home in Kingston.

A Bob Marley restaurant? Strange. But listen to the music. "There's a natural mystic blowing through the air..."

One of the coolest new additions to the Marley catalogue is the just-released CD *Chant Down Babylon*. The album contains duets with Marley and some of today's best hip-hop performers. The hip-hoppers supply new vocals, while Marley's vocals are taken from unused recordings in old studio sessions. "We got the idea, well, from Daddy basically," says Marley's son Stephen. "It was one of his dreams to get the urban youth of America."

These days Marley's musical message is gaining new audiences. *Legend*, the songwriter's greatest-hits album, is, after 15 years and 10 million copies sold, still on the hit-parade charts. *Songs of Freedom* has been reissued after selling 1 million copies. Cris Blackwell says Marley's lasting appeal is based on his approach to music. "His music was never overplayed at the time he was making it. This underground feel gives each new listener a sense of discovery. That's what makes him almost everybody's favourite. That and the fact that it's incredible music."

Marley, who died of cancer in 1981 at age 36, brought the Third World to the whole world. The dirty streets of Jamaican slums², the tales of the Caribbean, the fire of the Old Testament –he was influenced by it all, creating rebel music which was full of poetry and prophecy. Love and romance, for him, were not incompatible with revolution; bullets³ and ballads were both the stuff of his work.

A wide range of young performers cite Marley as a role model. Stephen Marley says this is Bob's extraordinary legacy. "The thing is you have to accept that these songs are yours," he says. "Me having kids now, I know that any song I have is really my children's. Like my shoes, like my pants. Once they can fit in them, it's theirs."

Projects that pair living stars with dead ones inspire terror in music fans. Fortunately, the matches⁴ on *Chant Down Babylon* are both fascinating and respectful. It is wonderful to listen to Laurin Hill and Bob sharing laughs and warmth across decades on *Turn Your Lights Down Low*. "It didn't feel as if I was recording with someone who wasn't there," says Hill. Stephen says that during the recording of the CD, he could feel his father's spirit, even smell his sweet paternal presence in the studio.

Reggae ghosts? Spiritual aromas? Strange. But listen to the music.

¹ *ghost*: fantasma, esperit / fantasma, espíritu

² *slum*: barri baix, suburbi / barrios bajos, suburbio

³ *bullet*: bala / bala

⁴ *match*: aparellament, acoblament / aparejamiento, mezcla

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the following questions according to the information in the text “Marley’s Ghosts”

[1 point each correct answer]

1. What are the reasons for Bob Marley’s increasing popularity today?
2. How do present-day singers feel about Bob Marley?
3. What inspired Marley’s songs?
4. Which of the following sentences summarises the text best?
 - a) Marley’s rebel music reflected the problems of Jamaican slums and of the whole Third World. He wanted to pass his revolutionary message to the urban youth of America. His son and singers like Laurin Hill follow this rebel message in the new albums.
 - b) Many years after his death, Marley is an increasingly popular figure. His image as an artist and his music are a model for new performers and inspire projects –concerts, new albums, restaurants... He died young but his message and his music are still with us.
 - c) Recording studios use Marley’s music for dance remixes like *Sun is Shining* and duets with new singers like Laurin Hill in *Chant Down Babylon*. These are technically difficult but, because the matches are well done, millions of copies of the new albums are sold.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose ONE topic. Write about either 1 or 2. Write between 75 and 100 words.

[Grammatical accuracy: 3 points. Writing fluency: 3 points]

1. Write a short essay about music in general or on modern singers and singer-writers. Explain your preferences, comment on artists and their work.
2. Write a letter to a friend. Invite him / her to a music concert. Comment on things related to this concert or to music in general. Do not use your real name in the letter.

COMMON SENSE ABOUT SMOKING

It is often said, 'I know all about the risk to my health, but I think that the risk is worth it.' When this statement is true, there is not much you can say. Everyone has the right to choose what risks they take, however great they may be. However, often the statement really means, 'I have the nasty feeling that smoking is bad for my health, but I would rather not think about it.' When some of these people are asked to explain what they think the risk to their own health is, very few get far in personal terms. This reaction can be observed in different aspects.

When it is explained that the number who die of lung cancer in Great Britain in one year is the equivalent of one every twenty-five minutes or is four times as many as those killed on the roads, the significance is more apparent. The one-in-eight risk of dying of lung cancer for the person who smokes twenty-five cigarettes a day is better understood with this analogy. If, when you board a plane, the girl at the top of the steps welcomed you aboard with the greeting, 'I am pleased that you are coming with us –only one in eight of our planes crashes,' how many would think again and make other arrangements? Lung cancer is a disease which kills quickly. However, one of the difficulties of making people aware of the danger, is that, despite the big epidemic of cancer, there are many who have no experience of it among their family or friends yet.

Smokers easily suggest an association between disease and air pollution by industrial smoke or by car fumes but are reluctant to accept the relation to cigarette smoking. These people think that 'they' ought to do something about air pollution, while forgetting that 'I' would have to change smoking habits. It is true that those living in cities are more likely to get lung cancer and bronchitis, but the difference between town and country is not so meaningful. Mechanics in garages and London traffic policemen do not appear to have any excess of lung cancer or related illnesses, like artery disease, tuberculosis and duodenal ulcer. What seems likely is that town smoke and cigarette smoke are cumulative in their effects.

The economic aspect of smoking can be interpreted in many different ways. On the one hand, the money gained by the Government from tobacco taxes is thousands of millions. Such big numbers are only used by astronomers or by engineers building spaceships for space travelling. From the point of view of the smoker, however, twenty-five cigarettes a day, cost over \$1.000 a year. If you start young, by the time you're sixty the accumulated capital almost equals your retirement pension. The cost of a lung cancer is the equivalent to several years of the smoker's salary. All this has led some doctors to create a cynical name for a packet of cigarettes –'a two-pound do-it-yourself cancer kit'!

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the following questions according to the information in the text “Common Sense about Smoking”.

[1 point each correct answer]

1. What are the differences between urban life and country life in terms of lung cancer and similar diseases?
2. What are the difficulties of making people see the danger of smoking to their lives and how can you help them understand it better?
3. The text mentions one positive aspect of smoking and some very negative aspects. What are they?
4. Which of the following sentences summarises the text best?
 - a) The personal cost of smoking, both in health and economic terms, is not often evident to the smokers. They may choose to ignore it and blame air pollution for lung cancer and other diseases. Explanations and analogies can help them understand the danger better in personal terms.
 - b) Smoking is not only a health problem but primarily an economic one. The thousands of millions in tobacco taxes received by the government do not pay for the cost of medical care and retirement pension to the smokers. They do not even pay for reducing air pollution by industrial smoke or by car fumes.
 - c) People are free to choose the risks they take. Many smokers think that smoking is worth it and forget about the one-in-eight risk of getting cancer. Doctors call a packet of cigarettes ‘a two-pound do-it-yourself cancer kit’. However, if people can pay for medical care and retirement pension, the problem is much smaller.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose ONE topic. Write about either 1 or 2. Write between 75 and 100 words.

[Grammatical accuracy: 3 points. Writing fluency: 3 points]

1. Write a short essay. There are benefits and dangers associated to modern life. Think and write about them.
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of living in town and living in a rural area? Write a list of arguments in favour and against each kind of life and comment them.