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1991 was the best year for music – 13th April, 2020

Level 0

We all have a favourite year for music. For some, it is 1824. That's when Beethoven finished his Symphony No. 9. Others say it is 1969 because of The Beatles. A UK radio station found 1991 was the best year. This is because of bands like R.E.M. and Nirvana. That year could be the best because many listeners were teenagers in 1991.

A scientist thinks we still love songs we heard when we were teenagers. In our teenage years, we make many big life-changing decisions and start long-term relationships. Music controls our emotions, so songs we hear in our teens stick with us. Old people have a better memory for things they experienced in their teens.

Level 1

We all have our favourite year for music. Some people say it was 1824, when Beethoven performed his Symphony No. 9. Other people say it was 1969 because of hits by The Beatles. A survey by a UK radio station found 1991 was the best year. This is because of bands like R.E.M. and Nirvana. The year 1991 could be the best because of the average age of the station's listeners. Many of them were teenagers in 1991 and have great memories of that year.

A scientist thinks we still like the songs we heard when we were teenagers. She said during our teenage years, we make many big life-changing decisions. We also start long-term relationships and form many of our beliefs. She added that music controls our emotions, so songs we hear in our teens stick with us. The scientist added: "People in their 80s and 90s show a better memory for things that they first experienced between the ages of 10 and 30."

Level 2

We all have an opinion on what is the best year for music. Some people say it was 1824 because Beethoven first performed his Symphony No. 9. Other people say it was 1969 because of hit songs by The Beatles and Elvis Presley. A UK radio station conducted a survey and found the best year for music was 1991. This is because of bands like the Red Hot Chili Peppers, R.E.M. and Nirvana. The reason for 1991 being the best year could be the average age of the listeners of the station. Many of the listeners were teenagers in 1991 and have great memories of that year.

A scientist thinks we still like the songs we heard when we were teenagers. She told the BBC why we still like these songs. She said: "It is during these...years that we make many crucial life-changing decisions. We start significant long-term relationships and establish the...beliefs which form our identity." She added that music has the capacity to regulate our emotions so songs we hear in our teens stick in our memories. The scientist said: "People in their 80s and 90s show a better memory for things that they first experienced between the ages of 10 and 30."

Level 3

Many of us have an opinion on what was the best year for music. Some people say it was 1824. This is when the composer Ludwig van Beethoven first performed his Symphony No. 9. Other people say the best year was 1969 because of hit songs by The Beatles, David Bowie and Elvis Presley. The UK radio station Radio X recently conducted a survey and found the best year for music was 1991. This is because of the success of bands like the Red Hot Chili Peppers, R.E.M., Stone Roses and Nirvana. The reason for 1991 being the Radio X survey's best year for music could be the average age of the listeners of the station. Many of the listeners were teenagers in 1991 and have great memories of that year.

A psychologist believes people tend to stick to the songs they heard when they were teenagers. Dr Catherine Loveday told the BBC why we like songs we first heard in our teens throughout our life. She said: "It is during these [developmental] years that we make many crucial life-changing decisions. We start significant long-term relationships and establish the cultural and political beliefs which form our identity." She added that: "Music has an intrinsic capacity to regulate emotions [so] these songs naturally become embedded in our important memories, both positive and negative." She said: "People in their 80s and 90s show a better memory for things that they first experienced between the ages of 10 and 30."

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