

1. Read the following text and answer the questions

John Lennon - much more than just a Beatle



The circumstances of the murder of John Lennon are well enough known for it to be unnecessary to repeat them now. It was ironic that John Lennon, advocate of non-violence, should have died the way he did: though perhaps it was ironic too that John should have chosen to live in New York, one of the more violent cities in the USA. "It could only have happened in New York," said one stunned fan, shortly after the news broke; that may or may not be true. That it did happen in New York certainly was. "It's a part of our youth that has died," said someone else; and tributes to John Lennon came in from people all over the world – from politicians, from musicians, from writers, from Englishmen, from Frenchmen, from Japanese people. There is probably no country in the world in which John's death did not come as a shock to some people. US president Ronald Reagan described it as "a great tragedy", and music radio-stations across the world played Lennon's songs, some of them in a non-stop tribute to the former Beatle who had such a tremendous effect on the world of the nineteen-sixties and early seventies.

AN ACCIDENTAL HERO

John Lennon never set out to become a hero, nor the leader of a whole generation. It came on him more by accident. He didn't want to be thought of as the *leader* of the Beatles — people forced it on him. "We're a co-operative" he used to say: but in the early nineteen sixties that was something people couldn't accept. "You must have a leader," they answered, and so John became the chief Beatle. He deserved the position, indeed, since he was the founder of the group, he wrote the words of most of their songs, and he was the dynamic force behind the others. "I'm just a 'umanbein' " he used to say.

What was it therefore which made the Beatles what they were? In short it was a combination of various things; their music, the words of their songs, their attitude, and their appearance.

Right from the start they were different; their music was good, and original; the words of their songs (Lennon's words) were often different. At the start Lennon wrote about love and romance, but it wasn't Hollywood love, it was 1960's everyday romance: something with which millions of young people in the cities of Britain and America, later Europe too, could identify. And in the nineteen sixties, there were millions and millions of teenagers and twenties just searching for something new to identify with. The expression "*generation gap*" was just becoming popular. The Beatles, led by Lennon, became the leaders of a new generation.

Forced into the role of leader, John Lennon accepted it, modestly. Even in 1970, he was still saying "I'm just a 'umanbein' ": but by then he knew he was a human being with influence; he knew that what he said or sung would be repeated all over the world. His songs had usually *said* something, right from the start; but in the period 1969-70, he began to say things more consciously. He had always been a symbol of an alternative life-style; but in the late 60s, his message became more overt. He wrote "Revolution", a song which classed him as peaceful, not violent, revolutionary, then there was his famous "Give Peace a Chance", and the more socially-conscious "Working-class Hero".

In fact, Lennon left the Beatles and the Beatles split up because they had "nothing more to say", whereas he had a lot. The Lennon of the early seventies was the most influential. He was "John Lennon", not just "a Beatle".

Shortly after the end of the Vietnam war, Lennon retired from public life. In a sense, the Beatles' generation had managed, by then, to change the face of western society. Attitudes had become much more liberal, and pop music part of our culture.

Shortly before his death, John Lennon recorded another album; and the day he died, he had been in the recording studio. After five years of family life, he was returning to public life. Was it a need for more money? Certainly not. Lennon was returning to life, perhaps, because he could see the world returning to its old ways. Re-armament, a return to conservatism, international tension, talk of war. The ex-leader of a generation which had tried to *give peace a chance*, could not sit back and watch things change for the worse. Tragically, in the end, peace would not give him a chance.

1. Why is it ironic that John Lennon chose to live in New York?

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2. How did John become the leader of The Beatles?

3. Why did millions of people identify with The Beatles?

4. What kind of influence did John have on his followers?

5. Why did Lennon decide to go back to public life after The Beatles had split?

2. Read about phobias and fill in the blanks with the right connective.

Does your blood run cold at the thought of needles? Do you have to leave the bathroom if there's a spider in the sink? Would you _____ spend a few hours on the train or ferry rather than get on board a plane?

The sight of blood, being in contact with needles, flying, heights, going to the dentist and being in open spaces are some of the most common fears people might encounter. _____, these fears can sometimes become _____ extreme and incessant that they develop into phobias. Phobias, which are strong and irrational fears, might become persistent and debilitating, significantly influencing and interfering with a person's daily activities. Phobias are sometimes caused by a specific, unpleasant event and escalate from there. _____ there's also evidence to suggest that having a phobia may be genetic and that some people are more likely to develop phobias than others. Those people who don't suffer from any phobia usually regard this type of fear _____ odd, irrational and difficult to understand.

There are hundreds of officially recognised phobias, _____ it's possible to develop a fear of almost anything. However, some have proved to be quite unusual. Did you know that _____ you are *lachanophobic* you have a fear of vegetables? Amazingly, the fear of long words is called *hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia*, which can't be easy for those who have it. Whatever the phobia, the sufferer will experience _____ stress and anxiety when he's faced with it and will try to avoid the things or situations which trigger the anxiety. But this can make the phobia worse in the long run, and the person might become more and more dominated by the things he has to do to avoid coming into contact with the cause of the anxiety. Some phobic people usually know that there's no real or specific danger to their lives. They may even feel embarrassed or silly for having their fear - _____ they can't do anything to stop the symptoms, which in _____, brings even more anxiety. It's easy to see how it can become one big vicious circle.

3. Keep reading about phobias and complete the blanks with *one* word only

Picture this scene: You're wandering around a supermarket or shopping mall on your own. Suddenly, as you walk about, you have the feeling that everybody _____ watching you. You suddenly start feeling _____ scared and embarrassed that your heart starts beating faster than usual, your throat becomes dry, or you start sweating- or a combination of all three. You don't know _____ this is happening and you can't do anything to avoid it; you panic and you feel you _____ to leave the place.

