

Taylor Swift Teacher's Notes **A2**

In this A2 article, some of your students will learn about Taylor Swift, while others will probably know a lot about her songs and life already. This difference should help initiate interaction through information gap. We suggest starting by working on easy facts and gradually moving on to more elaborate ideas about rumour and bullying. This could be a good start for a unit devoted to either bullying or the influence of social media on young people.

Vocabulary and structures.

- Recycling web vocabulary (*active on social media, open an account, delete an account*).
- Bullying related vocabulary (eg. *fragile, ridiculous, nasty, insults, bullying, hurt, depressing / depressed*).
- Past simple
- Passive

Interaction.

■ With **Activity A**, we suggest starting by making students aware of what makes a good or bad reputation, in order to avoid focusing on Taylor Swift as a celebrity. Then have them exchange information about her with the help of the photos. In the “I know” column they will then write what information they think they already have, and ask questions in the “I want to know” column. This will make them recycle some of the vocabulary and grammar they have used whenever working on a biography. Make sure you don't stop them from asking questions to which you know that they won't find the answer in the text. Their questions should remain open.

Reading and writing step by step.

■ **Activity B** is meant to pick out some basic information in order to write a short paragraph with the help of half-made sentences in **Activity C**, whereas **Activity D** is a preparation for more complex writing

(**Activity E**). We suggest having students work in groups of mixed ability for **Activity D** so that more advanced students can help less confident ones. In **Activity E** breaking up the class into groups of more or less similar ability seems an easier way of differentiating expectations and providing adequate teacher's help to make sure all students are engaged in the writing / learning process.

■ **Activity F** takes students back to **Activity A** to have them assess their learning throughout the activities.

Going Further

■ If you want to explore more about Taylor Swift with your class, or introduce greater differentiation, there are three versions of a biographical article on the star, graduated from A1+ to B1 on the *Banque de ressources numériques anglais cycle 4*.

To see the resources, go to:

<http://inscription-brne.eduplateforme.com/pre-register> and register or log in, then go to:

Articles de presse > A1+, A2, B1 > *Culture et création artistiques* > “Taylor Swift”.

Answers.

A.1. Good reputation: positive comments / respect / prestige / popularity

Bad reputation: lies / rumour / negative comments / insults

2. Here are some examples.

I know	I want to know
She is a singer. She is famous. She is American. In the first photo, she has long, blonde curly hair. She is pretty. She is tall. She is young. She looks happy. In the other photos she looks older. She has changed a little.	When / where was she born? How old was she when she became a singer? Where does she live? Is she a nice person?

B. Year of birth: 1989 / Year of first album: 2005 (1989 + 16) / First type of music: country and western / Type of music now: pop / Prizes: 10 Grammy awards / Title of 5th album: 1989 / Year of 5th album: 2014 / Title of November 2017 album: *Reputation*

C. 1. Her first album was made in 2005. Her fifth album was made in 2014. It was called 1989.

2. Taylor Swift **was born** in 1989. She **became** a singer when she was very young and she **made** her first album in **2005**. At first she **sang** country and western music but now she **sings** pop music. She **got / received** ten Grammy Awards between 2009 and 2015. Her fifth album is **called / was called** 1989 and it was made in 2014. The title of her latest album is **Reputation**.

D.1.

	true	false	Justification / correction
Taylor Swift hates social media		√	She loves to chat with her fans. She is very active on social media.
She's not interested in her fans.		√	She exchanges a lot with her fans. She often sends personal messages to fans who have problems.
She gets lots of negative messages	√		Taylor receives lots of negative messages.
In August 2017 she stopped using social media	√		In August 2017, Taylor suddenly deleted all her social media accounts
She never used social media again		√	Five days later, Taylor opened the accounts again.

2. a. "Look What You Made Me Do".

b. a cemetery. **c.** Taylor Swift's reputation is supposed to be buried there.

d. fragile / easy to start / difficult to stop / ridiculous / nasty (comments) / young / innocent / insults / bullying / hurts.

E. Here are some examples of what students might write with some help.

- In my opinion, rumours online are awful and dangerous because they can make victims feel depressed, especially when they are young and innocent. Rumours are easy to start and nasty comments hurt. I'm sure I would be heartbroken if I was bullied online.*
- I think she probably wanted to surprise her fans by deleting her accounts and*

opening them again a few days later. She wanted them to get excited and buy her new album. So we can say that she manipulated them.

F. This is obviously a personal activity, to which there is no general answer. Students are always encouraged to learn when they become aware of the impact of their engagement on their knowledge and skills.