



## Year 4 – Autumn – Study a famous musician – Ed Sheeran

### Element 1

#### **Bob Marley**



Robert Nesta Marley was born in 1945 in a small village in Jamaica. Marley's father was overseas most of the time and he died when Marley was ten. Marley and his mother moved to Jamaica's capital, Kingston, when he was 12 years old. They moved into a small house in an area called Trench Town. The people who lived in this area were all very poor and the houses were made of metal sheets and tar paper. The houses only had one room and no running water.

Trench Town had many street gangs and it was a dangerous place to live. However, many young people enjoyed the latest music from the USA and used it as a way of forgetting about their difficult lives. Marley had planned to be a welder but decided that he'd rather have a career in music. Marley and his childhood friend, Neville Livingston, loved to listen to music together. They decided to form a singing group with some other friends. His friend, Joe Higgs, taught Marley to play guitar, which allowed him to create music of his own. The group decided on the name 'the Wailers'. They had their first number one single in Jamaica in February 1964. By 1969, the group had started to play more reggae music. Reggae music has a slow, steady rhythm and the lyrics are chanted. The bass guitar is a key instrument.

Bob Marley and the Wailers toured all over the world using music to challenge people's opinions and share their beliefs. The music discussed injustice in the world and promoted love, peace and harmony. The song lyrics are known for being very powerful. Many people still enjoy the music many years later and identify with the messages in the songs. Marley was raised Roman Catholic but became interested in Rastafari as he grew older. The Rastafarian movement began in Jamaica in the 1930s and was inspired by the Christian Bible and some African traditions. Rastafarians believe in one God and that it is important to respect animals and the environment.

Many Rastafarians style their hair in dreadlocks and some dress in green, red, gold and black to symbolise herbs, blood, royalty and Africa. Marley sold more than 20 million records throughout his career. He was the first international music star from a developing country. Marley wasn't given many awards for his music when he was alive. He received a Grammy



Lifetime Achievement Award in 2001, 20 years after he died. Marley was only 36 years old when he died of skin cancer in 1981. His final words to his son were 'Money can't buy life.' He continues to be an inspirational and influential artist four decades later.

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## **Element 2**

### **Questions:-**

1. In which year was Bob Marley born?

- 1945
- 1955
- 1964.
- 1969.

### **True or False Questions:-**

Many young people in Trench Town enjoyed music from the UK.

Bob Marley and his group had their first number one single in 1964.

Some Rastafarians choose to dress in red, blue, green and black.

Bob Marley was 36 years old when he died.

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### **Challenge:**

**Harmony** - To be in agreement about something.

**Dreadlocks** - A Rastafarian hairstyle in which the hair is washed but not combed and twisted while wet into tight braids or ringlets hanging down on all sides.

**Developing country** - A poor country that is seeking to become more advanced economically and socially.

**Influential** - Someone who has had a big impact on people.