This is a type of social phobia, where the sufferer believes that people are continually judging his actions and movements. Most of the time he will feel fine. _____, when he is faced with a situation that scares him, he will experience intense anxiety or, in most extreme cases, panic.

Some phobias are easier to handle than _____, and affect people at particular times or in specific places. _____ you're scared of heights, you can manage to avoid tall buildings, or to look over the edge of cliffs. _____ measures don't take away the phobia, but they will

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help you not to confront your fear. But, if your phobia affects the way you want to run your everyday life, then you may want to find a cure to it.

_____ some people trust in self help methods to overcome difficulties, doctors believe those methods are useless _____ dealing with fears.

Fortunately, most phobias are quite treatable. _____ the fact that they are not a sign of serious mental illness, a person with this kind of disorder might benefit from _____ professional help from a psychiatrist or psychologist.

In _____ to overcome phobias successfully, many therapists suggest exposing the person to the source of his anxiety in small, non-threatening doses. Under a therapist's guidance a person _____ is afraid of dogs might begin by talking _____ this fear and by looking at photographs or a videotape of dogs. Next, he might observe a live dog from behind the safety of a window. Then, with the therapist at his side, he might spend a _____ minutes in the same room with _____ friendly, gentle puppy. Eventually, he will find himself able to pat the dog.

This gradual process is called desensitisation, meaning that the patient will become a little less sensitive to the source of his fear each time he confronts _____. In the end, he will no longer feel the need to avoid the situation that _____ been the basis of his phobia. While this process sounds like common sense and easy to carry out, it _____ be done only under the supervision of a professional.

It will take time for the patient to confront and gradually overcome his anxieties, since you can encourage (but not) force him to progressively come face to face with whatever he fears.

4. Laura Sanders is a teenager who suffers from a special type of social phobia. Read her story and put the verbs in brackets in the correct tense. Whenever you see + add a modal verb.

I have agoraphobia, which _____ (mean) I have panic attacks and get scared when I leave my house. At the moment, most teenagers my age _____ (take) lots of subjects at university, getting jobs or going out at night, but I find it really hard just to walk to the corner shop!

It all _____ (start) when I was 15. Throughout my childhood I _____ (always / be) pretty social. I used _____ (meet) my youth group regularly, and I also went on camping holidays. But, as I grew up and my body started changing, somehow I _____ (not find) pleasure in doing the same things anymore.

If I was in a public place, I _____ (+feel) uncomfortable and I was constantly worried that people _____ (+ think) I was silly. I would become nervous about the smallest things - _____ (get) on a bus to travel to town to meet friends implied a huge effort on my part.

I _____ (experience) those symptoms for a few months before I told my family. My friends thought I _____ (go) mad, and when I decided to leave the sports teams my mum and teachers realised something was wrong with me.

The summer before going to university I went to the doctor's. He told me I _____ (suffer) from an 'anxiety disorder'. He explained that my mind would refuse to concentrate when I was in a situation I wasn't comfortable with, and this would lead to the panic attacks.

Over the next two terms I lost all my friends and I _____ (order) to stop doing all the activities I _____ (often / carry out) before the symptoms began. It was devastating, but not as devastating as the feeling of helplessness the agoraphobia brought with it.

My parents said I _____ (+ take) a year off to rest and start therapy; their constant advice has helped a lot.

My family and boyfriend _____ (support) me all these months, but I wish I _____ (have) a normal life. I haven't had my hair _____ (cut) in a long time, because the sole idea of walking to the hairdresser's gives me the creeps. I have to go everywhere in a car driven by someone I trust and when I'm too far away from what I call "safe places" I panic, get dizzy and I _____ (+ go) home.

I'm trying to lead as near a normal life as possible and hopefully, all these symptoms _____ (disappear) in the future.

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5. Complete the conversation between Laura and her therapist.

Doctor: Hi, Laura! How are you feeling today?

Laura: Not, so well. I think I can't cope with my phobia any more.

Doctor: Why? _____?

Laura: Yesterday, I went to the cinema with Peter, my boyfriend, and I had a panic attack.

Doctor: _____?

Laura: I don't know exactly. We were in the queue and, suddenly, I started feeling everybody was watching me. I found it really difficult to breathe!

Doctor: _____?

Laura: Yes, he told me to calm down and helped me with my breathing exercises. You know he's really supportive. If I were him, _____.

Doctor: Another girlfriend? Don't be silly, Laura! He is supportive because he's in love and so _____.

Laura: Yes, you're right. I really love him, but I feel sorry for him. We used _____, but now we can't even go to the cinema.

Doctor: _____, do you think?

Laura: I don't know, maybe because I was too nervous. You know that when I'm under a lot of stress, I panic and I feel I can't handle it.

Doctor: I agree on that, I think you should _____.

Laura: You're right; but it's difficult to relax and not to think about my fears. I can't help it!!!

Doctor: I know, but we will have to work on that. _____?

Laura: No, I've never done such a thing. Do you think yoga lessons will be useful?

Doctor: At least they will help you relax and give you some tools to control your symptoms.

Laura: I would like to _____.

Doctor: You will feel better as time goes by, you'll see.

6. Writing: Choose one of the following topics. (200-250 words)

- Stress and anxiety can lead to poor health and early death.
- A friend of yours has recently lost his / her job and hasn't been able to find another one. At the moment he / she is short of money and can't pay the rent. Write a letter giving him / her advice about what he / she should do.