

Reading



THE BAND THAT WASN'T

Have you ever wanted to be part of a band as a famous singer or musician? Have you ever dreamed of playing in front of thousands of people at a concert, at which everyone is clapping and appreciating your music? Do you sing karaoke and pretend you are a famous singer like Song Zuying or Liu Huan? To be honest, a lot of people attach great importance to becoming rich and famous. But just how do people form a band?



Many musicians meet and form a band because they like to write and play their own music. They may start as a group of high-school students, for whom practising their music in someone's house is the first step to fame. Sometimes they may play to passers-by in the street or subway so that they can earn some extra money for themselves or to pay for their instruments. Later they may give performances in pubs or clubs, for which they are paid in cash. Of course they hope to make records in a studio and sell millions of copies to become millionaires!

However, there was one band that started in a different way. It was called the Monkees and began as a TV show. The musicians were to play jokes on each other as well as play music, most of which was based loosely on the Beatles. The TV organizers had planned to find four musicians who could act as well as sing. They put an advertisement in a newspaper looking for rock musicians, but they could only find one who was good enough. They had to use actors for the other three members of the band.



As some of these actors could not sing well enough, they had to rely on other musicians to help them. So during the broadcasts they just pretended to sing. Anyhow their performances were humorous enough to be copied by other groups. They were so popular that their fans formed clubs in order to get more familiar with them. Each week on TV, the Monkees would play and sing songs written by other musicians. However, after a year or so in which they became more serious about their work, the Monkees started to play and sing their own songs like a real band. Then they produced their own records and started touring and playing their own music. In the USA they became even more popular than the Beatles and sold even more records. The band broke up about 1970, but happily they reunited in the mid-1980s. They produced a new record in 1996, with which they celebrated their former time as a real band.

Comprehending

1 Join the correct parts of the sentences together.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 They produced a new record in 1996 | A but only one person was accepted. |
| 2 Most musicians get together and | B but reunited in the mid-1980s. |
| 3 They put an advertisement in the newspaper looking for four rock musicians, | C form a band because they like to write and play music. |
| 4 The first TV show | D to celebrate their time as a band. |
| 5 However, the band broke up about 1970, | E was a big hit. |

2 Go over the passage and look for the main idea of each paragraph. The first one is done for you.

Paragraph	Main idea
1	Many people want to be famous as singers or musicians.
2	
3	
4	

3 In groups of four, choose the adjectives that you think best describe the Monkees. Give your reasons for the choice. Then write down two or three sentences using the adjectives you have chosen to sum up your ideas.

popular lively funny foolish **attractive** brave intelligent bright
crazy noisy classical humorous honest famous smart determined

EXAMPLE: *The Monkees seem lively and funny because they play jokes on each other.*

4 In groups, discuss the following questions.

- 1 Do you think the TV organizers were right to call the Monkees a band when they did not write or sing their own songs? Give reasons.

- 2 In your opinion, what is the most important thing for a successful band? Why?
