



# Michael Jackson: A Life in Music



B2/C1 Reading, Vocabulary and Speaking skills.

**Michael Jackson**, known as the "King of Pop," was a legendary American singer, songwriter, and dancer whose career spanned over four decades. Born on August 29, 1958, in Gary, Indiana, Jackson made his debut in the music industry as a young child in the family group called the Jackson 5. He quickly stood out because of his remarkable talent and charisma on stage.

In the late 1970s, Jackson broke away from the Jackson 5 to launch his solo career, which took off with the release of his album "Off the Wall" in 1979. This album was a critical and commercial success, showcasing Jackson's ability to blend pop, soul, and disco. However, it was his 1982 album "Thriller" that turned him into a global superstar. "Thriller" holds up as the best-selling album of all time, featuring iconic hits like "Beat It," "Billie Jean," and the title track "Thriller."

Jackson was not only famous for his music but also for his innovative dance moves, such as the moonwalk, which he debuted during a television special in 1983. His influence extended beyond the music industry; he made a mark in fashion with his unique style, and his music videos set the bar for future artists by turning them into a form of art.

Throughout his career, Jackson received numerous awards, including 13 Grammy Awards, and was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame twice. His achievements in the music industry have left a lasting legacy, influencing countless artists across various genres.

However, Jackson's life was not without controversy. He faced several legal battles and allegations that tarnished his image. Despite these challenges, he continued to be a beloved figure for his humanitarian work and contributions to the music industry.

Tragically, Michael Jackson's life came to an end on June 25, 2009, at the age of 50. His death shocked the world and prompted a global outpouring of grief. Fans and fellow musicians paid tribute to his genius, celebrating the indelible mark he left on the world of entertainment.

Jackson's influence on music, dance, and culture remains unmatched. His albums continue to sell worldwide, and his music videos are still watched by millions. As the "King of Pop," Michael Jackson's legacy lives on, inspiring new generations of artists and fans alike.

### **Answer True or False**

1. Michael Jackson began his music career as a solo artist.
2. "Thriller" is the best-selling album of all time.
3. Michael Jackson invented the moonwalk during a live concert.
4. Michael Jackson won 10 Grammy Awards throughout his career.
5. Jackson was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame three times.
6. Michael Jackson's music and dance moves had a significant impact on the fashion industry.
7. Legal controversies and allegations severely affected Jackson's public image and career.
8. Michael Jackson passed away at the age of 45.

### **Match the verbs/phrases and their meanings**

1. Broke away
2. Took off
3. Turned into
4. Holds up
5. Debuted
6. Extended beyond
7. Set the bar
8. Lives on

- A. To continue to exist or be remembered over time.
- B. To separate from or leave something such as a group or tradition.
- C. To perform or show something for the first time to the public.
- D. To begin to be successful or popular very quickly.
- E. To maintain quality or standard over time.
- F. To establish a standard of excellence that others strive to reach.
- G. To transform or change into something different.
- H. To have an influence or effect that goes beyond the usual limits.

### Fill the gaps

1. Michael Jackson initially gained fame with the Jackson 5 but eventually \_\_\_\_\_ to start his solo career.
2. His solo career really \_\_\_\_\_ with the success of the album "Off the Wall."
3. The album "Thriller" \_\_\_\_\_ him \_\_\_\_\_ an international superstar.
4. "Thriller" \_\_\_\_\_ as the best-selling album of all time, even many years after its release.
5. Jackson first \_\_\_\_\_ the moonwalk during a television special, stunning the audience.
6. Throughout his career, Jackson \_\_\_\_\_ beyond just music; he also had a significant impact on fashion.
7. His innovative music videos \_\_\_\_\_ for artists in the years to come.
8. Despite various challenges, Michael Jackson's legacy \_\_\_\_\_, continuing to inspire artists and fans around the world.

### Talk about

1. What qualities do you think are necessary for someone to achieve fame like Michael Jackson?
2. Do you believe the benefits of being famous outweigh the drawbacks? Why or why not?
3. How do you think social media has changed the way people become famous today compared to Michael Jackson's era?
4. Can you think of any famous individuals who have used their platform for positive change? How do they compare to Michael Jackson's humanitarian efforts?
5. Why do you think Michael Jackson's music and dance moves have had such a lasting impact on artists and fans?
6. In light of the controversies surrounding Michael Jackson, do you think it's possible to separate an artist's work from their personal life? Why or why not?
7. Would you like to be rich and famous like Michael Jackson? Why or why not?
8. Which Michael Jackson songs do you know? Can you Moonwalk?

T/F answers: 1F, 2T, 3F, 4F, 5F, 6T, 7T, 8F