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L3a Comprehension 3 – Justin Bieber

In the Spotlight: Justin Bieber

Have you heard of Justin Bieber? At only 21 years old, he is one of the ten most influential people in the world. He was called one of the "ten most powerful people" by Forbes magazine for three years running. So how did the youngster get to where he is today, and has it been a smooth ride?

Bieber was born in London, Ontario in Canada on March 1, 1994. His mother, Pattie, raised him with the help of her parents. Justin's father, Jeremy, was not around much when the young Bieber was growing up, but has recently been more present in Justin's life and has reportedly been given an honorary position in Justin's 'entourage' or group of closest advisers and helpers. Justin has two half-siblings, Jazmyn and Jaxon, through his father.

When Justin was 12, in 2007, he performed a cover of the singer Ne-Yo's song, "So Sick" in a talent competition and came second. His mother uploaded recordings of his performance and continued to do so for other songs he would sing. In 2008, former marketing executive Scooter Braun accidentally saw a video of Justin singing and his career began to take off. However, his mother Pattie, a devout Christian, was anxious because Braun was Jewish, saying, "God, you don't want this Jewish kid to be Justin's man, do you?"

His first album, My World, was released in 2009, when he was only 15 years old. Two further albums later, and it became clear that fame had come very suddenly to Bieber. Despite huge commercial success, he began to "go off the rails" and was arrested on January 23, 2014, in Miami Beach, Florida, together with singer Khalil, on suspicion of driving under the influence, driving with an expired license, and refusing to be arrested peacefully.

After a rocky couple of years, Justin says that he woke up one day and felt that he could hear a voice talking to him and encouraging him to change his life. This, he says, is the ethos behind his most recent project, Purpose, released in November 2015 with such hit singles as 'Love Yourself' He says he wanted to share this message of rejuvenation and one day he called up his manager to get back on track. To date, Justin has sold 44.7 million albums and singles in the United States alone.

Read the following article and answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. How do you know that Justin Bieber is a celebrity?

   He was called one of the "ten most powerful people" by Forbes magazine for three years running. // To date, Justin has sold 44.7 million albums and singles in the United States alone.

2. How many brothers or sisters does Justin Bieber have?

   He has two half-siblings. / He has one half-brother and one half-sister.

3. How was Justin Bieber discovered by the music industry?

   He was discovered by a former marketing executive Scooter Braun when he saw Justin Bieber's competition on the Internet. (Suggested answer)

4. Why do some parents believe that Justin Bieber is a bad influence to their children?

   This is because despite huge commercial success, Justin Bieber began "go off the rail" and was arrested by the police. // This is because he "went off the rail" and drove under the influence, drove with an expired license, and refused to be arrested peacefully.

5. Which song represents his determination to change his life and what does it mean?

   'Love Yourself' represents his determination to change his life and it means he has got back on track.

6. Would you choose a person who has made a mistake to be your idol? Why?

   Yes, I would. This is because everybody makes mistakes and it is important that my idol knows how to get back on track.