

ВСЕРОССИЙСКАЯ ОЛИМПИАДА ШКОЛЬНИКОВ
ПО АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ. МУНИЦИПАЛЬНЫЙ ЭТАП. 9-11 КЛАССЫ.
SCRIPT

Время выполнения 90 минут. Максимальное кол-во баллов – 65.

Listening (script)

You will hear a presentation about Christmas catchy songs.

You will hear the text twice.

For questions 1-5, complete the sentences below. Write no more than two words and/or number for each answer.

*For questions 6-8, choose **THREE** letters, A-G, and write them next to questions 6-8 in any order.*

*For questions 9 and 10 Choose **TWO** letters, A-E, and write them next to questions 9 and 10 in either order.*

First, you have some time to look at Questions 1-10.

Pause 1 minute

Now listen carefully and answer the questions.

In the run-up to Christmas, we're exposed to a shower of festive music – on the radio and television, in shops, train stations, restaurants, pubs and bars. In the UK, our favourite old bands are being played everywhere along with newer singers like Kelly Clarkson and Justin Bieber. And, of course, Britain's two most popular Christmas songs by Mariah Carey and The Pogues are getting their annual airing.

So are you humming Jingle Bells or All I Want for Christmas while you wrap your presents? Catchy music, "sticky tunes" or earworms, as they have become known, are songs that get stuck in our heads – and while about two-thirds are pleasant, some can become quite annoying.

Musically, earworms seem to come more often from songs which have fairly conventional melodic patterns together with something unusual – a key change, or unexpected repetitions.

There's a popular article written by journalism professor Adam Ragusea, who claims to have identified a mysterious "Christmas chord" that might explain the popularity of Christmas songs and why they give us earworms, although not all commentators are entirely convinced. But research suggests that even though there could be some common features, the specific songs that become earworms are different from person to person.

What's different about Christmas music is that we are all listening to a much smaller pool of musical options at this time of year. Because of the dominance of Christmas music in public places such as shops and bars, we all get a lot more exposure to the same songs than we do at other times of year. So we could argue that Christmas music helps bring us together – whether we love it or hate it.

Dreaming of a hit record

Among the cheesy sleigh bells-filled tunes, there are some great Christmas classics – and it's interesting to note that White Christmas by Irving Berlin is not only consistently one of the most well-known Christmas songs but is the best-selling song of all time. It also has the characteristics of an earworm, and it contains that funny "Christmas chord". But how does a song like that maintain its popularity over the decades?

According to some theories, when we first hear a new piece of music, we tend to not like it very much. But repetition sparks liking – and repetition both within a song and through repeated listening over days, weeks and months will usually increase our fondness.

There's a limit to this repetition effect. Too much of it sends liking down the other side of the curve, meaning that when we have heard something too much we eventually, and quickly, get quite fed up with it. In one research study, we find that people regulate their own exposure to their own music over very long periods of time.

A lot of Christmas music, whether we think it's good or bad, will be more popular than it might deserve to be as it usually only gets aired a few months of the year. By the time we're taking down the Christmas tree in January, we've all become fully sick of Mariah and so we put it away in the attic with the tree, to be dusted off and enjoyed again next year.

Pause 10 sec.

Now listen to the text again.

Text repeated.

Now you have 2 minutes to complete the task and write down your answers on the answer sheet.

Pause 2 min.

This is the end of the listening task.